

STATEWIDE GUARDIAN AD LITEM OFFICE

Long-Range Program Plan

Fiscal Years 2008-2009 through 2012-2013

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AGENCY MISSION

The Florida Guardian ad Litem Program is a partnership of community advocates and professional staff providing a powerful voice on behalf of Florida's abused and neglected children.

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 32,787 children.

Primary Service Outcome

Outcome: Average number of children represented.

| <u>Baseline</u> | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| FY 2007/08 | FY 2008/09 | FY 2009/10 | FY 2010/11 | FY 2011/12 | FY 2012/13 |
| 32,787 | 32,787 | 32,787 | 32,787 | 32,787 | 32,787 |

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 2007/08 | FY 2008/09 | FY 2009/10 | FY 2010/11 | FY 2011/12 | FY 2012/13 |
| 48% | 51% | 54% | 57% | 60% | 63% |

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 2007/08 | FY 2008/09 | FY 2009/10 | FY 2010/11 | FY 2011/12 | FY 2012/13 |
| 1,537 | 1,614 | 1,695 | 1,780 | 1,869 | 1,962 |

Objective 2: Increase active volunteer base.

Primary Service Outcome

Outcome: Average number of active volunteers.

| <u>Baseline</u> | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| FY 2007/08 | FY 2008/09 | FY 2009/10 | FY 2010/11 | FY 2011/12 | FY 2012/13 |
| 5,209 | 5,365 | 5,526 | 5,692 | 5,863 | 6,039 |

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 – SAFETY FIRST

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 of 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 of 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

PRIORITY #5 – KEEPING FLORIDIANS HEALTHY

PRIORITY #6 – PROTECTING FLORIDA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

PRIORITY #7 – BETTER GOVERNMENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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, 2007. 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 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:

- In 2006, the Florida Legislature substantially revised the statutes regarding permanency to conform to federal law. The revisions to some of the provisions on permanency no longer allow the court to close the case but instead require on-going supervision by the court and the Department. Although the Program has made significant progress in staying on cases until permanency, it is unclear how these substantive changes will ultimately impact the Program's statistics regarding percentage of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated.
- The Program may also be impacted by the property tax reductions from the 2007 special session. The counties are obligated by statute to provide facilities for the Program, but some counties provide additional support to the Program, including staff. Counties have been adjusting budgets and making cuts in expectation of lower tax revenue. At this time, it is unknown how many counties will reduce their support of the Program and in what amounts. However, given the magnitude of the budget cuts, the Program is anticipating a loss of resources, which may reduce the number of children the Program is able to represent.

EXHIBIT I: AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

| Fiscal Years | Total FTE Reductions | Description of Reduction Issue | Positions per Issue | Impact of Reduction |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| FY 2007-08 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| FY 2008-09 | 0 | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total* | 0 | | | |

**to equal remainder of target*

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 FY2007-08 (Words) | Approved Prior Year Standard FY2006-07 (Numbers) | Prior Year Actual FY2006-07 (Numbers) | Approved Standards for FY2007-08 (Numbers) | Requested FY2008-09 Standard (Numbers) |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Average number of children represented | 26,500 | 30,289 | 32,787 | 32,787 |
| Percent of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated | 45 % | 57.79 % | 48 % | 65 % |
| Number of new volunteers certified as a GAL | 1,464 | 1,965 | 1,537 | 1,614 |
| Average number of active volunteers | 5,057 | 5,735 | 5,209 | 5,365 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

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: All performance measures.

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.

Data Sources and Methodology:

The data source for these measures are numbers tracked by each of the 20 Guardian ad Litem offices residing in the 20 judicial circuits. Each office records and reports, as of the last day of the month data needed to assess Program performance and to determine whether standards are met.

Validity:

The methodology for collecting and reporting the data supporting all performance measures is an accurate approach to data collection.

Reliability:

The methodology is sound and consistent. Although minor issues remain regarding data collection, the Program feels confident that the process is dependable and will result in consistent information from year to year.

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: Percent of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated.

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 achieved a significant increase in the percent of cases discharged after DCF supervision is terminated. One historical problem for the Program caused by lack of resources was that guardians ad litem often had to discharge from cases where permanency seemed probable in order to focus resources on newer cases. As a result, children did not have an advocate pushing for permanency and some cases languished in the system awaiting final resolution. This practice affected both the number of children represented and the quality of representation. The Program began to collect data on “Discharges with Permanency” to reflect the number of cases where the Program was able to stay on the case until the child was in a safe, permanent placement and DCF terminated supervision.

Due to increases in staff and volunteers the program has been able to remain on children’s cases until true permanency is achieved and anticipates that it can raise the level of its performance in this area.

