

Guardian ad Litem Program

Presentation to Judiciary Committee

February 19, 2026

Progress with Volunteers



January 2025

- 1 District*
- 1 Supervisor
- 0 onboarded
- 8 active volunteers

January 2026

- 3 Districts
- 3 Supervisors
- 47 onboarded
- 52 Active volunteers

Current Volunteer Presence



- 95 children assigned – 2.0%
- 52 Cases Assigned -- 1.7%
- 257 court reports filed
- 363 Child Contacts last 120 days

2026 Plan

Plan

- Cohorts in April and June 2026
- 100 active volunteers by 7/1/2026

Challenges

44% increase in persons supported

Early Attrition

- 7 of 47 onboarded in 2025 (15%)

CASA supervisor ratio (30)

Technology and Training

HR support – recruitment, interviews

Lessons Learned

- In person cohorts
- Extended Learning Paths
 - To provide ‘just-in-time’ information
 - Increase retention
 - Acknowledge lower caseloads/longer learning curve
- Frequent Support
 - Supervisors
 - Opportunities for Peer Support and Discussion
- Virtual desktop
 - Ease of use
 - Security

Unassigned Cases



2025 (Monthly average)

- 201 Unassigned Cases
- 7% of cases and children

Today

- 53 (74% reduction)
- 2% of cases and children
- Real-time Dashboard
- No exceptions in data
- 20% + increase in timely court reports and child contacts
9/25-12/25

Annual Report Review

Change Items Requested

- Wage Alignment with Median Salary Comparable Positions
- Attorney Manager/General Counsel
- Volunteer Manager
- Insurance Premium Relief
- MPL Employer's Portion

Board Members

Ann Ahlstrom, *Chair*
Kathleen Blatz, *Vice-Chair*
Jenna Peterson
Ruby Tolbert
Stephanie Bumgardner
Timothy Zuel



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January 15, 2026

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. 480.35 Subd. 8, the Guardian ad Litem Board provides the following annual report. Copies of this report have been distributed in compliance with Minn. Stat. 3.195. The report was prepared by Guardian ad Litem Board staff using data from the program's case management system and other internal sources. No costs were incurred by any other agency or level of government or paid to an external vendor. Minn. State. 3.197.

1. Board Personnel

a. Paid Staff – 262

- i. Note, this number includes Guardians ad Litem, Supervisors, Managers and Administrative staff.
- ii. The program has 226 employee Guardians ad Litem, a small number are part-time Guardian ad Litem.

b. Volunteers – 43

2. Children Assigned

a. 9973 children were assigned a Guardian ad Litem in a juvenile court matter in 2025.

- i. 105 of those assignments were to Guardian ad Litem volunteers.
- ii. 9868 of those assignments were to Guardian ad Litem employees.

3. Court Reports Filed

a. Court reports were filed by Guardians ad Litem in 17,683 court hearings. *

- i. 17,426 reports were filed by Guardian ad Litem employees.
- ii. 257 reports were filed by Guardians ad Litem volunteers.

*This number represents more than the total number of distinct court reports because some court reports may be considered in more than one hearing.

4. Cases Assigned

a. 5327 juvenile cases were assigned a Guardian ad Litem in 2025.

- i. 61 of those case assignments were to Guardian ad Litem volunteers.
- ii. 5266 of those case assignments were to Guardian ad Litem employees.

5. Hours Worked

- a. Employee Guardians ad Litem logged 324,785 hours in the case management system. This figure does not include, sick, leave or vacation time.
- b. Volunteer Guardians ad Litem logged 1610 hours in the case management system.

6. Complaints Filed

- a. Employees – 19
- b. Volunteers – 0

7. Complaints Investigated
 - a. Employees – 16
 - b. Volunteers – N/A
8. Complaints Resulting in Discipline
 - a. Employees – 0
 - b. Volunteers – N/A

Alex W Miller

Alex Miller
Interim Program Administrator

Ann Ahlstrom
Board Chair