

Council Substitute for House Bill No. 229

An act relating to the Guardian Ad Litem Program; creating s. 39.8298, F.S.; creating a direct-support organization for the Guardian Ad Litem Program; providing for the organization and operation of the organization for the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office; providing for a contract; providing for a board of directors; providing for the use of property, facilities, and personal services of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office by the direct-support organization; providing restrictions; providing for the deposit of moneys; providing for an annual audit; providing limits on the direct-support organization; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 39.8298, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

39.8298 Guardian Ad Litem direct-support organization.—

(1) AUTHORITY.—The Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office created under s. 39.8296 is authorized to create a direct-support organization.

(a) The direct-support organization must be a Florida corporation not for profit, incorporated under the provisions of chapter 617. The direct-support organization shall be exempt from paying fees under s. 617.0122.

(b) The direct-support organization shall be organized and operated to conduct programs and activities; raise funds; request and receive grants, gifts, and bequests of moneys; acquire, receive, hold, invest, and administer, in its own name, securities, funds, objects of value, or other property, real or personal; and make expenditures to or for the direct or indirect benefit of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office.

(c) If the executive director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office determines the direct-support organization is operating in a manner that is inconsistent with the goals and purposes of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office or not acting in the best interest of the state, the executive director may terminate the contract and thereafter the organization may not use the name of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office.

(2) CONTRACT.—The direct-support organization shall operate under a written contract with the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office. The written contract must, at a minimum, provide for:

(a) Approval of the articles of incorporation and bylaws of the direct-support organization by the executive director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office.

(b) Submission of an annual budget for the approval by the executive director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office.

(c) The reversion without penalty to the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office, or to the state if the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office ceases to exist, of all moneys and property held in trust by the direct-support organization for the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office if the direct-support organization ceases to exist or if the contract is terminated.

(d) The fiscal year of the direct-support organization, which must begin July 1 of each year and end June 30 of the following year.

(e) The disclosure of material provisions of the contract and the distinction between the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office and the direct-support organization to donors of gifts, contributions, or bequests, as well as on all promotional and fundraising publications.

(3) BOARD OF DIRECTORS.—The executive director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office shall appoint a board of directors for the direct-support organization. The executive director may designate employees of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office to serve on the board of directors. Members of the board shall serve at the pleasure of the executive director.

(4) USE OF PROPERTY AND SERVICES.—The executive director of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office:

(a) May authorize the use of facilities and property other than money that are owned by the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office to be used by the direct-support organization.

(b) May authorize the use of personal services provided by employees of the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office. For the purposes of this section, the term “personal services” includes full-time personnel and part-time personnel as well as payroll processing.

(c) May prescribe the conditions by which the direct-support organization may use property, facilities, or personal services of the office.

(d) Shall not authorize the use of property, facilities, or personal services of the direct-support organization if the organization does not provide equal employment opportunities to all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin.

(5) MONEYS.—Moneys of the direct-support organization may be held in a separate depository account in the name of the direct-support organization and subject to the provisions of the contract with the Statewide Guardian Ad Litem Office.

(6) ANNUAL AUDIT.—The direct-support organization shall provide for an annual financial audit in accordance with s. 215.981.

(7) LIMITS ON DIRECT-SUPPORT ORGANIZATION.—The direct-support organization shall not exercise any power under s. 617.0302(12) or (16). No state employee shall receive compensation from the direct-support organization for service on the board of directors or for services rendered to the direct-support organization.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.

Approved by the Governor June 15, 2007.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 15, 2007.