









2017-22 Long Range Program Plan
Alignment to the Cabinet's Scope

Guardian ad Litem



	 Prenatal	 Birth	 Early Care	 VPK	 Elementary School	 Middle School	 High School	 Transition to Adulthood
Average number of children represented								
Average percent of children represented								
Percent of cases closed with Permanency Goal achieved								

Statewide
Guardian ad Litem
Program

PMG: Stw/Guardian
ad Litem

EXHIBIT II – PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND STANDARDS

Department: Justice Administrative Commission	Department No.: 21
Program: Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program	Code: 21.31.00.00
Service/Budget Entity: PGM: Stw/Guardian ad Litem	Code: 21.31.00.00

Approved Performance Measures for FY2014-15	Approved Prior Year Standards FY2015-16	Actual Prior Year Standards FY2015-16	Approved Standards For FY2016-17	Requested Standards For FY2017-18
Average number of children represented	26,500	25,091	26,500	26,500
Average percent of children represented	80%	80.1%	80%	80%
Percent of cases closed with Permanency Goal achieved.	70%	64%	70%	70%
Number of new volunteers certified as a GAL	1,464	2,448	1,464	1,464
Average number of volunteers	5,057	10,945	5,057	5,057

AGENCY SERVICE OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE PROJECTION TABLES

STATEWIDE GUARDIAN AD LITEM (GAL) PRIMARY SERVICE OUTCOMES

Outcome: Average number of children represented.

Baseline					
FY 2015/16	FY2017/18	FY2018/19	FY2019-20	FY20-21	FY2021-22
25,091	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500

Explanation: This number is the average of 12 months of data, from July 1 of one year to June 30 of the next. The Guardian ad Litem Program is charged by Florida Statute, Ch. 39, to represent all children in the dependency system. The Program is currently funded to represent all children in out-of-home care, and children ages 0 to 3 years in their own homes (in-home care). These two groups total an estimated 24,345 children, although this number fluctuates daily depending upon removals and discharges. [The number of children in out of home care on June 30, 2016 is 22,948. There are an estimated 1,397 children under age 3 years in in-home care.] In addition to fluctuations in numbers, the GAL Program does not control the number of children appointed to the program. These appointments are made by judges in the dependency courts.

The GAL Program has historically sought increasing resources to serve ever larger segments of all dependent children, however, the focus for resource requests for FY 17-18 will be stabilization of the workforce, which has been affected significantly by low salaries and high caseloads leading to high turnover.

For FY 15-16, People First data indicate turnover in critical classes that have client contact and court responsibility, as well as volunteer recruitment and supervision, as follows:

- Child Advocate Manager – 50.3%
- Sr. Child Advocate Manager – 20.9%
- Volunteer Recruiter – 64.5%
- Program Attorney – 61%
- Sr. Program Attorney – 37.8%

The GAL Program has implemented a variety of no- or low-cost options to promote retention among critical classes. In addition, the Program has submitted a request for funding in FY 17-18 to support salary adjustments in the five key classes of positions listed above. Slowing staff attrition and reducing the lost productivity that results from turnover is essential before additional resources are requested for staff expansion.

Once the high turnover is addressed, the program will then address a key policy decision with the Office of the Governor and the Legislature; that is, 1) whether the program should request additional resources to pursue representation of all children in the dependency system (out-of-home and all in their own home), or 2) work with the Legislature to limit its statutory

AGENCY SERVICE OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE PROJECTION TABLES

mandate to representing only children in out-of-home care and children 0 to 3 years living in their own homes (as current funding levels permit).

Outcome: Average percent of children represented.

Baseline					
FY 2015/16	FY2017/18	FY2018/19	FY2019-20	FY20-21	FY2021-22
80.1%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%

Explanation: The percentages reflected in the chart above show the proportion of ALL children in the dependency system served and projected to be served by the GAL Program. The percent of all dependent children represented has declined due to the dramatic increase in children coming into the dependency system. Additionally, in certain highly populated areas of the state, time to permanency has increased, preventing the GAL Program from closing cases and reducing the average number of children represented. The Guardian ad Litem Program is currently funded to serve children in out-of-home care, and the children under age 3 in their own homes (in-home care).

Outcome: Percent of cases closed with Permanency Goal achieved.

Baseline					
FY 2015/16	FY2017/18	FY2018/19	FY2019-20	FY20-21	FY2021-22
64%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%

Explanation: A key outcome measure for children is achievement of permanency through adoption, reunification with family, or a permanent guardianship arrangement. These are true permanency outcomes and, in each case, court supervision and case management by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is terminated when those goals are achieved. In certain highly populated areas of the state, time to permanency has increased, preventing the GAL Program from closing cases and reducing the average number of children represented.

Outcome: Number of new volunteers certified as a GAL.

Baseline					
FY 2015/16	FY2017/18	FY2018/19	FY2019-20	FY20-21	FY2021-22
2,448	1,464	1,464	1,464	1,464	1,464

Explanation: The Program topped its goal of more than 10,000 volunteers statewide in February 2016. The GAL Program is limited by funding on the number of staff to recruit, train and oversee the work of volunteers in the Program.

**AGENCY SERVICE OUTCOMES AND
PERFORMANCE PROJECTION TABLES**

Outcome: Average number of volunteers.

<u>Baseline</u>					
FY 2015/16	FY2017/18	FY2018/19	FY2019-20	FY20-21	FY2021-22
10,945	5,057	5,057	5,057	5,057	5,057

Explanation: This number includes a small proportion of volunteers who do not carry a caseload but rather perform administrative and office work for the program. The Program's goal is to maintain at least 10,000 volunteers at all times.