Local Juvenile Court Rule 9.4
APPOINTMENT OF NON-LAWYER GUARDIAN AD LITEM

(A) Generally. It shall be the policy of the court to appoint a non-lawyer guardian ad litem for a juvenile in lieu of an attorney in all proceedings other than offender matters involving juveniles under the age of nine (9) years. The court may appoint a non-lawyer guardian ad litem in lieu of or in addition to an attorney in all proceedings other than offender matters involving juveniles who are nine (9) years of age of older. A guardian ad litem is deemed a party to the proceeding upon appointment.

(B) Procedure.

1. Dependency/Guardianship/Termination Proceedings. The court may appoint a guardian ad litem for a child after the court has entered a finding of dependency pursuant to RCW 13.34 or at any other appropriate stage of a proceeding. In cases involving more than one child from the same family unit, the court may appoint one guardian ad litem to represent the interests of all the children.

2. Other Proceedings. The court may appoint a guardian ad litem when it deems such an appointment necessary.

(C) Role. The guardian ad litem shall be an advocate on behalf of and in the best interests of the child. The guardian ad litem shall serve as a participant in court proceedings. A guardian ad litem shall be entitled to full access to all parties and relevant records and to receive notice as a party.

(D) Certification. No guardian ad litem shall be appointed to represent a child until he/she has successfully completed an approved training course supervised by the court and administered an oath of office by the court. A guardian ad litem shall be free of influence from anyone interested in the result of the proceeding.

(E) Reports. In all proceedings, the guardian ad litem shall submit a written report to the court addressing all relevant factors and making a recommendation to the court as to an appropriate disposition in the best interests of the child. All reports submitted by a guardian ad litem will be provided to the court and parties no later than ten (10) days prior to the scheduled hearing. A report received within five (5) days of a hearing may constitute good cause of a continuance if a party requests a continuance.

(F) Representation by Attorney. A guardian ad litem may be represented by an attorney.

[Adopted effective April 1, 1988, amended effective September 1, 2008]