

**RCW 4.08.050 Guardian ad litem for infant.** Except as provided under RCW 28A.225.035 and 7.105.100, when an infant is a party he or she shall appear by guardian, or if he or she has no guardian, or in the opinion of the court the guardian is an improper person, the court shall appoint one to act. Said guardian shall be appointed as follows:

(1) When the infant is plaintiff, upon the application of the infant, if he or she be of the age of fourteen years, or if under that age, upon the application of a relative or friend of the infant.

(2) When the infant is defendant, upon the application of the infant, if he or she be of the age of fourteen years, and applies within thirty days after the service of the summons; if he or she be under the age of fourteen, or neglects to apply, then upon the application of any other party to the action, or of a relative or friend of the infant. [2022 c 268 § 32; 2021 c 215 § 89; 1996 c 134 § 7; 1992 c 111 § 9; 1891 c 30 § 1; Code 1881 § 12; 1854 p 132 §§ 6, 7; RRS § 187.]

**Effective dates—2022 c 268:** See note following RCW 7.105.010.

**Effective date—2022 c 268; 2021 c 215:** See note following RCW 7.105.900.

**Findings—1992 c 111:** "The legislature finds that:

Domestic violence is a problem of immense proportions affecting individuals as well as communities. Domestic violence has long been recognized as being at the core of other major social problems: Child abuse, other crimes of violence against person or property, juvenile delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse. Domestic violence costs millions of dollars each year in the state of Washington for health care, absence from work, services to children, and more. The crisis is growing.

While the existing protection order process can be a valuable tool to increase safety for victims and to hold batterers accountable, specific problems in its use have become evident. Victims have difficulty completing the paperwork required particularly if they have limited English proficiency; model forms have been modified to be inconsistent with statutory language; different forms create confusion for law enforcement agencies about the contents and enforceability of orders. Refinements are needed so that victims have the easy, quick, and effective access to the court system envisioned at the time the protection order process was first created.

When courts issue mutual protection orders without the filing of separate written petitions, notice to each respondent, and hearing on each petition, the original petitioner is deprived of due process. Mutual protection orders label both parties as violent and treat both as being equally at fault: Batterers conclude that the violence is excusable or provoked and victims who are not violent are confused and stigmatized. Enforcement may be ineffective and mutual orders may be used in other proceedings as evidence that the victim is equally at fault.

Valuable information about the reported incidents of domestic violence in the state of Washington is unobtainable without gathering data from all law enforcement agencies; without this information, it is difficult for policymakers, funders, and service providers to plan for the resources and services needed to address the issue.

Domestic violence must be addressed more widely and more effectively in our state: Greater knowledge by professionals who deal frequently with domestic violence is essential to enforce existing laws, to intervene in domestic violence situations that do not come to the attention of the law enforcement or judicial systems, and to reduce and prevent domestic violence by intervening before the violence becomes severe.

Adolescent dating violence is occurring at increasingly high rates: Preventing and confronting adolescent violence is important in preventing potential violence in future adult relationships." [1992 c 111 § 1.]