

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 5.701- 5/21*

IN RE: ATTORNEY AD LITEM PROGRAM

It is within the Court's discretion to appoint Attorneys Ad Litem to represent children in dependency cases. The Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County has funded the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc. to establish and administer an Attorney Ad Litem program to represent children ages birth to twelve years who are in shelter care or foster care and their siblings (regardless of age) and assist them in obtaining their goal of permanence in dependency cases.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority conferred by Florida Rule of General Practice and Judicial Administration 2.215, it is **ORDERED** as follows:

1. The Attorney Ad Litem program, known as the Foster Children's Project, is established and administered by the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, Inc., to provide legal representation to children in dependency cases and to advocate for their right to permanence as provided by statute.
2. An Attorney Ad Litem shall be appointed to represent each child, age birth to twelve years, who is placed into the custody of the Department of Children and Families at the shelter hearing. **In its discretion, the Court may also appoint an Attorney Ad Litem to represent a child in shelter care or foster care who is over the age of twelve.** The Attorney Ad Litem shall also represent all siblings of any qualifying child. Representation shall commence immediately after the Court signs an order of appointment.
3. The Attorney Ad Litem program shall represent a maximum of **565** children.
4. The Attorney Ad Litem from the Foster Children's Project may decline appointment if the caseload of the Attorney Ad Litem has reached capacity. If a child achieves permanence as defined by Chapter 39, the Attorney Ad Litem shall be discharged from further representation of that child. The Attorney Ad Litem may seek discharge for other reasons as provided by law.

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5. The Clerk of the Juvenile Division shall provide the daily shelter calendar to the Attorney Ad Litem office by e-mail each weekday. The Clerk shall indicate which children qualify for appointment of an Attorney Ad Litem by placing the child's date of birth next to his or her name on the shelter docket.

DONE AND SIGNED in Chambers in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida,
this 7 day of May, 2021.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Krista Marx". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Krista Marx
Chief Judge

*supersedes admin. order 5.701-9/08