

**SUPERIOR COURT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 14-01**

**Practice Standards for Guardians ad Litem (GAL) in
Custody and Related Consolidated Cases**

WHEREAS, the Superior Court has authority under D.C. Code §§ 16-918(b) and 16-831.06(c), to appoint attorneys to act as guardians *ad litem* “to appear on behalf of the child and represent his [or her] best interests” in any proceeding “wherein the custody of a child is in question”; and

WHEREAS, D.C. Code § 11-1103 directs the Superior Court to adopt practice standards for all court-appointed attorneys in the Family Court; and

WHEREAS, the Family Court Domestic Relations GAL Standards Committee has developed Practice Standards for Guardians ad Litem in Custody and Related Consolidated Cases, in consultation with representatives from the bench, the bar and local community-based organizations that provide legal representation in Family Court; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Practice Standards are intended to apply to guardians *ad litem* who are court-appointed to represent and advocate for the child's best interests in custody and related consolidated cases involving domestic violence, the dissolution of a marriage, separation, and parentage proceedings, where issues of legal and/or physical custody/placement, parenting plans, access and/or visitation, and related issues involving child support and maintenance shall be adjudicated; and

WHEREAS, these standards do not apply to attorneys appointed as guardians *ad litem* for children in neglect proceedings under D.C. Code Title 16, Chapter 23, whose standards of practice were previously adopted through Administrative Order 13-06;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is by this Court,

ORDERED, that the attached Practice Standards for Guardians ad Litem in Custody and Related Consolidated Cases are adopted pursuant to this Administrative Order, shall take effect on the date of this order, and shall govern representation in custody and related consolidated cases as defined above; and it is further

ORDERED, that this Order shall take effect on January 24, 2014.

SO ORDERED.

BY THE COURT

January 24, 2014

/s/

Lee F. Satterfield
Chief Judge

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