**Guidelines for GALs for Watts hearings**

[Note: This applies to Watts cases only. Please see guidelines for permanent guardianships document for rules related to those cases]

* GALs are not required to accept appointments during the pandemic and declining to do so will not affect eligibility to receive appointments in the future. Due to volume, however, we cannot allow GALs to decline a particular appointment based on type of facility or at a particular facility (GALs can, of course, decline a particular appointment for the usual reasons such as availability or conflict). If you wish to be temporarily removed from the GAL guardianship list, email Josh Steib at [josh.steib@wicourts.gov](mailto:josh.steib@wicourts.gov) or call him at 414-278-4451**.** When you wish to be re-added to the GAL list, you should email or call Josh
* Regularly scheduled Watts summary hearings will begin, via Zoom, starting the week of November 2, 2020. However, those scheduled on Wednesday mornings will be held on the Friday morning of that week, starting at 9:00 am. The Friday afternoon cases will be held at their regular 1:30pm time.
* Previously scheduled summary hearings and pre-trial conferences are in the process of being rescheduled. Due to volume, the court is unable to contact each GAL to schedule a date. Instead, you will receive notice of your scheduled hearing and, if that date or time does not work for you, please call Lee Ross at 414-278-4449, in the afternoons only, to reschedule.
* For previously scheduled summary hearings, the GAL does NOT need to meet with the ward again or submit a new report. Watts hearings for 2021 will be held as currently scheduled, so the ward will have a new agency review and GAL for 2021 as if the 2020 hearing had been held as scheduled. Those cases with objections will be given pretrials, as usual, at which time it can be determined if the objection still stands.
* For new Watts hearings, GALs should try to meet with their wards in person, if allowed by the facility in which they are residing. If in person meetings are not allowed, the GAL should communicate with the ward in the most meaningful way possible (video, phone, etc.)
* The GAL’s report should reflect any difficulties that the GAL had in communicating with the ward that the GAL believes is or may be due to Covid-19 related precautions.
* All hearings will be held via Zoom videoconferencing. The GAL should appear via video if at all possible..