



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2019-2020

LFIR#: 1911

**1. Title of Project:** Attorney Recruitment and Retention

**2. Senate Sponsor:** Aaron Bean

**3. Date of Submission:** 02/23/2019

**4. Project/Program Description:**

This issue requests \$240,513 in General Revenue funding to align health insurance benefits and annual leave afforded to attorneys employed by the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program with attorneys employed in other Florida State agencies. Presently, attorney positions in other state agencies receive higher State contributions to health insurance, which lowers the cost to the employee. For example, GAL attorneys contribute \$180 per month toward the cost of their family health insurance coverage while other attorneys contribute \$30 per month. Attorneys within other agencies also earn annual leave at a higher rate than do attorneys in the GAL Program.

**5. State Agency to receive requested funds :** Justice Administration

State Agency Contacted? Yes

**6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2019-2020**

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	240,513
Fixed Capital Outlay	
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>240,513</b>

**7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (including matching funds available for this project)**

Type of Funding	Amount	Percent
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	240,513	100.0%
Federal	0	0.0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0.0%
Local	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2019-2020</b>	<b>240,513</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**8. Has this project previously received state funding?** No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	NonRecurring		

**9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested?** Yes

a. If yes, indicate non-recurring amount per year. 240,513



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**10. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended**

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		
Other Salary and Benefits		
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		
<b>Operational Costs:</b>		
Salary and Benefits	Additional funds in the salary category to cover the added cost of enhanced (SES) level health insurance for all Guardian ad Litem Attorney positions.	240,513
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>240,513</b>

**11. Program Performance:**

**a. What is the specific purpose or goal that will be achieved by the funds requested?**

This request is for \$240,513 in General Revenue funding to align the health insurance benefits and annual leave afforded to attorneys employed by the Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Program with attorneys employed in other Florida State agencies. Presently, attorney positions in other state agencies receive higher State contributions to health insurance, which lowers the cost to the employee. For example, GAL attorneys contribute \$180 per month toward the cost of their family health insurance coverage while other attorneys contribute \$30 per month. Attorneys within other agencies also earn annual leave at a higher rate than do attorneys in the GAL Program.

**b. What are the activities and services that will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?**

Turnover among attorneys employed by the state is generally high, due to the competitive nature of the workplace. Because attorneys working for the Guardian ad Litem Program are generally paid less than their counterparts in other state agencies, the agency often loses capable attorneys to state agencies with higher salaries. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that attorneys working for the Program do not receive the same benefits that attorneys receive when they work for other state agencies. Other state agencies provide benefits consistent with the Select Exempt Service, while GAL does not. This issue, if funded, will remedy that disparity and provide more incentive for GAL attorneys to remain with the program.

**c. What are the direct services to be provided to citizens by the appropriations project?**

Lack of Select Exempt-level benefits are a barrier to attracting and maintaining qualified attorneys in the Guardian ad Litem Program. This has a negative effect on representation of children, as the GAL is a party to



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each dependency case on which the Program is appointed, and the attorney must present the GAL case to the court. By improving attorney benefits, abused and neglected children will benefit through more consistent representation in dependency court.

**d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?**

Program Attorneys, Senior Program Attorneys and Supervising Attorneys in the Guardian ad Litem Program

**e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?**

This request is intended to improve the stability of the attorney workforce within the Guardian ad Litem Program, thus promoting more experienced workforce and better, more effective representation of children in the dependency court system.

**f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for in the contract?**

Attorneys that don't meet performance expectations would no longer work for the Guardian ad Litem Program.

**12. The owner(s) of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owner(s) of the facility and the entity.**

NA

**13. Requestor Contact Information:**

- a. **Name:** Alan Abramowitz
- b. **Organization:** Florida Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office
- c. **E-mail Address:** Alan.Abramowitz@gal.fl.gov
- d. **Phone Number:** (850)922-7213

**14. Recipient Contact Information:**

- a. **Organization:** Florida Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office
- b. **County:** Statewide
- c. **Organization Type:**
  - For Profit
  - Non Profit 501(c) (3)
  - Non Profit 501(c) (4)
  - Local Entity
  - University or College
  - Other (Please specify) State agency
- d. **Contact Name:** Alan Abramowitz
- e. **E-mail Address:** Alan.Abramowitz@gal.fl.gov
- f. **Phone Number:** (850)922-7213



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#### 15. Lobbyist Contact Information

- a. **Name:** Alan Abramowitz
- b. **Firm Name:** Gardiam ad Litem
- c. **E-mail Address:** Alan.Abramowitz@gal.fl.gov
- d. **Phone Number:** (850)922-7213