

Also for GALs...

Domestic Violence for Guardians ad Litem 2026



Clear-eyed custody analysis

Domestic Violence for Guardians ad Litem 2026 examines the intersection of domestic violence and contested custody cases, where abuse can be embedded in family dynamics. Experienced practitioners address screening and contextual evaluation of abuse in relation to custody and placement determinations under Wisconsin law. Using the SAFeR approach, this program provides a structured framework for recognizing abuse, assessing its impact, and making safety-forward recommendations that protect children while providing clarity to the court.

Register now!

HOW YOU'LL BENEFIT

- Approach domestic violence cases with a consistent, structured methodology
- Make recommendations that more accurately reflect safety risks
- Better support child-centered custody and placement outcomes
- Integrate findings of abuse into well-supported, safety-focused recommendations
- Strengthen the clarity and credibility of your reports to the court
- Address ethical challenges when GAL duties conflict with party positions or court expectations
- Comply with Wisconsin statutory requirements to accept GAL appointments

CREDIT HOURS: 6.5 CLE | GAL Family/Minor | GAL Domestic Violence credits, including 1 Ethics and Professional Responsibility credit.

WEBCAST SEMINAR: 4/23/26 | 5/1/26 | 5/11/26 | 9/15/26 | 10/7/26 | 11/19/26
12/11/26

**For more information or to register, scan the QR code
in this brochure or visit wisbar.org/seminars**

2026 Guardian ad Litem Series

GAL Training 2026
Program dates start May 14

**Adult Guardian ad Litem
Training 2026**
Program dates start May 21





GAL Training 2026

Your foundation for everyday GAL work

Guardian ad litem (GAL) appointments in family court place you at the center of contested disputes, where emotions run high, and your recommendations could influence major decisions about a child's future. **GAL Training 2026** offers practical, Wisconsin-focused insight into the evidentiary, ethical, and procedural issues behind these cases, with perspectives from judges, family court commissioners, and experienced GALs who understand what makes these cases so demanding.

Register now!

HOW YOU'LL BENEFIT

- Approach GAL appointments with a stronger understanding of your ethical duties
- Anticipate evidentiary issues before hearings and present recommendations supported by the record
- Evaluate custody studies and professional evaluations more effectively when forming recommendations about a child's best interests
- Understand how family court commissioners assess GAL reports, testimony, and courtroom conduct
- Gain practical strategies for managing high-conflict cases and other challenging circumstances
- Learn from real experiences shared by practicing GALs so you can avoid common mistakes

SCHEDULE

- 8:00 AM Registration**
- 8:30 AM The Rules of Evidence in Family Court**
- The rules of evidence do apply
 - Tips for specific types of evidence to be admitted
- 9:30 AM Break**
- 9:45 AM Acting as GAL: Tough Cases and Best Practices**
- Enforcement of placement orders with older children
 - Substantial changes in circumstance issues
 - Practical appointment issues and solutions
 - Learned lessons in high-conflict cases
- 11:15 AM Session Topic to Be Announced**
- 12:05 PM Lunch (on your own)**
- 1:15 PM Custody Study and Evaluations: What Value Do These Add to Family Law Cases?**
- Things that happen in a custody study
 - Differences between a custody study and an evaluation
 - Things that evaluators are looking for
 - Relying on the study as a GAL
- 2:05 PM Break**
- 2:20 PM What Family Court Commissioners Want (and Don't Want) from a GAL**
- Evidence presented before a family court commissioner
 - Reports regarding best interest factors
 - When a GAL should meet with a ward
 - How GALs are assigned in different counties
- 3:20 PM Trending Ethical Issues for Guardians ad Litem**
- Conflicts of interest
 - ♦ Best interest of the ward versus wishes of the ward
 - ♦ GALs serving in multiple roles
 - Confidentiality
 - ♦ Mandatory versus discretionary reporting
 - ♦ Third party participation in investigational meetings
 - Investigational scope, competency, and professionalism
 - ♦ Communication with represented and unrepresented parties
- 4:10 PM Program Concludes**

Following start time, schedule may vary slightly from above. All times are Central Time Zone.

