**Policy:**
The Guardian ad Litem (GAL) is appointed to represent the best interests of a child within the child protection/court process. This is a role of considerable importance and public trust and as such, the GAL is expected to demonstrate conduct which is responsible, ethical, law abiding and respectful of the parties and participants.

**Reason:**
The guardian ad litem is a representative of the program. The actions of the employee/volunteer reflect on all other guardians ad litem, the program, and staff.

**Expectations:**
The Guardian ad Litem will:

- Utilize the rights and responsibilities in the role appropriately to advocate for the best interests of the child.

- Comply with applicable laws and rules – both state and federal, as well as court rules, GAL program policies – including accepting the role of mandatory reporter of child abuse and neglect as set forth in Minnesota Statute 626.556.

- Maintain confidentiality.

- Avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

- Not discriminate, nor manifest by words or conduct, a bias or prejudice based upon race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, age or other groups protected by law.

- Disclose any real or potential conflict of interest as soon as possible to the program and/or court, including current, former or potential relationships of a personal or professional/business nature which may compromise the independence and credibility of the guardian ad litem on an individual case, or compromise the program’s purpose and goals.

- Not use the position for personal advantage and have no direct or indirect financial interest in the assets, leases, business transactions or professional service of the program.
• Establish appropriate boundaries with children, families and parties/participants and service providers.

• Take reasonable steps to ensure personal safety.

• Notify the program immediately of any criminal charges filed against the guardian ad litem or other court involvement of the guardian ad litem.

• Notify the program immediately of any criminal charges filed against an immediate family member.

• Notify their manager/coordinator once they become aware they are a party, victim, or a witness in any case before the court within their district, with the exception of uncontested petty misdemeanor traffic citations.

**Applicability:**
This policy applies to all employees and volunteers within the Guardian ad Litem Program.

**Consequence:**
Employees or volunteers who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including loss of position.

---

**ORIGINATION DATE:** October 2, 2014   **LAST UPDATED:** November 20, 2018

**RELATED DOCUMENTS:**
Confidentiality Policy
Conflict of Interest Policy
Employee Code of Ethics Policy
Non - Discrimination and Harassment Policy
Safety Policy