



251124

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/25/2020	.	
	.	
	.	
	.	

---

Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services  
(Rouson) recommended the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete lines 179 - 221

and insert:

Section 5. Section 39.820, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.820 Definitions.—As used in this chapter part, the term:

(1) "Guardian ad litem" as referred to in any civil or criminal proceeding includes the following: the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office, which includes circuit a certified



251124

11 guardian ad litem programs; ~~program~~, a duly certified volunteer,  
12 a staff member, a staff attorney, a contract attorney, or a  
13 ~~certified~~ pro bono attorney working on behalf of a guardian ad  
14 litem ~~or the program; staff members of a program office~~; a  
15 court-appointed attorney; or a responsible adult who is  
16 appointed by the court to represent the best interests of a  
17 child in a proceeding as provided for by law, including, but not  
18 limited to, this chapter, who is a party to any judicial  
19 proceeding as a representative of the child, and who serves  
20 until discharged by the court.

21 (2) "Guardian advocate" means a person appointed by the  
22 court to act on behalf of a drug dependent newborn under  
23 ~~pursuant to the provisions of~~ this part.

24 Section 6. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section  
25 39.8296, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

26 39.8296 Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office; legislative  
27 findings and intent; creation; appointment of executive  
28 director; duties of office.-

29 (2) STATEWIDE GUARDIAN AD LITEM OFFICE.-There is created a  
30 Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office within the Justice  
31 Administrative Commission. The Justice Administrative Commission  
32 shall provide administrative support and service to the office  
33 to the extent requested by the executive director within the  
34 available resources of the commission. The Statewide Guardian Ad  
35 Litem Office is ~~shall~~ not ~~be~~ subject to control, supervision, or  
36 direction by the Justice Administrative Commission in the  
37 performance of its duties, but the employees of the office are  
38 ~~shall be~~ governed by the classification plan and salary and  
39 benefits plan approved by the Justice Administrative Commission.



251124

40 (b) The Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office shall, within  
41 available resources, have oversight responsibilities for and  
42 provide technical assistance to all guardian ad litem and  
43 attorney ad litem programs located within the judicial circuits.

44 1. The office shall identify the resources required to  
45 implement methods of collecting, reporting, and tracking  
46 reliable and consistent case data.

47 2. The office shall review the current guardian ad litem  
48 programs in Florida and other states.

49 3. The office, in consultation with local guardian ad litem  
50 offices, shall develop statewide performance measures and  
51 standards.

52 4. The office shall develop a guardian ad litem training  
53 program, which shall include, but not be limited to, training on  
54 the recognition of and responses to head trauma and brain injury  
55 in a child under 6 years of age. The office shall establish a  
56 curriculum committee to develop the training program specified  
57 in this subparagraph. The curriculum committee shall include,  
58 but not be limited to, dependency judges, directors of circuit  
59 guardian ad litem programs, active certified guardians ad litem,  
60 a mental health professional who specializes in the treatment of  
61 children, a member of a child advocacy group, a representative  
62 of a domestic violence advocacy group ~~the Florida Coalition~~  
63 ~~Against Domestic Violence~~, and a social worker experienced in  
64 working with victims and perpetrators of child abuse.

65  
66 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

67 And the title is amended as follows:

68 Delete lines 15 - 20



251124

69 and insert:  
70 child from the home; amending s. 39.820, F.S.;  
71 revising the definition of the terms "guardian ad  
72 litem" and "guardian advocate"; amending s. 39.8296,  
73 F.S.; requiring that the guardian ad litem training  
74 program include training on the recognition of and  
75 responses to head trauma and brain injury in specified  
76 children; amending s.