

RCW 2.56.150 Review of mandatory use of court-appointed special advocates as guardians ad litem, certification of guardians ad litem and court visitors. (1) The administrator for the courts shall review the advisability and feasibility of the statewide mandatory use of court-appointed special advocates as described in RCW 26.12.175 to act as guardians ad litem in appropriate cases under Titles 13 and 26 RCW. The review must explore the feasibility of obtaining various sources of private and public funding to implement statewide mandatory use of court-appointed special advocates, such as grants and donations, instead of or in combination with raising court fees or assessments.

(2) The administrator shall also conduct a study on the feasibility and desirability of requiring all persons who act as guardians ad litem or court visitors under Titles 11, 13, and 26 RCW to be certified as qualified guardians ad litem or court visitors prior to their eligibility for appointment.

(3) In conducting the review and study the administrator shall consult with: (a) The presidents or directors of all public benefit nonprofit corporations that are eligible to receive state funds under RCW 43.330.135; (b) the attorney general, or a designee; (c) the secretary of the department of social and health services, or a designee; (d) the superior court judges' association; (e) the Washington state bar association; (f) public defenders who represent children under Title 13 or 26 RCW; (g) private attorneys who represent parents under Title 13 or 26 RCW; (h) professionals who evaluate families for the purposes of determining the custody or placement decisions of children; (i) the office of financial management; (j) persons who act as volunteer or compensated guardians ad litem; and (k) parents who have dealt with guardians ad litem or court visitors in court cases. For the purposes of studying the feasibility of a certification requirement for guardians ad litem acting under Title 11 RCW the administrator shall consult with the advisory group formed under RCW 11.130.155.

(4) The administrator shall also conduct a review of problems and concerns about the role of guardians ad litem in actions under Titles 11, 13, and 26 RCW and recommend alternatives to strengthen judicial oversight of guardians ad litem or court visitors and ensure fairness and impartiality of the process. The administrator must accept and obtain comments from parties designated in subsection (3) of this section. [2020 c 312 § 701; 2005 c 282 § 9; 1996 c 249 § 3.]

Effective dates—2020 c 312: See note following RCW 11.130.915.

Presentation of review and study—Time limit—1996 c 249: "The review and study required under section 3 of this act shall be presented to the governor and to the legislature no later than December 1, 1996." [1996 c 249 § 4.]

Intent—1996 c 249: See note following RCW 2.56.030.