

**26A.140 Accommodation of special needs of children.**

- (1) Courts shall implement measures to accommodate the special needs of children which are not unduly burdensome to the rights of the defendant, including but not limited to:
  - (a)
    1. Trained guardians ad litem or special advocates, if available, shall be appointed for all child victims and shall serve in Circuit and District Courts to offer consistency and support to the child and to represent the child's interests where needed.
    2. The guardians ad litem shall be paid a fee fixed by the court, which shall be paid by the Finance and Administration Cabinet;
  - (b) During trials involving child victims or child witnesses, the environment of the courtroom shall be modified to accommodate children through the use of small chairs, frequent breaks, and the use of age appropriate language;
  - (c) Children expected to testify shall be prepared for the courtroom experience by the Commonwealth's or county attorney handling the case with the assistance of the guardian ad litem or special advocate; and
  - (d) In appropriate cases, procedures shall be used to shield children from visual contact with alleged perpetrator.
- (2) The Supreme Court is encouraged to issue rules for the conduct of criminal and civil trials involving child abuse in which a child victim or child witness may testify at the trial.

**Effective:** July 15, 2024

**History:** Amended 2024 Ky. Acts ch. 135, sec. 3, effective July 15, 2024. -- Created 1992 Ky. Acts ch. 351, sec. 9, effective July 14, 1992.

**Legislative Research Commission Note (7/15/2024).** When this statute was amended in 2024 Ky. Acts ch. 135, sec. 3, the internal numbering and lettering did not conform to the format used in the Kentucky Revised Statutes. Under the authority of KRS 7.136, the reviser of statutes has modified the numbering and lettering. No words were changed in the process.