Approved:

| <u>Baseline</u> | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| FY 2007/08 | FY 2008/09 | FY 2009/10 | FY 2010/11 | FY 2011/12 | FY 2012/13 |
| 48% | 51% | 54% | 57% | 60% | 63% |

Requested Change:

| <u>Baseline</u> | Requested | Requested | Requested | Requested | Requested |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| FY 2007/08 | FY 2008/09 | FY 2009/10 | FY 2010/11 | FY 2011/12 | FY 2012/13 |
| 48% | 65% | 68% | 71% | 74% | 77% |

EXHIBIT V: IDENTIFICATION OF ASSOCIATED ACTIVITY CONTRIBUTING TO PERFORMANCE MEASURES

| Measure Number | Approved Performance Measures for FY 2007-08 (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 |

| JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION | | FISCAL YEAR 2006-07 | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------|
| SECTION I: BUDGET | | OPERATING | | FIXED CAPITAL OUTLAY | |
| TOTAL ALL FUNDS GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT | | | 734,058,182 | 0 | |
| ADJUSTMENTS TO GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT (Supplementals, Vetoes, Budget Amendments, etc.) | | | 54,907,275 | 0 | |
| FINAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY | | | 788,965,457 | 0 | |
| SECTION II: ACTIVITIES * MEASURES | | Number of Units | (1) Unit Cost | (2) Expenditures (Allocated) | (3) FCO |
| <i>Executive Direction, Administrative Support and Information Technology (2)</i> | | | | | 0 |
| Represent Children * Number of cases assigned to GAL's. | | 48,147 | 713.43 | 34,349,313 | |
| Civil Investigative Services * Number of appointed civil cases investigated | | 22,797 | 17.13 | 390,432 | |
| Criminal Investigative Services * Number of appointed criminal cases investigated | | 851,413 | 22.35 | 19,032,058 | |
| Criminal Trial Indigent Defense * Number of appointed criminal cases | | 851,413 | 197.90 | 168,495,846 | |
| Civil Trial Indigent Defense * Number of appointed civil cases | | 22,797 | 150.83 | 3,438,503 | |
| Client Services Programs * Number of client services. | | 1,733 | 92.75 | 160,742 | |
| Indigent Appellate Defense * Number of appointed appellate cases | | 5,593 | 2,655.30 | 14,851,119 | |
| Death Row Case Investigation * Number of death row cases investigated | | 142 | 16,834.56 | 2,390,507 | |
| Death Penalty Legal Counsel * Number of hearings before the court | | 174 | 20,723.24 | 3,605,844 | |
| Death Penalty Public Records Request * Number of public records analyses completed | | 100 | 12,400.89 | 1,240,089 | |
| Felony Prosecution * Felony Cases Referred | | 483,338 | 404.42 | 195,469,469 | |
| Misdemeanor Prosecution * Misdemeanor/Criminal Traffic Cases Referred | | 1,190,696 | 71.32 | 84,915,392 | |
| Juvenile Prosecution * Juvenile Cases Referred | | 176,310 | 199.87 | 35,238,692 | |
| Child Support Enforcement Services * Child Support Enforcement Actions | | 14,205 | 1,540.78 | 21,886,710 | |
| Baker Act Services * Baker Act Hearings | | 29,100 | 33.80 | 983,619 | |
| Sexual Predator Civil Commitment Services * Sexual Predator Civil Commitment Proceedings | | 3,739 | 1,184.12 | 4,427,427 | |
| Child Welfare Services * Number of child welfare legal cases referred | | 798 | 3,257.35 | 2,599,366 | |
| Criminal Investigative Services * Cases Investigated and Reviewed | | 660,004 | 45.09 | 29,760,717 | |
| Post Conviction Relief Services * Post Conviction Responses | | 12,879 | 280.42 | 3,611,539 | |
| Prosecution Alternative Services - Worthless Check Diversion * Worthless Check Diversion Program | | 166,411 | 2.11 | 351,274 | |
| Prosecution Alternative Services - Domestic Violence Diversion * Number of cases disposed of in domestic violence diversions | | 3,951 | 33.73 | 133,258 | |
| Prosecution Alternative Services - Pre-trial Intervention * Pre-Trial Intervention Program | | 39,045 | 2.07 | 80,996 | |
| Victim Services * Victim Contacts | | 759,105 | 3.79 | 2,878,977 | |
| Witness Services * Witness Contacts | | 1,394,760 | 0.17 | 238,531 | |
| TOTAL | | | | 630,530,420 | |
| SECTION III: RECONCILIATION TO BUDGET | | | | | |
| PASS THROUGHS | | | | | |
| TRANSFER - STATE AGENCIES | | | | 134,951,912 | |
| AID TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS | | | | | |
| PAYMENT OF PENSIONS, BENEFITS AND CLAIMS | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | |
| REVERSIONS | | | | 23,483,251 | |
| TOTAL BUDGET FOR AGENCY (Total Activities + Pass Throughs + Reversions) - Should equal Section I above. (4) | | | | 788,965,583 | |

SCHEDULE XI: 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.