

Workgroup to Review the Practice and Performance of Guardians Ad Litem for Children

Workgroup Purpose:

The Virginia State Bar's (VSB's) Family Law Section surveyed its members in 2015 regarding guardian ad litem practice and performance. They shared survey results with the Court Improvement Program (CIP) of the Office of the Executive Secretary, Supreme Court of Virginia, which administers the courts' guardian ad litem program and supports implementation of the Virginia Judicial Council approved Standards to Govern the Performance of Guardians Ad Litem for Children. Given a shared interest in quality representation of children's best interests, the CIP and its Committee of Special Advisors committed to the Family Law Section to form a collaborative workgroup to review concerns and suggestions raised by the bar's survey.

Participants:

Guardian Ad Litem Workgroup Members

Judge Susan Whitlock, Culpeper Circuit Court (Chair)
Judge Deborah Bryan, Virginia Beach J&DR District Court
Judge Florence Powell, Washington/Bristol J&DR District Court
Judge Frank Somerville, Culpeper J&DR District Court
Judge Deborah Tinsley, Louisa J&DR District Court
Judge Ellen White, Campbell J&DR District Court
Peter V. Chiusano, Esq., Virginia Beach, VSB Family Law Section Board of Governors
Laura Griffin, Clerk, Chesterfield J&DR District Court
Leslie Haley, Esq., GAL, Chesterfield
Melissa O'Neill, CASA Program Coordinator, DCJS
Lawrence P. Vance, Esq., Winchester, VSB Family Law Section Board of Governors
Matthew Yao, Esq., GAL, Fairfax

Office of the Executive Secretary Staff

Sandra L. Karison, Esq., Director, Court Improvement Program
Kristi Wright, Director, Department of Legislative and Public Relations
Jane Lissenden, Training Coordinator, Court Improvement Program
Lori Battin, Senior Research Analyst, Court Improvement Program
Amanda Hoyt, Program Specialist, Court Improvement Program
Rhonda Gardner, J&DR Court Services Manager, Department of Judicial Services