

M E M O

TO: Prospective Attorneys for Children - Fourth Department

FROM: Linda J. Kostin, Director, Office of Attorneys for Children

RE: Panel Designation

DATE: April 2024

The regulations provide that an application for initial designation must be approved by the senior Family Court judge, or, in counties where the supervising judge of Family Court sits, by the Supervising Judge. The application must be accompanied by an affirmation, which the appropriate judge signs to approve your designation. The Office of Attorneys for Children will submit applications and affirmations to the appropriate judges for consideration. **Affirmation forms will be sent to you by email prior to Monday's webinar. Completed forms may be submitted to the Appellate Division, Fourth Department, Office of Attorneys for Children Program, 50 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14604.** You must complete the required online training, including the mandatory domestic violence training, as well as complete the required Family Court proceedings and hearings (paragraphs 14 and 15 of the AFC application) before your application and affirmation will be submitted for approval.

You must submit a separate affirmation for every county on whose panel list you want your name to appear (you are allowed a maximum of four counties, one of which would be your "main" designated county). You may accept attorney for the child appointments in any county contiguous to a county on whose list your name appears. Judges typically want to know the attorneys they appoint, and are mindful of unnecessary mileage expenses and travel time.

Once we receive a judge's approval, the Appellate Division Clerk's Office will enter an order appointing you to the panel. A copy of the order will be sent to you and to the Clerks of Family Court, Supreme Court and Surrogate's Court.

All panel designations run through March 31. The lists are recertified on April 1 of each year. The regulations require the Appellate Division to remove an attorney's name from a panel list if: 1) the attorney has not served as an attorney for the child during the previous two years; or 2) the attorney has not attended at least one Attorneys for Children Program training seminar during the previous two years (note: no seminars will be offered for the foreseeable future), or taken 5.5 hours of Attorneys for Children Program online training; or 3) the attorney has not submitted a Panel Re-designation Application to the AFC Program Office annually by January 2, in order to be eligible for re-designation on April 1 of each year. (Please see Panel Re-designation memo, also attached.) Before you may be appointed to the AFC panel, you must complete a Re-designation Application and submit it to the AFC Program office. You are required to keep track of your panel status and your compliance with the requirements for re-designation. The panel lists and the Re-designation Application appear on the Attorneys for Children Program link to the Appellate Division website at <http://nycourts.gov/ad4/>.

PROCEDURE FOR DESIGNATION TO AN ATTORNEY FOR THE CHILD PANEL LIST

1. Complete an affirmation. A separate affirmation is required for each county on whose panel list you wish to be placed. We do not encourage you to submit multiple affirmations (see attached memo).
2. You may submit the affirmation(s) to the attention of Jennifer Kohler, Court Analyst, Office of Attorneys for Children, 50 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14604.
3. The Office of Attorneys for Children will submit the affirmation and your application to the appropriate Family Court Judge for approval.
4. Upon receipt of the signed affirmation from Family Court, the Office of Attorneys for Children will submit an Order to the Appellate Division Clerk's Office appointing you to the county panel.
5. A copy of the Order will be sent to you and to the Family, Supreme and Surrogate's Court Clerks.
6. Your name will appear on the panel list on the Office of Attorneys for Children link to the Appellate Division website at <http://nycourts.gov/ad4/>.

NOTE: All panel designations run through March 31 and are recertified on April 1 of each year. For example, if you were placed on a panel list on June 15, 2024, the order appointing you would begin on June 15, 2024 and expire on March 31, 2025.

REMINDER: In general, you will not be recertified unless you have: 1) served as an attorney for the child during the previous two years; 2) attended one Attorneys for Children Program seminar during the previous two years, or have taken 5.5 hours of webinar training, and or online training, available on the Attorneys for Children website; and 3) have submitted a Panel Re-designation Application to the AFC Program Office annually by January 2. You will receive semi-annual "e-mailings" from the Office of Attorneys for Children informing you of upcoming webinars and seminars. Please be sure to update your contact information, including email address, when changes occur. You can also find information about our webinars and seminars on our website listed above.