



John H. Lightfoot, Jr.
Chairman

State of New Hampshire Guardian ad Litem Board

25 Capitol Street - Room 120, Concord, New Hampshire 03301
TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964
Web site: www.nh.gov/gal

Phone: (603) 271-1199
Fax: (603) 271-5440
E-mail: gal.board@nh.gov

Request for Services

Investigator

Date: **April 4, 2011** Revised: **April 15, 2011**

Contact Person: Katherine Harmon, GAL Board Secretary
25 Capitol Street – Room 120
Concord, New Hampshire 03301
(603) 271-1199 gal.board@nh.gov

Services Contract Overview

The New Hampshire Guardian ad Litem Board is seeking up to two (2) independent investigators to investigate complaints made against Guardian ad Litem.

The investigators may be an individual or a firm. The service contract is not to exceed \$15,000 for labor support. The service contract does not include tax withholding, benefits of any kind, or operations reimbursement costs. Bids will reflect a per hour cost and may include mileage reimbursement.

The Guardian ad Litem Board makes no guarantees as to the number of cases we will refer.

The contract will be for two (2) years, renewable with both parties agreement for another two (2) years. The Board shall have the right to terminate the contract at any time by giving the Contractor a thirty (30) day written notice.

The contract is expected to begin **September 1, 2011**, ending **August 31, 2013**.

Applications are due by 2:30 p.m. EST on **May 2, 2011**. Email applications to Katherine Harmon at gal.board@nh.gov. No calls please.

Guardian ad Litem Board Background

The Guardian ad Litem Board was established with the responsibility to oversee the credentialing, activities, and discipline of guardians' ad litem in New Hampshire. The Guardian ad Litem Board, established by RSA 490-C, currently consists of nine members who are New Hampshire residents and serve without compensation. The term "guardian ad litem" ("GAL") is generally understood to refer to a person appointed by a court to represent the best interest of an individual (usually a child or incompetent adult) in any proceeding where a court deems it necessary to appoint such a person. The nature of a GAL's activity may vary from case to case. Generally a GAL performs those functions deemed necessary under the terms of a particular court's appointment. The appointment might, for example, include a requirement that a GAL make recommendations to the court about what is in the best interest of a recipient of services. A GAL is not appointed to serve as a person's attorney and not all GALs are lawyers. Similarly a GAL is not a general "guardian" appointed to handle the affairs of another.

The Guardian ad Litem Board first started handling complaints against GAL's in 2008. The complaints may be made against a GAL for failure to follow the Guardian ad Litem Board's administrative rules. To date, 4 cases have been referred to an investigator, and 5 disciplinary hearings have been scheduled.

Contractor Responsibilities

Contractor must agree to investigate and procure evidence regarding cases, impartially and without prejudice. The Board requires the submission of the result of findings and recommendations based on those findings in writing to the board. Contractor may also be asked to testify or act as prosecution in cases brought forward before the Board at a hearing of the complaint, should the Board hold a hearing. The Board will expedite the investigation process wherever possible. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, both parties agree to provide reasonable notice, if the case gets settled or dropped or unforeseen circumstances prevent further investigation, such as a conflict of interest with the parties, discovered while working on the case. The investigator will not take any case in which they have a conflict of interest and will promptly notify the Board of any conflict. One contractor will be designated the principle contractor, but the Board reserves the right to refer investigations to either contractor at will.

Investigations must start within three (3) weeks of referral. At that time the investigator is required to submit an estimate for time period needed & expense of the completion of the investigation to the Board. The contractor agrees to notify the Guardian ad Litem Board in writing of any significant charges for additional work that may be required above and beyond what is stated in this RFP and receive written notice to proceed prior to performing the additional work. Failure to comply with timelines will result in termination of contract.

The contractor will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement and to become familiar with the GAL administrative rules, particularly the Gal 200 and 500 Rules.

Contractor will obtain the necessary documentation and resources to protect yourself and the Board.

Objectives

The purpose of this service contract is to provide the Guardian ad Litem Board with the necessary information regarding complaints made against Guardians' ad Litem. The information will be used to assist the Board in determining whether to discipline/sanction Guardians' ad Litem.

Qualifications

- Ten (10) years experience in conducting investigations, either in private or criminal investigations.
- Five (5) years experience in acting as prosecutor in some capacity.

The preferred candidate will have completed:

- At least 20 hours of domestic violence training or as an instructor.

Candidate does not need to be an attorney

Addendum

In the event it becomes necessary to add to or revise any part of the RFP prior to the scheduled submittal date, the Board will fax addenda. Before submission, always check for any addenda or other materials that may have been issued, which would affect the RFP.

Format for Application

Please use the following guideline to format your application:

1. **Cover letter:** The New Hampshire Guardian ad Litem Board, Bid-date, applicant name, address, website address if applicable, telephone number, fax number, email address and primary contact person name. Include the hourly cost for investigations. Provide a brief overview of your capabilities and strengths.
2. **Resume:** Highlight relevant professional experiences; including any experience with the family or probate courts, administrative boards, education, awards and memberships.
3. **Work samples:** provide a sample of two investigative reports, personal information may be redacted.
4. **References:** provide contact information for three professional references.
5. Written letter on how you meet the qualifications if not covered in the resume

A PDF containing all of the documents described above is the preferred delivery method.

The selected contractors will be required to submit a fully executed state of New Hampshire criminal records release authorization form from the department of safety allowing for the disclosure of the applicant's current criminal record to the board. If the contractor is a firm, a separate release authorization must be submitted for any individual who may be conducting investigations.

The selected contractors will be required to submit an original writing from the central registry of founded abuse and neglect reports indicating that the applicant's name does not now appear in the central registry of founded abuse and neglect reports. If the contractor is a firm, a separate writing must be submitted for any individual who may be conducting investigations.

Evaluation

Selection will be based on our assessment of best value for the Guardian ad Litem Board, taking into account the following technical factors:

- Proposals must be received no later than 2:30 p.m. EST on **May 2, 2011**. Late proposals may be disqualified. Proposals must be delivered via email. Contractor will be emailed upon receipt of proposal. Email your proposal to **Katherine Harmon** at **gal.board@nh.gov**.
- The Board reserves the right to make a written request for additional information in writing from a Contractor to assist in understanding or clarifying a Bid Proposal.
- During the review period, we may require interviews by phone with our evaluation team. You will be notified if this is requested. Contract award is subject to Guardian ad Litem Board approval.
- Application packets will be evaluated according to the following factors
 - Cost
 - Experience
 - Writing sample; clarity, comprehensive, direct, thorough
 - References
- The contractor to be awarded this contract will be notified by **June 1, 2011**.
- The term of the proposed work will be from approximately **September 1, 2011 – August 31, 2013**, unless otherwise indicated at the time of contract award.

- The Board reserves the right to reject all non-conforming applications. The board reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time prior to contract award.

Contract Terms

The Guardian ad Litem Board will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by the attorney general's office and administrative services. The Board reserves the right to waive any and all informalities in the best interest of the Board. If a vendor is a corporation they are required to be registered with the Secretary of State of New Hampshire and provide a certificate of good standing and certificate of insurance as part of the contract process.

Please direct any questions to gal.board@nh.gov. Answers will be posted online.