



PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

COMPENSATION

Salary Range: \$140,000 - \$160,000

Applications will be accepted until June 26, 2026.
All applicants must [apply online here](#).

PRESENTED BY

ballinger | leafblad

Minnesota Guardian ad Litem

Program Administrator

Ballinger | Leafblad is honored to partner with the Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Board on the search for its next Program Administrator. This position serves as the administrative leader of the statewide Guardian ad Litem Program, overseeing organizational strategy, statewide operations, legislative engagement, financial management, policy implementation, and staff leadership across a complex public-sector child advocacy organization.

This search comes at an important moment for the Program as it works to strengthen statewide consistency, operational accountability, strategic planning, and long-term sustainability following a period of organizational transition and assessment. The next Program Administrator will serve as the primary representative of the Program with legislators, judicial leaders, justice partners, counties, tribal communities, and stakeholders across Minnesota while helping guide the organization through an important period of organizational growth and stabilization.

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OVERVIEW

The Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program is a statewide program within the Minnesota Judicial Branch dedicated to advocating for the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in child protection and family court proceedings.

Guardians ad Litem work directly with children, families, courts, attorneys, county systems, and community partners to ensure children's voices, safety, permanency, and wellbeing remain central throughout the legal process.

The Program operates across all regions of Minnesota and partners closely with judges, county child welfare agencies, tribal communities, attorneys, legislators, and other justice system stakeholders. The Program is governed by the State Guardian ad Litem Board and funded through a distinct state appropriation.

The Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program currently includes more than 260 staff and 40 volunteers serving children and families throughout the state.

In 2025, the Program assigned Guardians ad Litem to nearly 10,000 children across more than 5,300 juvenile court cases and participated in more than 17,000 court hearings statewide.



PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

SUMMARY

The Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Board seeks a strategic, collaborative, and mission-driven leader to serve as its next Executive Director. Reporting directly to the State Guardian ad Litem Board, the Program Administrator serves as the chief executive and administrative leader of the statewide Guardian ad Litem Program. This role oversees organizational strategy, statewide operations, legislative engagement, financial management, policy implementation, and staff leadership across a complex public-sector child advocacy organization.

This leadership transition comes at an important moment for the organization. The Program is working to strengthen statewide consistency, operational accountability, strategic planning, and long-term sustainability following a period of organizational transition and assessment. The next Executive Director will help guide this work while serving as the primary representative of the Program with legislators, judicial leaders, justice partners, counties, tribal communities, and stakeholders across Minnesota.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- 10+ years demonstrated leadership experience within child welfare, family court, public-sector, judicial branch, legal, or closely related systems.
- Strong understanding of Minnesota child welfare statutes, court processes, and related systems.
- Experience leading complex organizations, programs, or statewide operations.
- Experience working with boards, public agencies, legislators, and external stakeholders.
- Strong strategic planning, operational leadership, and organizational management skills.
- Demonstrated ability to lead teams, build trust, and navigate complex organizational environments.
- Excellent communication, relationship-building, and public presentation skills.
- Experience managing budgets, public resources, and organizational operations.
- Ability to lead with sound judgment, decisiveness, and clarity in complex situations.

A bachelor's degree in public administration, social work, behavioral sciences, law, public policy, or a related field is required. Advanced degrees such as an MSW, JD, MPA, or related graduate degree are preferred.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

KEY LEADERSHIP PRIORITIES

- Develop and implement a clear, forward-looking strategic plan aligned with statewide operational needs and organizational priorities.
- Strengthen organizational infrastructure, accountability systems, and operational consistency across the statewide program.
- Partner closely with the State Guardian ad Litem Board to support effective governance, role clarity, and strategic decision-making.
- Advance a proactive legislative and public funding strategy that strengthens long-term sustainability and statewide impact.
- Support and strengthen organizational culture, communication, leadership clarity, and staff retention across the program.
- Build strong relationships and credibility with legislators, judicial leaders, county systems, tribal partners, attorneys, and child welfare stakeholders statewide.
- Ensure guardians ad litem receive high-quality training, operational support, and leadership necessary to effectively serve children and families.

STRATEGIC & ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

- Provide statewide executive leadership for the Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program.
- Lead strategic planning, organizational improvement efforts, and implementation of statewide priorities.
- Establish clear organizational goals, priorities, and accountability measures.
- Support organizational alignment and operational consistency across districts and functional areas.
- Lead through organizational change with transparency, collaboration, and clarity.

BOARD PARTNERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

- Serve as the primary executive partner to the State Guardian ad Litem Board.
- Support effective governance practices, board operations, and strategic decision-making.
- Implement policies, directives, and priorities established by the Board.
- Provide timely updates, analysis, recommendations, and operational insight to the Board.

LEGISLATIVE & EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- Represent the Program with the Minnesota Legislature, Judicial Branch leadership, county systems, justice partners, and external stakeholders.
- Support legislative strategy, policy discussions, and state funding advocacy efforts.
- Develop and maintain strong external partnerships that strengthen the Program's statewide impact and credibility.
- Serve as a visible and trusted public representative of the Program.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

OPERATIONS, FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

- Oversee statewide administrative operations, policies, and program functions.
- Lead financial planning, budget development, and stewardship of public resources.
- Ensure compliance with applicable statutes, policies, reporting requirements, and operational standards.
- Support development and implementation of performance measures, operational systems, and continuous improvement practices.

PEOPLE & CULTURE LEADERSHIP

- Provide leadership and support to statewide managers and staff.
- Strengthen organizational communication, staff engagement, and role clarity.
- Support recruitment, retention, professional development and training, and leadership development efforts.
- Foster a culture grounded in professionalism, accountability, collaboration, and service to children and families.





Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$140,000 - \$160,000.

Compensation includes participation in a comprehensive and generous benefits package.

Where the work happens

This position operates in a hybrid environment with statewide travel throughout Minnesota. The Executive Director is expected to regularly engage with staff, board members, legislators, judicial leaders, and external stakeholders across the state.

All applicants must [apply online here](#).

To apply, a resume and cover letter are required for consideration.

We strive for a transparent and supportive process, starting with an initial review of applications, followed by exploratory conversations with qualified candidates, in-depth interviews, and open communication throughout. There will be an immediate and ongoing review of candidates, so we encourage and appreciate early applications.

All inquiries will be handled with strict confidentiality, subject to standard recruiting practices and any applicable legal disclosure obligations.

For more details or questions, inquiries may also be directed to Jamie Millard, jamie@ballingerleafblad.com.

Early application is highly encouraged. Review of materials begins immediately.
Applications due by June 26, 2026.



Jamie Millard

Managing Partner

Ballinger | Leafblad Search Team

Our collaborative search model is led by partners who bring deep expertise in executive recruitment, stakeholder engagement, strategic communications, and search execution. With a disciplined, relationship-centered approach and strong operational rigor, we ensure a seamless process and a successful outcome for every search.



ABOUT BALLINGER | LEAFBLAD

Founded in 2014, Ballinger | Leafblad is a civic-focused executive search firm driven by a passion for strengthening leadership in mission-driven organizations. Rooted in partnership and a deep connection to the communities we serve, we specialize in matching organizations with exceptional leaders who align with their values and vision. Our approach is relationship-centered and designed to foster meaningful, long-term impact.

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