



HB 1201

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A bill to be entitled  
 An act relating to guardian ad litem services; creating s.  
 39.8225, F.S.; providing for guardian ad litem programs in  
 each judicial circuit; authorizing contracts with private  
 or public entities for the provision of guardian ad litem  
 services; providing requirements for statewide funding  
 standards; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 39.8225, Florida Statutes, is created  
 to read:

39.8225 Statewide system of representation.--

(1) Each judicial circuit shall have in operation a  
 program that provides best-interest representation through  
 appointment of a guardian ad litem by the court to represent a  
 child in any child abuse, abandonment, or neglect judicial  
 proceeding, whether civil or criminal.

(2) In selecting the entity responsible for providing  
 best-interest representation in each judicial circuit, the state  
 shall have the ability to contract with private or public  
 entities to provide guardian ad litem services. The public or  
 private entity must have appropriate expertise in representing  
 the rights of children taken into custody by the Department of  
 Children and Family Services.

Statewide funding standards for programs providing guardian ad  
 litem services throughout the state shall be established in a  
 manner allowing sufficient flexibility to each judicial circuit



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30 to provide those services and spend contracted funds using a  
31 model that best suits the needs of its own community.

32       Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2003.