

**232.126 Appointment of counsel and guardian ad litem.**

The court shall appoint counsel or a guardian ad litem to represent the interests of the child at the hearing to determine whether the family is a family in need of assistance unless the child already has such counsel or guardian. The court shall appoint counsel for the parent, guardian or custodian if that person desires but is financially unable to employ counsel.

The court may appoint a court appointed special advocate to act as guardian ad litem. The court appointed special advocate shall receive notice of and may attend all depositions, hearings, and trial proceedings to support the child and advocate for the protection of the child. The court appointed special advocate shall not be allowed to separately introduce evidence or to directly examine or cross-examine witnesses. The court appointed special advocate shall submit reports to the court and the parties to the proceedings containing the information required in reports submitted by a court appointed special advocate under section 232.89, subsection 5. In addition, the court appointed special advocate shall file other reports to the court as required by the court.

[C79, 81, §232.126]

87 Acts, ch 121, §5; 2002 Acts, ch 1162, §18