FACULTY

PROGRAM CHAIR

Sarah DeKraay, Murphy Desmond S.C., Madison

PROGRAM PRESENTERS

Shelly Anday, LSW, Family Court Consulting Services, Middleton
Comm. Christopher Bailey, Waukesha County Circuit Court, Waukesha
Comm. Shane W. Falk, Jefferson County Circuit Court, Jefferson
Comm. Mark R. Fremgen, Dane County Circuit Court, Madison
Katherine C. Harrell, Stafford Rosenbaum LLP, Madison
Stacie H. Rosenzweig, Halling & Cayo, S.C., Milwaukee
Jolene D. Schneider, Remley Law, S.C., Neenah
Megan M. Stoltz, Stoltz Law Office LLC, Monona
Sara M. Vanden Brook, The Law Center, S.C., Madison
Hon. Thomas J. Walsh, Brown County Circuit Court, Green Bay

DATES & LOCATION

IN-PERSON SEMINAR MADISON

Thursday, May 14, 2026
State Bar Center
 5302 Eastpark Blvd.
 Madison, WI

LIVE WEBCAST

Thursday, May 14, 2026

WEBCAST REPLAYS

Friday, May 22, 2026
 Wednesday, May 27, 2026
 Tuesday, June 2, 2026
 Friday, June 12, 2026
 Monday, June 22, 2026
 Saturday, June 27, 2026
 Thursday, July 9, 2026
 Wednesday, July 15, 2026
 Tuesday, July 28, 2026
 Monday, August 17, 2026
 Thursday, September 24, 2026
 Friday, October 16, 2026
 Wednesday, November 11, 2026
 Tuesday, December 8, 2026

CREDITS

This program will be submitted to the Wisconsin Board of Bar Examiners for **7 CLE/GAL Family/Minor credits including 1 Ethics and Professional Responsibility credit.**



Adult Guardian ad Litem Training 2026

Co-produced with the Elder Law & Special Needs Section of the State Bar of Wisconsin

Sound answers to tough questions

Adult guardian ad litem work can involve urgent decisions, overlapping responsibilities, and difficult questions about autonomy, safety, and care. **Adult Guardian ad Litem Training 2026** provides practical guidance for handling Wisconsin guardianship and protective-placement matters, with a focus on procedure, ethics, special needs trust, and the issues that impact voters with disabilities.

Register now!

HOW YOU'LL BENEFIT

- Hone your skills in adult guardian ad litem cases from appointment to payment
- Make more effective recommendations in cases involving protective placement and continued oversight
- Communicate more effectively with courts, families, and care providers
- Address questions about voting rights with a better understanding of the remedies available
- Effectively handle overlapping guardianship, special needs trusts, and care-planning issues
- Work through ethical and familial challenges with a more informed approach
- Come away with practical tools and clearer instincts for the everyday demands of GAL practice

SCHEDULE

- 8:00 AM Registration**
- 8:30 AM Guardianship Basics Scenarios (Interactive Roleplay)**
- Initial guardianships from beginning to end
 - Watts review
 - Protective placement
 - Completing forms and setting up files
 - Deciding who to talk to
 - County to county differences
- 10:10 AM Break**
- 10:25 AM Guardianship and Special Needs Trusts**
- Purpose of a special needs trust, and duty of trustee
 - Authority to create a special needs trust
 - What a special needs trust can and cannot do
 - Coordination between trustee/guardian/ward/beneficiary
- 11:15 AM Guardianship Advocacy and Legislative Update**
- Overview of next-of-kin legislation
 - Reintroducing Wisconsin WINGS (Working Interdisciplinary Networks of Guardianship Stakeholders)
 - Legislative and policy updates
- 12:05 PM Lunch (on your own)**
- 1:10 PM Disability, Incompetency, and the Right to Vote**
- Overview of rights and resources for Wisconsin voters with disabilities
 - Guardianship, voting, and considerations for GALs:
 - ♦ Best initial determinations
 - ♦ Reinstatement of the right
 - ♦ Support for voters under guardianship
- 2:00 PM Ethics**
- Conflicts of interest (SCR 20:1.7, SCR 20:1.9)
 - Scope of representation when the client is “best interest” (SCR 20:1.2 and EF-23-02)
 - Navigating family quagmires, he said/she said, injunctions, and more
- 2:50 PM Program Concludes**

Following start time, schedule may vary slightly from above. All times are Central Time Zone.

