

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
VERMILION COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2020-11

RE

GUARDIAN AD LITEM CONTACTS

The Circuit Court for Vermilion County in the Fifth Judicial Circuit of Illinois adopts the following Administrative Order:

WHEREAS, on March 17, 2020, the Illinois Supreme Court entered an Order - *In re: Illinois Courts Response to COVID-19 Emergency, MR. 30370*, directing all courts to establish and periodically update temporary procedures to minimize potential exposure to and the impact of the 2019 Novel Coronavirus pandemic on judicial operations;

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2020, the Governor of the State of Illinois issued Executive Order No. 8, ordering and directing all citizens of the State to remain at home or other place of residence unless performing an essential function; the terms and provisions of said Order were to be effective until April 7, 2020, unless otherwise extended by further order; and on April 1, 2020 the Governor extended the term of said Executive Order until April 30, 2020; and on April 30, 2020, the Governor extended the term of said Executive Order until May 31, 2020;

WHEREAS, the Presiding Circuit Judge for Vermilion County has been granted temporary emergency administrative authority to enter orders affecting the general operation of the County's judicial system pursuant to authority granted by the Chief Circuit Judge under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 21(b);

WHEREAS, pursuant to 705 ILCS 405/2-17, the guardian ad litem appointed for an abused or neglected child or a child victim of a sex offense shall have certain minimum in-person contacts with the child and with the current foster parents or caregivers; and

WHEREAS, 705 ILCS 405/2-17 authorizes the presiding judge, for good cause shown, to excuse the required in-person contacts; and

WHEREAS, the Presiding Judge, acting on behalf of the Circuit Judges of Vermilion County, considers it to be in the best interests of the health and safety of the minors protected by the Juvenile Court Act, guardians ad litem, foster parents, and caregivers to suspend in-person contacts by adopting the following provisions:

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED:

1. **Effective Date:** This Administrative Order is effective, retroactive to March 17, 2020 and its provisions shall remain in effect through May 29, 2020, unless extended by further order of the court.
2. **Waiver of In-Person Contacts:** The guardian ad litem in-person interview requirements pursuant to 705 ILCS 405/2-17(8) are waived through May 29, 2020. Such contacts may be conducted by telephone, video, or other electronic means.
3. **Miscellaneous:**
 - a. The court may issue further orders as necessary to address the circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, including re-assessing the situation following the suspension period to determine whether normal operations may resume or additional suspension time is still required to avoid the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus.
 - b. It is further ordered that this order be filed in the Office of the Circuit Clerk of Vermilion County, Illinois and be made available to the public.
 - c. This Administrative Order is effective *instanter*.

Dated: this 6th day of May, 2020



Thomas M. O'Shaughnessy, Presiding Judge