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# **Individual Tulsa Lawyers for Children (TLC)**

## **Volunteer Attorney Expectations**

Mission: To ensure high quality legal representation of Oklahoma's abused and neglected children by recruiting, training, and mentoring professionals in juvenile law.

Position: Volunteer Attorney

Qualifications: Must be a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association in good standing and demonstrate integrity, credibility, and a passion for improving the lives of TLC clients.

Length of Term: Volunteer Attorneys serve for the entirety of the assigned TLC client's case. Volunteer Attorneys may represent more than one child, but are expected to serve all assigned TLC clients zealously.

General Expectations:

1. Volunteer Attorneys will comply with the requisite background checks and registry declaration and submit this signed document prior to engaging with any TLC clients.
2. Volunteer Attorneys understand there is no "normal" deprived case. Each child client is unique as are their legal needs.
3. Volunteer Attorneys are individually responsible for their *pro bono* work for TLC Clients, including compliance with the Oklahoma Rules of Professional Conduct.
4. Volunteer Attorneys are loyal to their TLC clients, advocating for the interest of their TLC clients and not for the interest of the individual volunteer or others (including resource parents).
5. Volunteer Attorneys will ensure legal and ethical integrity in their representation of TLC clients.
6. Volunteer Attorneys will maintain legal malpractice insurance while representing TLC clients. If you do not have legal malpractice insurance, TLC can provide it for the representation of TLC clients upon request at no cost.
7. Volunteer Attorneys will utilize the expertise of TLC staff and other TLC veteran volunteer attorneys when necessary to address difficult or novel situations.
8. Volunteer Attorneys will receive access to the resources at <https://www.tulsalawyersforchildren.org/resources/> to assist them in their advocacy.

Client Representation:

1. Volunteer Attorneys will prepare and file an Entry of Appearance on behalf of their assigned TLC clients within one week of accepting a case.

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2. Volunteer Attorneys will visit with their TLC clients monthly and document their visits in their case file.
  3. Volunteer Attorneys will notify the Program Coordinator (volunteer@tulsakidlaw.org) if their client's placement has changed.
  4. Volunteer Attorneys will provide appropriate legal representation (expressed interest or substituted judgment) of each TLC client consistent with 10A O.S. § 1-4-306(A)(2)(c) and Oklahoma Rule for Professional Conduct 1.14.
  5. Volunteer Attorneys will maintain strict confidentiality regarding their TLC clients and their TLC case.
  6. Volunteer Attorneys will dedicate sufficient time to represent TLC clients both in and out of the courtroom.
  7. Volunteer Attorneys will attend all court hearings, staffings, and other miscellaneous meetings necessary to zealously advocate for their clients. When scheduling conflicts arise, Volunteer Attorneys will ensure appropriate coverage by TLC staff or another TLC volunteer.
  8. Volunteer Attorneys will handle all aspects of their assigned child welfare case on behalf of their TLC client, including hearings, trials, and appeals. TLC staff is available to assist when needed.
  9. Volunteer Attorneys will maintain and update their TLC case files.
  10. Volunteer Attorneys will notify TLC staff immediately and file the appropriate motions to withdraw, if representation cannot continue.
  11. Volunteer Attorneys will notify TLC staff when a TLC case closes due to reunification, adoption, guardianship, the client aging out of the system, or the case being dismissed. The closed file will be returned to the TLC offices within two weeks of closure for digital record keeping.
  12. Volunteer Attorneys will not transport TLC clients, nor act as the primary caretaker of a TLC client.
  13. Volunteer Attorneys will make appropriate referrals to the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-522-3511) when they have reason to believe that a child is a victim of abuse or neglect pursuant to 10A O.S. § 1-2-101(B)(1).

#### Volunteer Hours:

1. Volunteer Attorneys will track their TLC service hours. Hours to document include but are not limited to:
  - a. Monthly client visits
  - b. Attending TLC sponsored CLE courses
  - c. Participating in TLC events
  - d. Case management/Out of Court Advocacy

