Rhode Island Family Court
Administrative Order 2015-1

Appointment and Duties of Attorneys on the Panel of Court-Appointed Guardians *ad litem* in Child Welfare Cases

Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 40-11-14, each child who is alleged to be abused, neglected and/or dependent shall be referred to the Court Appointed Special Advocate's Office (CASA) for appointment of a Guardian *ad litem*. In those cases, where CASA is unable to represent the child due to a conflict of interest, an attorney certified in accordance with Rhode Island Supreme Court Executive Orders regarding court appointment panels shall be appointed to act as Guardian *ad litem* for the child. An attorney who accepts such an appointment shall, at a minimum:

1. Meet face-to-face with the child. The circumstances of the meeting are within the discretion of the attorney after considering the child's age, intelligence and developmental level.

2. Review the child's placement for safety and appropriateness.

3. Review the case plan and monitor the delivery of services to the child and the family;

4. Review and monitor the transition plan for youth aging out of foster care.

5. File motions and make recommendations as necessary and, unless excused by the court, attend all court proceedings involving the child.

6. File a written report with recommendations for each permanency hearing and submit other written reports as requested by the judge or as needed to ensure that the best interests of the child are served.

A judge who is hearing a case may remove a Guardian *ad litem* who fails to perform the minimum duties set forth in this order within a reasonable time.

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The Guardian *ad litem* shall have access to all reports that have been generated by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and those of other agencies contracted with DCYF to provide services to the child.

A Guardian *ad litem* shall not withdraw from the case without the permission of the court.

This Order is effective as of June 15, 2015.

Date: 6-11-15

Haiganush R. Bedrosian
Chief Judge
Rhode Island Family Court