

CAUSE NO. 20-CPR-000001

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER	§	IN THE COUNTY COURT
	§	
LOCAL ORDERS FOR ATTORNEY	§	
AND GUARDIAN AD LITEM LISTS	§	AT LAW NUMBER ONE (1)
FOR PROBATE AND GUARDIANSHIP	§	
CASES AND FOR COMPLIANCE WITH	§	
TEX. GOVT. CODE § 37.01	§	FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS

**FIRST AMENDED STANDING ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ON FORT BEND
COUNTY COURT AT LAW NO. 1 ATTORNEY AND GUARDIAN AD LITEM
APPOINTMENT LISTS**

On this day, Fort Bend County Court at Law No. 1 (the "Court") considered in chambers the Court's policy and procedures to administer the Attorney and Guardian Ad Litem Appointee Lists for both probate and guardianship cases in accordance with Texas Government Code § 37.004. The Court recently studied the issues surrounding the appointment of attorney ad litem and determined additional changes were needed to ensure the appointment of qualified attorney and guardian ad litem. Therefore, the Court finds that the following changes are required for attorney ad litem and guardian ad litem appointments, to ensure an efficient way to comply with Texas Government Code § 37.004.

It is THEREFORE ORDERED and DECREED that:

I. There will be two Attorney/Guardian Ad Litem Appointment Lists:

Ad Litem List 1: Attorneys with 10 or more years of probate and guardianship experience who have requested to be appointed in complex, unique or contested probate and guardianship cases; and are qualified in accordance with this Order.

Ad Litem List 2: Attorneys who have requested to be appointed and are qualified in accordance with this Order.

- II. Each year, the Court will update and post a copy of the current Attorney/Guardian Ad Litem Lists (the "Lists") on the Fort Bend County Public Notice Bulletin located at the entrance of the Fort Bend County Justice Center. The Lists will also be posted on the Court's website. The Lists shall contain the names of all attorneys in alphabetical order (the order in which attorneys are appointed may differ), who have met all local requirements and complied with all criteria set forth in this Order.
- III. To be considered for placement on the Lists, an attorney must email items a. – d. hereafter listed to the Court's Probate Auditor and complete items e. for placement on the Lists:

- a. A letter addressed to the Court on the attorney's letterhead, requesting placement on the Lists;
- b. A current State Bar of Texas Certified Attorney Ad Litem Certificate obtained by completion of the Texas Estates Code § 1054.201 mandated four hours of guardianship training;
- c. A resume or curriculum vitae;
- d. A completed Fort Bend County Court at Law No. 1 Application and Attorney Profile Form;
- e. Attend the Court's annual Practicing Probate in County Court at Law No. 1 CLE once a year or submit an affidavit stating you have attended 15 hours of Probate and Guardianship CLE within the past fiscal year and attach the relevant course documentation.

After items a. - d. have been submitted to the Court, the Court's Probate Auditor will contact the attorney to schedule an uncontested probate docket for the attorney to attend.

- IV. For an attorney to be found by the Court to qualify to serve as an Ad Litem on the Attorney/Guardian Ad Litem List 1, the attorney must have significant experience in difficult and complex probate and guardianship matters, and/or have experience in dependent or temporary administrations.
- V. After making a discretionary decision based on the requirements of each case and in accordance with Texas Government Code § 37.004, the Court will decide which Ad Litem List will be used to make the appointment. The Court is statutorily authorized to appoint an attorney out of order or to appoint an attorney who otherwise meets statutory or other legal requirements to serve as an attorney or guardian ad litem in a case, but who is not currently an Ad Litem if the attorney:
 - a. Possesses relevant specialized education, training, certification, skill, language proficiency, or knowledge of the subject matter of the case;
 - b. Has relevant prior involvement with the parties in the case;
 - c. Is in a relevant geographic location; or
 - d. Is chosen by agreement of all the parties.
- VI. An attorney shall provide the Court an updated State Bar of Texas Certified Attorney Ad Litem Certificate when the prior certificate expires. If the attorney fails to provide an updated certificate prior to the expiration date, the attorney shall be removed from the Lists and be required to again perform all the steps listed in Section III. of this Order.
- VII. The Court finds that this Order should be implemented in order to serve the citizens of Fort Bend County, and to efficiently and effectively administer the cases filed in Fort Bend County Court at Law No. 1, according to the law.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the above Standing Administrative Order of Fort Bend County Court at Law No. 1 Attorney and Guardian Ad Litem Appointment Lists shall be carried out and implemented by Fort Bend County Court at Law No. 1 and the attorneys serving on the Ad Litem Lists according to the law.

Signed on 4th day of January 2023

HON. CHRISTOPHER G. MORALES
PRESIDING JUDGE
COUNTY COURT AT LAW NO. 1
FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS