



**NIGALA**

HQ: CENTRE HOUSE, 79 CHICHESTER STREET, BELFAST, BT1 4JE

**GUIDANCE FOR  
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC  
ATTENDING  
NIGALA BOARD MEETINGS**

Welcome to the Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA) public Board meeting.

## **On Arrival**

On arrival, please make yourself known at the Reception Desk. The Administration Manager will show you to a seat.

A copy of the Agenda for the Board Meeting will be provided for your information.

## **Procedure for a Non-Board Member participating at a NIGALA Board Meetings**

The NIGALA holds its Board meetings in public. These meetings are listed on the NIGALA website, and advertised in the local press one week in advance of the meeting, and members of the public are invited to attend. Those wishing to attend should indicate their intention to:-

**Mrs Ann Andrew, Chief Executive's Office, Tel: 02895361549.**

**Email: [ann.andrew@nigala.hscni.net](mailto:ann.andrew@nigala.hscni.net)**

The meeting takes place in the **Board Room at NIGALA, Centre House, 79 Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 4JE.**

Anyone requiring any specific arrangements in regard to disability or special needs should alert Mrs Ann Andrew at the Chief Executive's office one week in advance. The NIGALA will endeavour to accommodate these requirements.

## **How NIGALA Board Meetings operate**

The format of NIGALA's public Board meeting is as follows:

1. The NIGALA Chairperson will welcome members of the public to the Board Meeting.
2. The Chairperson will refer those present to the agenda for today's meeting, which outlines the items which will be considered by Board members.
3. The Chairperson will advise members of the public present of their opportunity, at his invitation and at the end of the meeting, to address the Board or raise any questions they may have.

4. Where members of the public attend a public meeting without prior notice and wish to raise a question at the end of the meeting, the specified advance notice for speaking rights may be waived at the discretion of the Chairperson.
5. Members of the public may also forward their queries to the Administration Manager for a formal response from the Board. The Administration Manager can be contacted at: NIGALA, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Centre House, 79 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 4JE, Tel: (028) 95 361549, email: [ann.andrew@nigala.hscni.net](mailto:ann.andrew@nigala.hscni.net)

## **Participation in Open Board Meetings & Addressing the Board**

Non-Board members may attend Board meetings as observers, but may not participate in the meeting discussions, unless explicitly invited to do so. No photographic, television and/or recording equipment will be permitted at any meeting unless explicitly authorised by the Board.

Non-Board members attending Board meetings will be asked to identify themselves and whether they have any formal affiliations.

Persons wishing to address the Board at a Board meeting should note the following:-

**Etiquette and Speaking Rights:** Deputations from any meeting, association, public body or an individual may be permitted to address a public meeting of the Board provided notice of the intended deputation and a summary of the subject matter is given to the Board at least two clear days prior to the meeting and provided the Chairperson and Board agrees. In normal circumstances this facility shall be confined to a short statement or presentation not exceeding five minutes. The Chairperson shall determine the actual allotted time and if the deputation has sufficiently covered the issue.

Requests<sup>1</sup> to address the Board will be considered by the Chair of the Board in order of receipt. No more than three presentations will be heard at any given meeting of the Board. The presentations will be made at the commencement of the public portion of the meeting. The Board is not obligated to respond to a presentation.

Adjournment because of Disorder: Non-Board members may be asked to leave a Board meeting if they are conducting themselves improperly or if they are otherwise disrupting the meeting, as determined by the Chair, and they may be prohibited from attending future meetings. Should the person/persons refuse to withdraw, the Chair shall adjourn the meeting until the disorderly faction has been legally removed.

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<sup>1</sup> Any requests relating to individual cases should be directed to the relevant line manager and dealt with under the NIGALA Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

**Admission of Press and Public:** The meetings of the NIGALA shall be open to members of the press and public provided that the numbers attending may be accommodated in the room being used. This will be done on a “first come first served” basis.

**Withdrawal:** All such persons shall withdraw when requested to do so by the Chair.

**Closed Sessions:** Closed sessions may be held at the beginning and the end of the public segment of each Board meeting. Only those persons authorized by the Board to remain at the closed session of the meeting will be permitted to remain. Other persons will be excused from the closed portion of the meeting. Closed sessions will be held to discuss items of a confidential nature, including but not limited to: the security of the property, personal matters about an identifiable individual, employment issues, the receiving of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege.