

## Chief Justice Paul Newby Proclaims April as North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Volunteer Appreciation Month for the Judicial Branch



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## Chief Justice Paul Newby Proclaims April as North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Volunteer Appreciation Month for the Judicial Branch

RALEIGH — [Chief Justice Paul Newby](#) has declared the month of April as North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Volunteer Appreciation Month in the Judicial Branch. The Judicial Branch and the [N.C. Guardian ad Litem \(GAL\) program](#) would like to recognize the more than 5,000 GAL child advocate volunteers and over 130 pro bono attorneys who help improve the lives of North Carolina's abused and neglected children each year.



"For 40 years now, GAL child advocate volunteers and pro bono attorneys have provided a voice for North Carolina children who, through no fault of their own, find themselves in court as a result of abuse and neglect," said Chief Justice Newby. "We thank these volunteers for their hard work to ensure that justice for these children is administered without favor, denial, or delay."

Last year, 5,035 GAL child advocate volunteers and attorney advocates represented more than 17,000 children in 65, 625 child abuse, neglect, and dependency hearings. A child with a GAL volunteer is more likely to find a safe and permanent home, is half as likely to re-enter the foster care system, and is more likely to succeed in school. During the last fiscal year, the GAL Program handled 219 appeals with 130 of those cases being handled by pro bono attorneys who volunteered with the program.

Appreciation events are planned to be held throughout the state this month to recognize and celebrate the volunteers and pro bono attorneys who advocate and provide support for abused and neglected children every day.

[View the proclamation.](#)

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### About Guardian ad Litem

[North Carolina Guardian ad Litem](#) equips and trains community volunteers to serve as independent court advocates to represent and promote the best interests of abused and neglected children and youths by advocating for their best interests. The Office of Guardian ad Litem (GAL) Services is a division of the [North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts](#). Pursuant to G.S. 7B-601, when a petition alleging abuse or neglect of a juvenile is filed in district court, the judge appoints a volunteer Guardian ad Litem advocate and an attorney advocate to provide team representation to the child, who has full party status in trial and appellate proceedings.

### About North Carolina Judicial Branch

The [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#) is an equal and distinctively separate branch and core function of government. More than 7,000 Judicial Branch employees statewide administer justice in courthouses in North Carolina's 100 counties. The [Judicial Branch budget for FY 2020-21](#) was \$598.2M, 89.2% of which is used to pay salaries and the remaining 10.8% is used for operations. The Judicial Branch receives only 2.44% of the overall State budget.

### About North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) is the administrative agency for the [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#), providing administrative services to help the North Carolina court system operate more efficiently and effectively, taking into account each courthouse's diverse needs, caseloads, and available resources.

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