

JUVENILE COURT  
POLICY/PROCEDURE

**STEP PARENT ADOPTION(S)**

POLICY

A Guardian Ad Litem must be appointed by the time of the TPR, and fees will be paid by the stepparent unless waived by the Court. The GAL will bill at a rate established by the Clerk of Courts with approval of the Court and will bill the party directly with a copy to the court. Parties have up to 10 days after billing to object to the GAL fees requested.

PROCEDURE

In cases involving **VOLUNTARY CONSENT:**

1. Natural parent(s) may sign a consent to the Termination of Parental Rights before a Judge of any Court of Record. Parties filing the voluntary TPR petitions should be directed to the Probate Court. The Commissioner will schedule the consent hearing on a date designated by the Court, before the Juvenile Judge of the next week prior to, or after the adoptions now being scheduled on the designated mornings. Any legal questions or requests for copies of forms may be directed to the Probate Commissioner.
2. Once the consent has been executed by the parent(s) the paperwork is to be returned back to Probate court to process the petition.

In cases involving an **INVOLUNTARY TPR:**

1. An attorney is advisable but not required to start an involuntary TPR for a stepparent adoption. Involuntary would include, but may not be limited to, a missing father/mother, an adjudication or natural (by marriage) father/mother not agreeing to a TPR, or non-adjudicated alleged father or fathers.
2. The attorney would file a Petition for Termination of Parental Rights in Juvenile Court with the Juvenile Court Commissioner Clerk, and the case will be assigned to a Judge and set for hearing, that hearing to occur within 30 days of filing.
3. After the Termination of Parental rights, the attorney may file a Petition for Adoption with a certified copy of the TPR of father/mother with the Commissioner.