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**State Guardian ad Litem Board**

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<https://mn.gov/guardian-ad-litem/>

**AT A GLANCE**

- 13,155 children served by the program in FY2022
- 4,544 actives cases on July 1, 2022
- Two-year budget of \$45,630,000
- 259 total employees/230 FTE’s and 71 volunteers

**PURPOSE**

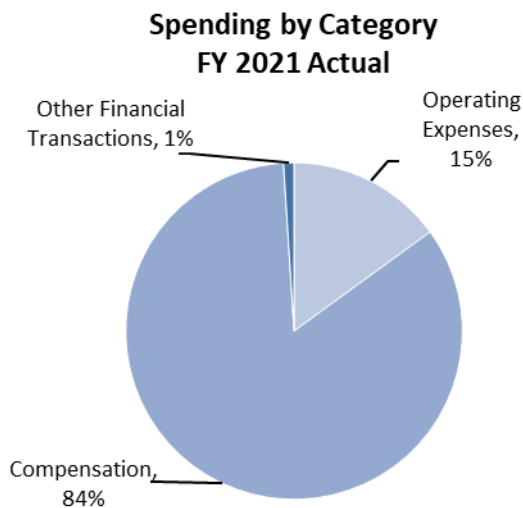
The State Guardian ad Litem Board (GALB) administers the Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program which exists so that all children with a court-appointed Guardian ad Litem have their primary needs met and that each judicial officer is equipped to make informed decisions for each child within the confines of available resources. The GALB represents the children’s best interest throughout child protection and family court proceedings.

Our purpose is to provide well trained, effective guardians ad litem to advocate for safe and permanent homes for the children we represent. We are committed to serving families with integrity, compassion, and a belief that community, equity, justice, and safety are paramount to a child’s wellbeing. We are further committed to building and sustaining a respectful and racially equitable program that promotes and advocates for the best interests of children and families through empowerment, engagement, and community.

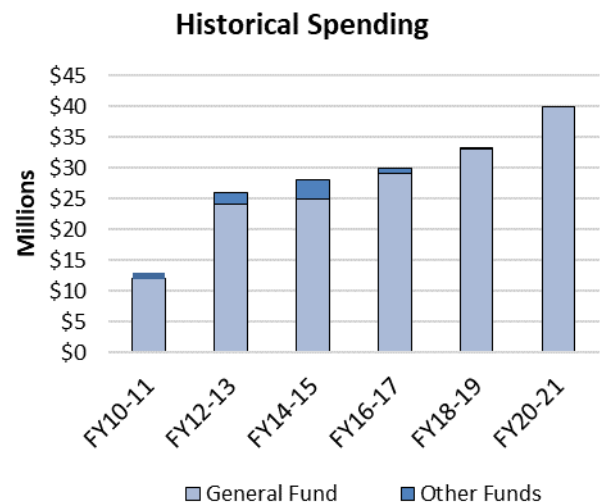
**GAL are appointed to ensure:**

- Children are safe
- Concurrent permanency planning with relative/kin begins on Day 1
- Children spend the least amount of time under court jurisdiction
- Children receive appropriate services including trauma informed care
- Parents participate in services that reflect the best interests of children
- Physical and mental health, educational and cultural needs of children are met
- Children are reunited with parents if it is in the best interests of the child
- Children do not re-enter the child protection system

**BUDGET**



Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

In 2010, the Legislature created the State Guardian ad Litem Board to move and transition the Guardian ad Litem Program out of the state court system and establish an independent guardian ad litem program. Historical spending began in fiscal year (FY) 2011. The State Guardian ad Litem Board has a total biennial base budget of \$45,630,000 payroll consisting of 84% and operating expenses 16%. The budget is funded primarily by general fund appropriations.

### STRATEGIES

The GALB achieves the program mission by complying with mandated appointments for every child alleged to be abused or neglected. Further, the Board accommodates (as resources permit) the unmet and critical need in family court.

Within their role, Guardians ad litem provide information to the court through an independent investigation, report writing and testimony. GAL make recommendations to the court regarding child safety and timely permanency planning that are in the best interest of the child. The Board and program staff utilize the case management system to measure outcomes for children as well as program performance. Lastly, program staff work as part of the Children’s Justice Initiative Team in each of the judicial districts to help ensure juvenile rule/statute compliance.

To obtain more equitable outcomes for children and families in Minnesota, the Guardian ad Litem program uses evidence-informed research to advance our current advocacy practice to a healing practice. We are shifting the lens of how we view children to ensure we see each child in the context of their family. We are deepening our understanding of our own biases and how they are detrimental to children and their families. We are redefining our role as healers to improve outcomes for children.

### RESULTS

<i>Type of Measure</i>	<i>Appointment of a Guardian ad Litem</i>	<i>Previous Value</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Current Value</i>	<i>Date</i>
Quantity	Cases Assigned Per Fiscal Year	3,310	FY2021	3,904	FY2022
Quality	Court Reports Filed and On-Time	57%	FY2021	71.2%	FY2022
Results	Compliance with federal and state mandates	98%	FY2021	98%	FY2022

\*GALP changed the definition of Case. Now all court files for family court are grouped in single case

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M.S 480.35 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/480.35> established the State Guardian ad Litem Board; M.S. 260C.163 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/260C.163> provides for the appointment of a guardian ad litem in juvenile court proceedings and M.S. 518.165 <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/518.165> for family court.