

Chief Justice Paul Newby Proclaims April 2024 as Guardian ad Litem Child Advocate Month in North Carolina



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RALEIGH — Chief Justice Paul Newby has [proclaimed](#) the month of April Guardian ad Litem Child Advocate Month in North Carolina. The North Carolina Judicial Branch and [Office of Guardian ad Litem \(GAL\)](#) are taking this opportunity to recognize the more than 5,000 GAL volunteers who help improve the lives of children and youth.



"Our GAL volunteers are changing lives by providing children a voice in court," said [Chief Justice Newby](#). "A child with a GAL volunteer is more likely to find a safe, permanent home, is half as likely to re-enter the foster care system, and is more likely to succeed in school."

Child Advocate Month acknowledges the importance of families and communities working together to advocate for children while preventing child abuse and neglect. During the month, communities across the state come together to promote child abuse prevention and to encourage the social and emotional well-being of children and families.

More than 4,600 Guardian ad Litem advocates and over 100 pro bono attorneys donate their time to serve the abused and neglected children of North Carolina.

This year, GAL is hosting events throughout the state to recognize and celebrate the volunteers who advocate for children every day. These events are planned and hosted at the local level through partnerships with Guardian ad Litem, judges, clerks of court, and other court agencies, partners, and community stakeholders.

[Read Chief Justice Newby's Proclamation.](#)

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About North Carolina Judicial Branch

The [North Carolina Judicial Branch](#) is an equal and distinctively separate branch and core function of government. More than 7,400 Judicial Branch employees statewide administer justice in courthouses in North Carolina's 100 counties. The [Judicial Branch budget for FY 2022–23](#) was \$712.8M, 87% of which is used to pay salaries and 11.5% is used for operations. The Judicial Branch receives only 2.64% 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.

About North Carolina 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.

Could you be the voice for a child?

More than 2,000 abused and neglected children and youth in North Carolina went to court without a volunteer assigned at the end of FY2019-20. Volunteer to become a Guardian ad Litem Advocate and be the voice for a child. Learn more and apply to volunteer at [volunteerforgal.org](#).

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