

STATEWIDE GUARDIAN AD LITEM OFFICE

Long-Range Program Plan

Fiscal Years 2009-2010 through 2013-2014

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AGENCY MISSION

We advocate for abused and neglected children in the court and in the community, and impact the child welfare system, so that all children have safe, stable homes and an opportunity to reach their own unique potential.

AGENCY GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PROJECTION TABLES

Goal 1: To provide effective advocacy for all of Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children.

Objective 1: Represent 30,344 children.*

Primary Service Outcome

Outcome: Average number of children represented.

<u>Baseline</u>					
FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
30,344	30,344	30,344	30,344	30,344	30,344

Goal 2: Advocate for timely permanency for children.

Objective 1: Provide representation for children until permanency is achieved.

Primary Service Outcome

Outcome: Percent of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated.

<u>Baseline</u>					
FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
51%	54%	57%	60%	63%	66%

Goal 3: Increase number of volunteer advocates for children.

Objective 1: Increase number of new volunteers.

Primary Service Outcome

Outcome: Number of new volunteers certified as a GAL.

<u>Baseline</u>					
FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
1,614	1,695	1,780	1,869	1,962	2,060

Objective 2: Increase active volunteer base.

Primary Service Outcome

Outcome: Average number of active volunteers.

<u>Baseline</u>					
FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
5,365	5,526	5,692	5,863	6,039	6,220

* The Program is requesting adjustment of this measure, as described on page 10 of this document.

LINKAGE TO THE GOVERNOR’S PRIORITIES

Governor Charlie Crist has established priorities for his administration to better serve Floridians. As shown below, direct linkages exist between the priorities of Governor Crist and the goals set out in this plan.

PRIORITY #1 – PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

GAL Program Goal 1: To provide effective advocacy for all of Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children.

GAL Program Goal 2: Advocate for timely permanency for children.

GAL Program Goal 3: Increase number of volunteer advocates for children.

PRIORITY #2 – STRENGTHENING FLORIDA’S FAMILIES

GAL Program Goal 1: To provide effective advocacy for all of Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children.

GAL Program Goal 2: Advocate for timely permanency for children.

GAL Program Goal 3: Increase number of volunteer advocates for children.

PRIORITY #3 – KEEPING FLORIDA’S ECONOMY VIBRANT

PRIORITY #4 – SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

GAL Program Goal 1: To provide effective advocacy for all of Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children.

PRIORITY #5 – KEEPING FLORIDIANS HEALTHY

GAL Program Goal 1: To provide effective advocacy for all of Florida’s abused, abandoned and neglected children.

PRIORITY #6 – PROTECTING FLORIDA’S NATURAL RESOURCES

TRENDS AND CONDITIONS

The Guardian ad Litem Program was established in Florida in 1980 to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in court proceedings. There are 20 local Guardian ad Litem programs in the 20 judicial circuits in Florida. On January 1, 2004, the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office was created to provide the infrastructure to increase functionality and standardization among the existing programs. Since then, an annual report has been filed each year which describes the environment, issues and strategies employed to address our basic mission to represent all dependent children, as defined within Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes. Our next annual report will be filed on October 1, 2008. Reviewers are invited to read that report and contact the Statewide Office with any questions. Our vision is to provide effective advocacy for all of Florida's abused and neglected children. In an effort to fulfill our vision, we are leveraging state, county and private funds to meet the needs of the children we represent.

Chapter 39, Florida Statutes, addresses proceedings relating to abused, abandoned and neglected children and requires the appointment of a guardian ad litem for every child. Section 39.8296, Florida Statutes, created the State Office as an independent entity within the Justice Administrative Commission.

The State Office has oversight responsibility for, and provides technical assistance to all guardian ad litem and attorney ad litem programs located within the judicial circuits. Responsibilities include collecting, reporting and tracking reliable case data, reviewing the programs in Florida and in other states, developing statewide performance measures and standards, forming a training committee and developing a training program, reviewing various funding sources, and developing methods to improve delivery of program services.

Our outcome measures will be affected by the following emerging trends and conditions:

- The Program's budget was reduced by approximately 7.2% during the 2008 Legislative Session. This resulted in the termination of a large number of staff and therefore a reduction in the number of children the Program is able to represent. The Program has adjusted Goal #1 to reflect the reduction in its resources to 30,344 children, which is the number of children that can be represented using the resources allocated in the 2008/2009 General Appropriations Act. However, revenue estimating conferences have concluded the downturn in revenue will continue and 4% of the Program's current year appropriation is being held back. If this funding is not released, this will further reduce the number of children the Program can represent. The Program's LRPP goals do not reflect the 4% holdback.
- The Program is anticipating a reduction in the resources provided by county governments which will reduce the number of children the Program can represent. The counties are obligated by statute to provide facilities for the Program, but some counties provide additional support to the Program, including staff. Several circuits have already lost county resources and it is unknown how many more counties will reduce their support of the Program and in what amounts. The Program's LRPP goals do not currently reflect any reduction in county resources.