FACULTY

PROGRAM CHAIR & PRESENTER

Jessica A. Liebau, Wessels & Liebau LLC, Mequon

PROGRAM PRESENTERS

Abbey K. Bowen, Wessels & Liebau LLC, Mequon

Victoria Davis Davila, Davis & Pledl, S.C., Milwaukee

Zach Gebert, Corporate Guardians, Inc., Two Rivers

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Polly Shoemaker, Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Madison

Mary Till, Life Navigators, Wauwatosa

DATES & LOCATION

IN-PERSON SEMINAR MADISON

Thursday, May 21, 2026
State Bar Center
5302 Eastpark Blvd.
Madison, WI

LIVE WEBCAST

Thursday, May 21, 2026

WEBCAST REPLAYS

Friday, May 29, 2026

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Tuesday, June 9, 2026

Monday, June 15, 2026

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Tuesday, June 30, 2026

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Monday, July 27, 2026

Tuesday, August 18, 2026

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Thursday, October 15, 2026

Friday, November 13, 2026

CREDITS

This program will be submitted to the Wisconsin Board of Bar Examiners for **6 CLE/GAL Adult credits including 1 Ethics and Professional Responsibility credit.**

TUITION*

	IN-PERSON	WEBCAST
State Bar Member	\$259	\$289
Nonmember	\$339	\$369
Ultimate Pass Gold/Silver	\$0	\$0
Ultimate Pass Bronze	\$259	\$0
Passbook Certificate	1 Certificate	1 Certificate

*Tuition shown is for EACH individual program.

REGISTRATION & GENERAL INFO

ONLINE: wisbar.org/seminars

PHONE: (800) 728-7788

MAIL/FAX: Visit wisbar.org/regform for registration form



PINNACLE PASSBOOK REGISTRATIONS: PINNACLE Passbook certificates must be received by the State Bar at least one business day prior to the event. For in-person seminars, walk-in registrations using Passbook certificates are also welcome.

COURSE MATERIALS: Course materials are provided to seminar attendees in PDF format and are downloadable from myStateBar on wisbar.org up to two days prior to and 90 days after your seminar.

CANCELLATIONS: Please visit wisbar.org/cancellations for information on PINNACLE registration cancellation policies.

ACCOMMODATIONS: If you need special accommodations, please contact us at (800) 728-7788, ext. 6142 at least three weeks prior to the program date so we can make appropriate arrangements.

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Event Codes: CA3958, CA3962 | **Priority Codes:** S4722B, S4723B

BOOK BONUS!

The Guardian ad Litem Handbook

SAVE 15% on *The Guardian ad Litem Handbook*.*

This comprehensive resource is filled with practical information on handling GAL appointments, whether you're looking for guidance on the basics or need help with complex issues. Use **discount code CA3958** when you order online or by calling (800) 728-7788

PRINT BOOK: AK0057 | **BOOKS UNBOUND:** AE0057_SUB



Guardianship and Protective Placement for Older Adults in Wisconsin

SAVE 15% on *Guardianship and Protective Placement for Older Adults in Wisconsin*.*

This thorough guide to law and practice under the guardianship and protective placement statutes explains the basics in practical terms. Find clear guidance on Wisconsin guardianships, protective services, and protective placement, along with practice-ready checklists to help you approach each matter thoroughly and responsibly. Use **discount code CA3962** when you order online or by calling (800) 728-7788.

PRINT BOOK: AK0201 | **BOOKS UNBOUND:** AE0201_SUB



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