

Minutes
Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and
Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters
June 2, 2025

The Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters met on June 2, 2025. The meeting was convened by the Chair in Courtroom 3 at 95 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut.

Those in attendance: Judge Leo Diana (Chair); Judge Jennifer Macierowski; Attorney Renee Cimino (designated by the Chief Public Defender); Attorney Justine Rakich-Kelly; Attorney Edward Bryan; Ms. Rachel Boucher, Clinical Director, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Ms. Barbara Cass, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner for Long Term Care, Department of Public Health; Attorney Nisa Khan

Absent: Attorney Bryan Cafferelli

Also in attendance were Attorney Grace Palo, Assistant Bar Counsel; Attorney Damon Goldstein and Ms. Nicole Collins from the Judicial Branch's Court Operations Unit.

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 PM by Judge Diana.

I. Review and Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Rachel Boucher to approve the minutes from the meeting held on May 5, 2025. The motion passed with a 7-0 vote with Nisa Khan abstaining and one member absent.

II. Possible Removal of Individuals from List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

At 3:03 PM, in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes §1-200(6), Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Edward Bryan seconded, to enter executive session to discuss complaints for removal of guardians ad litem. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote with one member absent.

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Edward Bryan to conclude the executive session. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote with one member absent. The Committee reconvened in open session at 3:11 PM.

a. Complaint #24-0001

A motion was made by Judge Macierowski and seconded by Rachel Boucher to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote with one member absent. The complaint was dismissed.

b. Complaint #25-0001

A motion was made by Justine Rakich-Kelly and seconded by Judge Macierowski to accept the Probable Cause Panel's findings of no probable cause and recommendation

of dismissing the complaint. The motion passed by an 8-0 vote with one member absent. The complaint was dismissed.

III. Changes to the Active List of Persons Qualified to Serve as a GAL/AMC

No business was brought before the Committee on this agenda item.

IV. Review and Possible Revisions to the Procedures by Which an Individual May be Removed from the List of Those Deemed Eligible for Appointment as a Guardian Ad Litem or Attorney for the Minor Child in Family Matters

Grace Palo distributed to Committee members an updated draft of the proposed revisions to the procedures by which an individual may be removed from the active GAL/AMC list for their review. The proposed revisions address the handling of complaints that fall outside the period of limitations, requests for extensions of time for respondents to reply to a complaint, and a procedure in which a complainant can request to amend their complaint. Members of the Committee reviewed the proposed revisions and had a discussion regarding any suggestions that they had. Subsequent revisions based on the discussion will be made and presented to the Committee at the next meeting.

V. GAL/AMC Application and Annual Review Process

No business was brought before the Committee on this agenda item.

VI. Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Standing Committee on Guardians Ad Litem and Attorneys for the Minor Child in Family Matters will be held on Monday, September 8, 2025 at 2:00 PM.

VII. Such Other Matters as may Properly Come Before the Standing Committee

On May 8, 2025, Committee staff received notice of approval from the Statewide Bar Counsel of a proposed disposition in connection with a grievance complaint filed against Attorney Cynthia Cartier. Attorney Cartier is on the active list of persons eligible to serve as a GAL/AMC in family matters. After consultation with Judge Diana, it was determined that the receipt of the notice would be placed on the agenda for this meeting.

Following a discussion among Committee members and Attorney Palo regarding the Grievance Committee's decision, it was noted that Attorney Cartier continues to meet all the requirements of Practice Book Section 25-62(b). Grace Palo will monitor the conditions of the Grievance Committee's decision.

Justine Rakich-Kelly moved, and Edward Bryan seconded, a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Committee approved the motion by an 8-0 vote with one member absent. Judge Diana adjourned the meeting at 3:38 PM.