

Documentation Template

For Volunteer Guardians ad Litem (VGALs)

Purpose

To capture interview notes clearly, separate facts from opinions, and prepare neutral summaries that comply with confidentiality rules.



Header Information

Field	Entry
Case Number	_____
Child's Initials	_____
Date of Interview	_____
Interviewee	☐ Child ☐ Caregiver ☐ Teacher ☐ Other: _____
Location	_____
Interviewer	_____



Section A: Direct Quotes (Word-for-Word Statements)

Quote #	Exact Words
1	“ _____
2	“ _____
3	“ _____
4	“ _____
5	“ _____

Section B: Observations (Nonverbal / Environmental)

Observation #	Notes (What you saw, not interpretation)
1	Example: “Child looked down, avoided eye contact when discussing school.”
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____
5	_____
6	_____

Section C: Neutral Interpretations / Clarifications

Item #	Neutral Interpretation
1	Example: "Interviewee described multiple school changes in the last year."
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Section D: Key Issues / Follow-Ups

Item	Response
Potential safety concerns	☐ Yes ☐ No (If yes, notify supervisor immediately)
Court order compliance issues?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Information to verify with other sources	

Confidentiality Reminder

- Notes must be stored securely.

- Do not share outside authorized court proceedings.
- Remove personal identifiers unless legally required.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Mixing quotes with interpretations (always separate).
- Using judgmental adjectives (avoid “good/bad,” use descriptive terms instead).
- Omitting date, location, or participant info.

Pro Tips

- Use bullet points for speed.
- Review notes immediately after interview to fill in gaps.
- Highlight items that need supervisor review.

