STATE OF MICHIGAN

54TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

HON. AMY GRACE GIERHART
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE

440 NORTH STATE STREET
CARO, MICHIGAN 48723

(989) 672-3720

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RE: CONTRACT TO PROVIDE COUNSEL FOR INDIGENT RESPONDENTS AND/OR PARENTS IN NEGLECT AND ABUSE PROCEEDINGS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2027

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS: Individuals licensed to practice law in Michigan, in good standing with the State of Michigan Bar Association, and capable of performing legal services pursuant to the listed services below. All bids will be on behalf of a law firm of at least 4 attorneys or as a group with a minimum of 4 attorneys.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS: All proposals must be submitted in writing to Chief Judge Amy Grace Gierhart no later than 4:30 p.m. on October 28, 2026.

CONTRACT PERIOD: Calendar year 2027, beginning January 1, 2027 and terminating on December 31, 2027. Representation shall be for all pending cases as of January 1, 2027 and all newly commenced proceedings in the following areas under the jurisdiction of the Court: Protective Proceedings and Child Neglect. Attorney services will also include appeals in these matters, but are limited to appeals by right only.

DESCRIPTION OF INTENDED SERVICES: Legal services will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following court appearances and all out of the court preparation therefore:

1. Preliminary hearings, adjourned preliminary hearings and waiver hearings;
2. Plea hearings (and possible plea conference)
3. Trials and pretrial motions;
4. Review hearings;
5. Dispositional hearings, including termination;
6. Permanency Planning hearings;
7. Other hearings – Visitation, Placement and Removal.

Attorneys shall represent respondent mother, respondent father, respondent putative father, children, and when the Court feels that representation is absolutely necessary, shall represent party in ancillary matters. If more than 4 attorneys are needed on one case, then additional attorneys will be appointed by the Court and paid by the Court.

Appearances may include sixty (60) minutes of notice on a Saturday and during the normal work week.

In addition to the agreed compensation, the Court shall pay all subpoena fees, deposition fees, witness fees and other similar costs, and mileage for out of Tuscola County travel at the IRS business mileage rate. Attorneys shall seek prior Court approval before incurring deposition fees or expert witness fees. Attorneys shall file monthly reimbursement requests with the 54th Circuit Court.

Cases will be appointed on a rotating basis to ensure, to the extent possible, an equal number of appointments per attorney. Any conflicts of interest will be resolved by the attorney group when possible.

Proposals should include an annual contract amount and a separate hourly rate for appeals. The terms of payment will be negotiated upon award of the contract.

The 54th Circuit Court reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals.

All new case filings specific to neglect/abuse cases for previous years are as follows:

NA Petitions Filed:

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
44	43	41	32	21	24	16	12	6	8	11