



Supreme Court of Illinois

October 21, 2026

ILLINOIS SUPREME COURT AMENDS RULE TO INCREASE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAINING FOR GUARDIANS AD LITEM

Chief Justice P. Scott Neville, Jr. and the Illinois Supreme Court announced today amendments to Rule 906 which will strengthen training requirements on domestic violence issues for Guardians *ad Litem* (GALs) appointed in domestic relations and child custody cases.

“During my tenure as Chair, the Committee has worked to address a number of issues relating to domestic violence and the Courts. One recurring issue has been the reliance of family and order of protection court judges on Guardians *ad Litem* when making extremely important decisions impacting families and the need for GALs to give judges the best information possible to assist in making these determinations,” said Seventeenth Circuit Associate Judge Jennifer J. Clifford, Chair of the Illinois Supreme Court Committee on Domestic Violence. “Judges rely heavily on GAL recommendations, therefore, training on domestic violence is critical for GALs as they make recommendations that directly and indirectly affect child safety, parenting time, custody arrangements, and family stability.”

The amendment to Rule 906 is effective July 1, 2027, and can be found [here](#).

GALs are tasked with representing and advocating for the best interests of the child, highlighting the need for specialized training to ensure that GALs possess the skills and understanding necessary to identify domestic violence, assess safety and risks, and make informed recommendations to the judiciary when orders of protection exist and domestic violence is alleged.

Illinois Supreme Court Rule 906, titled “Attorney Qualifications and Education in Child Custody, Allocation of Parental Responsibilities, Visitation, and Parenting Time Matters,” describes the Court’s process of establishing qualifications for child custody cases.

The amendment to Rule 906 now adds “Prior to appointment the attorney shall have four (4) hours in the two years prior to the date the attorney qualifies for appointment in approved continuing legal education courses in the following area: intimate partner domestic abuse. Training topics may include family violence, coercive control, the impact to children who witness intimate partner domestic abuse, the impact of violence on survivors, post-separation intimate partner abuse, the use of collateral resources to address risk management and safety, parenting plans, and resources for the child and family.”

GALs seeking CLEs on domestic violence can find courses provided by the Illinois Judicial College. New courses are forthcoming and free of charge.

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