EXHIBIT II: PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND STANDARDS

Department: Justice Administrative Commission	Department No.: 21
Program: Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program	Code: 21300000
Service/Budget Entity: PGM: Stw/Guardian ad Litem	Code: 21310000

Note: Approved primary service outcomes must be listed first.

Approved Performance Measures for FY2008-09 (Words)	Approved Prior Year Standard FY2007-08 (Numbers)	Prior Year Actual FY2007-08 (Numbers)	Approved Standards for FY2008-09 (Numbers)*	Requested FY2009-10 Standard (Numbers)
Average number of children represented	26,500	31,426	30,344**	30,344**
Percent of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated	45 %	77.82%	51 %	54%
Number of new volunteers certified as a GAL	1,464	2,159	1,614	1,695
Average number of active volunteers	5,057	6,330	5,365	5,526

* The last approved standards for the GAL Program were set in FY 2007-08. We have listed the standards we had requested for 2008/09.

** The Program is requesting adjustment of this measure, as described on page 10 of this document.

EXHIBIT III: PERFORMANCE MEASURE ASSESSMENT

Department: Justice Administrative Commission
Program: Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program
Service/Budget Entity: PRG: Stw/Guardian ad Litem
Measure: All performance measure standards met.

Action:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Assessment of <u>Outcome</u> Measure | <input type="checkbox"/> Revision of Measure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Assessment of <u>Output</u> Measure | <input type="checkbox"/> Deletion of Measure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adjustment of GAA Performance Standards | |

Approved Standard	Actual Performance Results	Difference (Over/Under)	Percent Difference

Factors Accounting for the Difference

Internal Factors (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Factors | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Capacity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competing Priorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Level of Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Previous Estimate Incorrect | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |

Explanation:

External Factors (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Unavailable | <input type="checkbox"/> Technological Problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal/Legislative Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Disaster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Target Population Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This Program/Service Cannot Fix the Problem | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current Laws are working against the Agency Mission | |

Explanation:

Management Efforts to Address Differences/Problems (check all that apply)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Identify) |

Recommendations:

LRPP EXHIBIT IV: Performance Measure Validity and Reliability

Department: Justice Administrative Commission
Program: Statewide Guardian ad Litem Program
Service/Budget Entity: PRG: Stw/Guardian ad Litem
Measure: Average Number of Children Represented

Action (check one):

- Requesting revision to approved performance measure.
- Change in data sources or measurement methodologies.
- Requesting new measure.
- Backup for performance measure not previously approved or for which validity, reliability and/or methodology information has not been provided.
- Other.

The Program has experienced funding reductions for the past two years. This has required the Program to reduce salaried and OPS staff who represent children. These staff reductions have reduced our representation capability. The current revenue forecasts do not provide any immediate hope that these constraints will be lifting in the near term. These reduced measures are based on calculations of the caseloads for the actual staff lost during the last year. This calculation includes both those positions which were eliminated and those for which salary dollars were not provided, and accounts for salaried and OPS positions. The Program will seek a budget amendment reflecting this change.

Approved:

<u>Baseline</u>					
FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
32,787	32,787	32,787	32,787	32,787	32,787

Requested Change:

<u>Baseline</u>	Requested	Requested	Requested	Requested	Requested
FY 2008/09	FY 2009/10	FY 2010/11	FY 2011/12	FY 2012/13	FY 2013/14
30,344	30,344	30,344	30,344	30,344	30,344

EXHIBIT V: IDENTIFICATION OF ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTING TO PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Measure Number	Approved Performance Measures for FY 2008-09 (Words)		Associated Activities Title
1	Average number of children represented		Represent children
2	Percent of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated		Represent children
3	Number of new volunteers certified as a GAL		Represent children
4	Average number of active volunteers		Represent children

PASS THROUGHS			
TRANSFER - STATE AGENCIES		149,985,992	
AID TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS			
PAYMENT OF PENSIONS, BENEFITS AND CLAIMS			
OTHER			
REVERSIONS		25,251,758	
TOTAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY (Total Activities + Pass Throughs + Reversions) - Should equal Section I above. (4)			
		820,243,599	
SCHEDULE XI/EXHIBIT VI: AGENCY-LEVEL UNIT COST SUMMARY			

(1) Some activity unit costs may be overstated due to the allocation of double budgeted items.

(2) Expenditures associated with Executive Direction, Administrative Support and Information Technology have been allocated based on FTE. Other allocation methodologies could result in significantly different unit costs per activity.

(3) Information for FCO depicts amounts for current year appropriations only. Additional information and systems are needed to develop meaningful FCO unit costs.

(4) Final Budget for Agency and Total Budget for Agency may not equal due to rounding.