

GOVERNMENT CODE

TITLE 2. JUDICIAL BRANCH

SUBTITLE B. JUDGES

CHAPTER 37. APPOINTMENTS OF ATTORNEYS AD LITEM, GUARDIANS AD  
LITEM, MEDIATORS, AND GUARDIANS

Sec. 37.001. APPLICABILITY; CONFLICT OF LAW. (a) This chapter applies to a court in this state created by the Texas Constitution, by statute, or as authorized by statute that is located in a county with a population of 25,000 or more.

(b) To the extent of a conflict between this chapter and a specific provision relating to a court, this chapter controls.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1223 (S.B. 1876), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 37.002. EXEMPTION. The appointment requirements of Section 37.004 do not apply to:

(1) a mediation conducted by an alternative dispute resolution system established under Chapter 152, Civil Practice and Remedies Code;

(2) a guardian ad litem or other person appointed under a program authorized by Section 107.031, Family Code;

(3) an attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, amicus attorney, or mediator appointed under a domestic relations office established under Chapter 203, Family Code;

(4) a person other than an attorney or a private professional guardian appointed to serve as a guardian as defined by Section 1002.012, Estates Code;

(5) an attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, amicus attorney, or mediator providing services without expectation or receipt of compensation; or

(6) an attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, amicus attorney, or mediator providing services as a volunteer of a nonprofit organization that provides pro bono legal services to the indigent.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1223 (S.B. 1876), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 569 (S.B. 41), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 37.003. LISTS OF ATTORNEYS AD LITEM, GUARDIANS AD LITEM, MEDIATORS, AND GUARDIANS. (a) In addition to a list required by other state law or rule, each court in this state shall establish and maintain the following lists:

(1) a list of all attorneys who are qualified to serve as an attorney ad litem and are registered with the court;

(2) a list of all attorneys and other persons who are qualified to serve as a guardian ad litem and are registered with the court;

(3) a list of all persons who are registered with the court to serve as a mediator; and

(4) a list of all attorneys and private professional guardians who are qualified to serve as a guardian as defined by Section 1002.012, Estates Code, and are registered with the court.

(b) A court may establish and maintain more than one of a list required under Subsection (a) that is categorized by the type of case and the person's qualifications.

(c) A local administrative judge, at the request of one or more of the courts the judge serves, shall establish and maintain the lists required under Subsection (a) for those courts. The local administrative judge may establish and maintain one set of lists for all of the requesting courts and may maintain for the courts more than one of a list as provided in Subsection (b).

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1223 (S.B. 1876), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 37.004. APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEYS AD LITEM, GUARDIANS AD LITEM, MEDIATORS, AND GUARDIANS; MAINTENANCE OF LISTS.

(a) Except as provided by Subsections (c), (d), and (d-1), in each case in which the appointment of an attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, or guardian is necessary, a court using a rotation system shall appoint the person whose name appears first on the applicable list maintained by the court as required by Section 37.003.

(b) In each case in which the appointment of a mediator is necessary because the parties to the case are unable to agree on a mediator, a court using a rotation system shall appoint the person whose name appears first on the mediator list maintained by the court as required under Section 37.003.

(c) The court may appoint a person included on the applicable list whose name does not appear first on the list, or a person who meets statutory or other requirements to serve and who is not included on the list, if the appointment of that person as attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, or guardian is agreed on by the parties and approved by the court.

(d) On finding good cause, the court may appoint a person included on the applicable list whose name does not appear first on the list, or a person who meets statutory or other requirements to serve on the case and who is not included on the list, if the appointment of that person as attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, mediator, or guardian is required on a complex matter because the person:

(1) possesses relevant specialized education, training, certification, skill, language proficiency, or knowledge of the subject matter of the case;

(2) has relevant prior involvement with the parties or case; or

(3) is in a relevant geographic location.

(d-1) The court may appoint a person included on the applicable list whose name does not appear first on the list or a person who meets statutory or other requirements to serve and who is not included on the list if, within 30 days preceding the date of appointment, an initial declaration of a state of disaster is made for the area served by the court.

(e) A person who is not appointed in the order in which the person's name appears on the applicable list shall remain next in order on the list.

(f) After a person has been appointed as an attorney ad litem, guardian ad litem, mediator, or guardian from the applicable list, the court shall place that person's name at the end of the list.

(g) In this section, "declaration of a state of disaster" means a declaration made by:

(1) the president of the United States under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Section 5121 et seq.);

(2) the governor under Section [418.014](#); or

(3) the presiding officer of the governing body of a political subdivision under Section [418.108](#).

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1223 (S.B. [1876](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 569 (S.B. [41](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 37.005. POSTING OF LISTS. A court annually shall post each list established under Section [37.003](#) at the courthouse of the county in which the court is located and on any Internet website of the court.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1223 (S.B. [1876](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.