JUVENILE COURT
POLICY/PROCEDURE

INDEPENDENT TPR/ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS

POLICY

      In a non-relative independent adoption, the Judge shall appoint a Guardian Ad Litem for the child and a GAL for a minor parent. The prospective parents shall pay all GAL fees at the attorney's usual rate and may be required to make a deposit for those fees in advance.

      Judges **will not** go to the hospital to conduct a hearing for an independent adoption.

      No adoption will be granted in which an attorney has acted as an intermediary. If an attorney represents or ever represented any party in an independent adoption and has any financial or business arrangement, either formal or informal, with the agency conducting the placement or the agency counseling the biological parent(s) this must be disclosed to his or her client and to the court.

      The study presented to the court for approval of an adoptive placement shall include:
1. A full description of the manner in which the biological parent(s) and the proposed adoptive parents located each other, who was involved in facilitating that meeting, and what contacts they have had prior t to the placement hearing.
2. A full description of all financial exchanges between the biological parent(s) and the proposed adoptive parents, including any in-kind services, expenses paid, reimbursements, promises to provide anything of value in the future, and exchanges of anything of value.
3. A full description of the services received by the biological parent(s).
4. A report of any criminal record of the proposed adoptive parents discovered through a check of law enforcement and criminal court records for the areas in which these proposed adoptive parents resided.

PROCEDURE

      To accomplish this process:
1. The attorney shall file with the Juvenile Court Commissioner Clerk the petition for approval of placement signed by the potential adoptive parents and the natural parent(s). If either natural parent(s) is a minor, the process shall start with a petition for appointment of a GAL for that parent.
2. Upon receipt of a proper petition, the Juvenile Court clerk(s) will assign the case to a Judge and send the file/case to the Branch for scheduling.