

# Options for Court Appointed Parenting Professionals

For additional information please visit: [www.coloradojudicial.gov](http://www.coloradojudicial.gov)

## Child and Family Investigator (CFI) C.R.S. 14-10-116.5

- ❖ CFIs are typically appointed in domestic relations (DR) cases (divorce/legal separation/allocation of parental responsibilities/custody).
- ❖ CFIs provide a written report to the court and parties with recommendations about child-related issues (i.e., parenting time, decision making, etc.)
  - CFI investigations are typically less intrusive than those conducted by a PRE and the reports are shorter. A CFI may be well-suited for less complicated cases with fewer issues.
  - CFIs do not conduct psychological or other testing.
- ❖ CFIs may be licensed attorneys or mental health professionals, but these licenses are not required.
- ❖ CFIs do not represent any party and are not “hired” by any party; they serve as court appointed neutrals.
- ❖ A CFI may testify at a hearing at the request of a party, but they remain a neutral professional, not a witness for any party.
- ❖ A CFI, even if licensed, cannot give legal advice.
- ❖ Privately paid CFI fees are capped at \$3,250 (unless they request, and the court grants, additional fees.) Additional fees (i.e., for testimony, copying, discovery, etc.) may apply.
- ❖ State paid (free to the party) CFIs are available for qualifying, low-income parties, and some exceptions apply.

## Parental Responsibility Evaluator (PRE)

### C.R.S. 14-10-127

- ❖ PREs are typically appointed in domestic relations (DR) cases (divorce/legal separation/allocation of parental responsibilities/custody).
- ❖ PREs provide a lengthy, detailed written report to the court and parties with recommendations about child-related issues (parenting time, decision making, etc.)
  - PRE evaluations are complex and extensive, and typically take longer than a CFI investigation. A PRE may be well-suited for very complicated cases with multiple issues (i.e., mental health concerns, substance abuse, and/or sexual misconduct).
  - Some PREs are qualified to conduct psychological testing.
- ❖ PREs must be licensed mental health professionals.
- ❖ PREs do not represent any party and are not “hired” by any party, they serve as court appointed neutrals.
- ❖ A PRE may testify at a hearing at the request of a party, but they remain a neutral professional, not a witness for any party.
- ❖ PREs do not have set fees or caps on fees and there is no state paid option for PREs; billing policies, including hourly rates and estimate of costs, should be provided to the parties ahead of time.

Once you've selected the professional you want appointed in your case, please see your Self-Help Center for next steps  
[www.coloradojudicial.gov/self-help-resources](http://www.coloradojudicial.gov/self-help-resources)

# More Options for Court Appointed Parenting Professionals

For additional information please visit: [coloradochildrep.org](http://coloradochildrep.org)

## **Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) C.R.S. 19-1-111**

- ❖ A GAL is an attorney appointed to investigate and represent the best interests (health, safety, and well-being) of children and youth.
- ❖ In rare cases, a GAL may be called to testify or complete and submit a report.
- ❖ GALs for children and youth are ONLY appointed in JV cases (Dependency and Neglect (D&N) and Child Support and Parentage), not DR cases. (GALs for adults are available in DR cases)
- ❖ GALs may be State paid (free to the party) for qualifying, low-income parties in paternity and support cases.

## **Counsel For Youth (CFY) C.R.S. 19-3-203**

- ❖ A CFY is an attorney who provides specialized client-directed legal representation for a child or youth aged 12 or older.
- ❖ A CFY represents the youth's position and wishes rather than what the attorney determines is in the youth's best interests.
- ❖ CFYs do not write or submit reports.
- ❖ CFYs cannot be called to testify.
- ❖ CFYs are ONLY appointed in JV D&N cases- not JV Child Support and Parentage cases or DR cases.
- ❖ CFYs are State paid (free to the party).

## **Child Legal Representative (CLR) C.R.S. 14-10-116**

- ❖ A CLR is an attorney appointed to represent the best interests of children and youth.
- ❖ A CLR does not write a report with recommendations like a CFI or PRE but does file pleadings.
- ❖ CLR's cannot be called to testify.
- ❖ CLR's are available in domestic relations (DR) cases only (divorce/legal separation/allocation of parental responsibilities/custody).
- ❖ CLR's may be State paid (free to the party) for qualifying low-income parties.