

The present bachelor's degree thesis focuses on the role of children's rights and welfare officers as court-appointed guardians of minors for the purposes of court proceedings. The thesis is based on theoretical knowledge gained from publications and laws, hands-on experience acquired serving as a guardian ad litem as well as information provided by guardianship judges. The aim of the thesis is to assess whether a court-appointed guardian may actually protect the best interests and well-being of a child. In the first part of the thesis, the author takes a look back at the history of guardianship in the Czech Republic while considering the nature of "the best interests and well-being" of the child and outlining the future of the guardian within the framework of the protection of children's rights, legitimate interests and social needs. The main focus of the thesis is the delimiting of the role of a guardian from the comparative perspective of law and practice, the importance of co-operation between the court and the guardian, the guardian's position in a court proceeding and the steps and acts before the court. In addition, the thesis addresses specific steps of the guardian in certain types of proceedings using case studies prepared on the basis of files maintained by an authority dedicated to the protection of children's rights and interests. At the end of the thesis, the author gives an answer to the target question set at the beginning of the work and mentions several factors that may, in practice, have a negative impact on the performance of a guardian ad litem.