



# GUARDIAN AD LITEM JOB DESCRIPTION

## MISSION STATEMENT

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The Mission of the Nevada Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program is to provide specially trained community volunteers the opportunity to advocate for abused and neglected children, by representing and protecting the best interests of the child and by assisting the Court with safe, permanent and nurturing homes, as provided by NRS 432B of the Nevada Statutes.

## VISION STATEMENT

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The vision of the Nevada GAL Program is to match a qualified Guardian ad Litem to every child in state custody in need of a voice and a safe, permanent, nurturing home.

## QUALIFICATIONS


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- A. Is at least 21 years of age.
- B. Has never been arrested for, found guilty of, nor pleaded guilty, nor nolo contendere to, nor has charges pending for any criminal offense involving abuse or neglect, or abandonment of a minor child, or for related acts that would pose risks to children or been required to register as a sexual offender.
- C. Submits a written application with at least three (3) references.
- D. Submits to a personal interview.
- E. Passes the background check including reference checks, social security verification and criminal record, sex offender registry and Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.
- F. Participation in pre-service interview.
- G. Successful completion of GAL pre-service training.






## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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- A. Primary goal is to identify and advocate for the best interests of the child.
- B. Conduct independent research of case records.
  - 1) Read and review all relevant records to include the records from the Division of Child and Family Services.
  - 2) Interview all relevant individuals in case such as:
    - a) Biological parents
    - b) Child(ren)
    - c) Foster parents or residential facility personnel
    - d) Extended family members, where appropriate
    - e) Others having pertinent information (teachers, physician, etc.)

- 3) Maintain all case information in strict confidence
  - a) Give case-related information to only those who need to know and have a legal right to know
  - b) Ensure security of confidential material in a case notebook and allow  no one else access that does not have the need and legal right to know

**C. Monitor and facilitate progress of case through ~~system~~** 

- 1) Ensure  timely development of Case Plan
  - a) Verify that the Case Plan is written and filed within guidelines of the Court Order
- 2) Report the delays or problems to the local District Court Program Coordinator 
- 3) Follow parents' progress in following Case Plan
  - a) Maintain independent personal contact with parent
  - b) Consult with service providers (therapists, etc) 
- 4) Follow the Division of Child and Family Services efforts to achieve permanence
  - a) Maintain contact with DCFS Worker
  - b) Promote permanency planning and case plan goals throughout case contacts
  - c) Attend Family Team meetings to Monitor  implementation of the recommendations
  - d)  Report deficiencies to local District Court Program Coordinator
- 5) Ensure child is adequately cared for and special needs are addressed
  - a) Maintain contact with child and foster parents or residential facility personnel
  - b) Personal contact must be made with the child(ren) at least once a month; although the goal of the program is twice a month or more.
  - c) Consult with service providers
  - d) Report deficiencies to appropriate parties (DCFS Worker and Program Coordinator)
- 6) Consult with child's attorney regarding case
  - a) Keep attorney apprised of current case developments
  - b) Clarify any legal questions regarding case
- 7) Consult with other appropriate persons; act as facilitator among parties
  - a) Make recommendations for specific appropriate services for the child, and when appropriate, the child's family.

**D. Ensure all relevant information is available to the Court**

- 1) Prepare GAL report for the Court
  - a) Review DCFS and Court case files
  - b) Make recommendations regarding case
  - c) Submit properly formatted reports to the Court summarizing relevant and factual information and make specific recommendations in the child's best interest to the local District Court Program Coordinator by assigned date
  - d) Update local District Court Program Coordinator on case status

- 2) Ensure GAL presence at Court
  - a) Attend all court hearings
  - b) Testify or make verbal representations as required
  - c) Maintain accurate, up-to-date case file

**E. Keep local District Court Program Coordinator informed of case activity and progress**

- 1) Maintain regular (no less than monthly) contact with local District Court Program Coordinator
  - a) Discuss case advocacy issues and concerns
  - b) Develop appropriate case strategies
  - c) ~~Keep~~ local Program Coordinator informed of illnesses or vacations which could temporarily prevent GAL activity/contact or allow coordination of scheduling
- 2) Keep all case records accurate and up to date
  - a) Record all contact and activities immediately on case log sheets in case notebook
  - b) Turn in Monthly Activity Sheet by due date
  - c) Review case documentation with local District Court Program Coordinator

**F. Pursue professional development in the areas of child welfare, family issues and related topics to include 12 hours of In-Service Training per year.**

**G. Return notebook and all papers, notes, etc. pertaining to the case to the local District Court Program Coordinator when the case is dismissed or the GAL resigns. Sign a confidentiality case release form.**