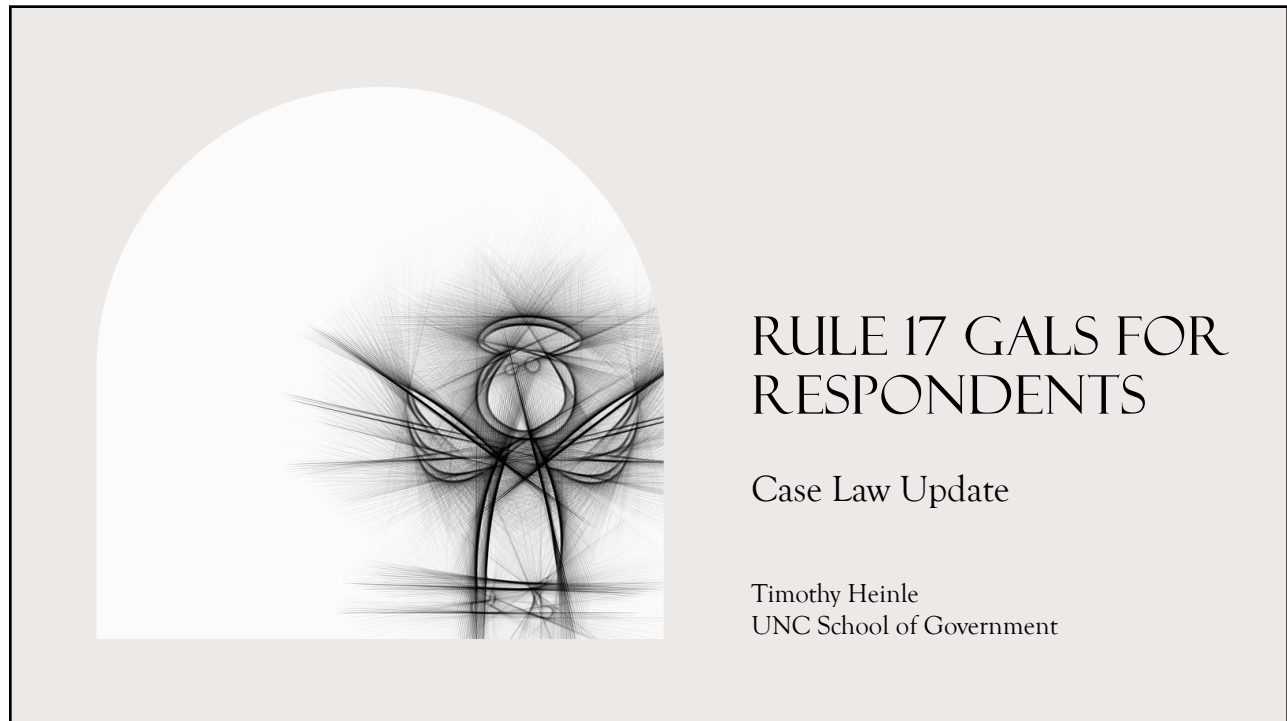
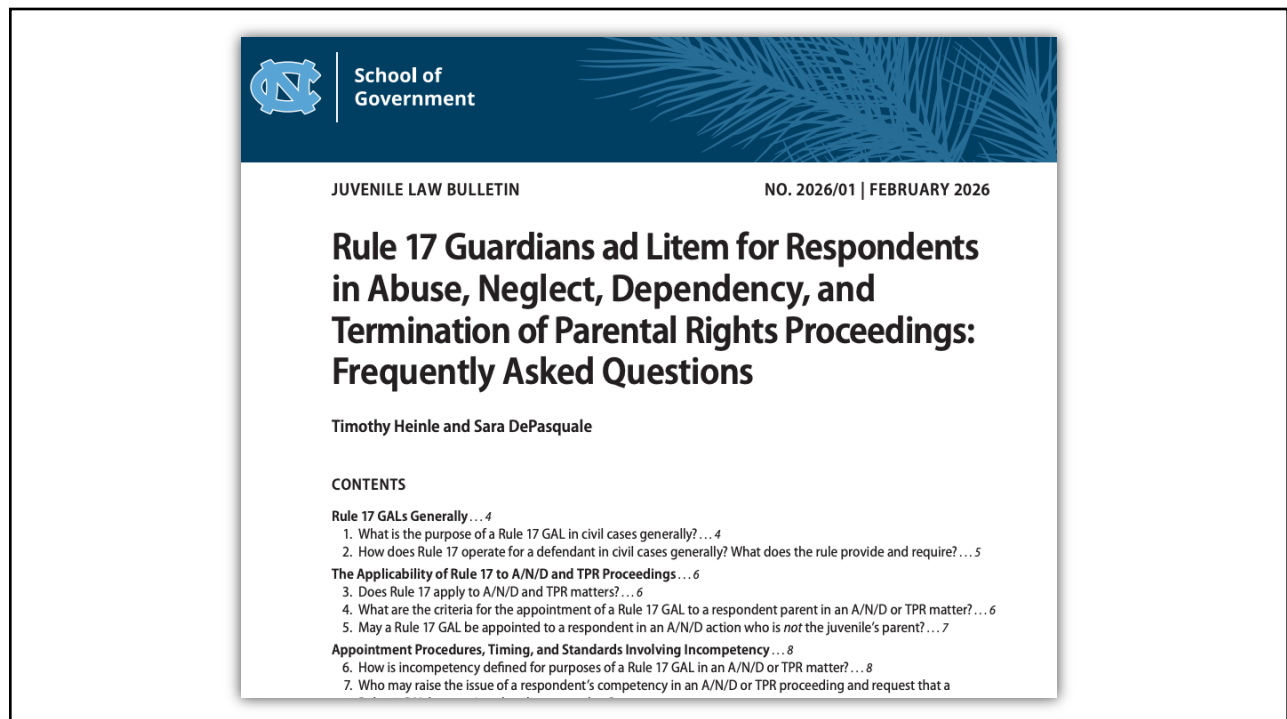




1



2

In re A.T., 301 N.C. App. 331 (2025)

p. 30

- J's neglected by parents (psych evals: MH + SU)
- PPR continuance order (R. 17 GALs sua sponte)
- PPR held w/ GALs present
- Later, TPR granted



3

Abuse of discretion to
appoint a R. 17 GAL?

4



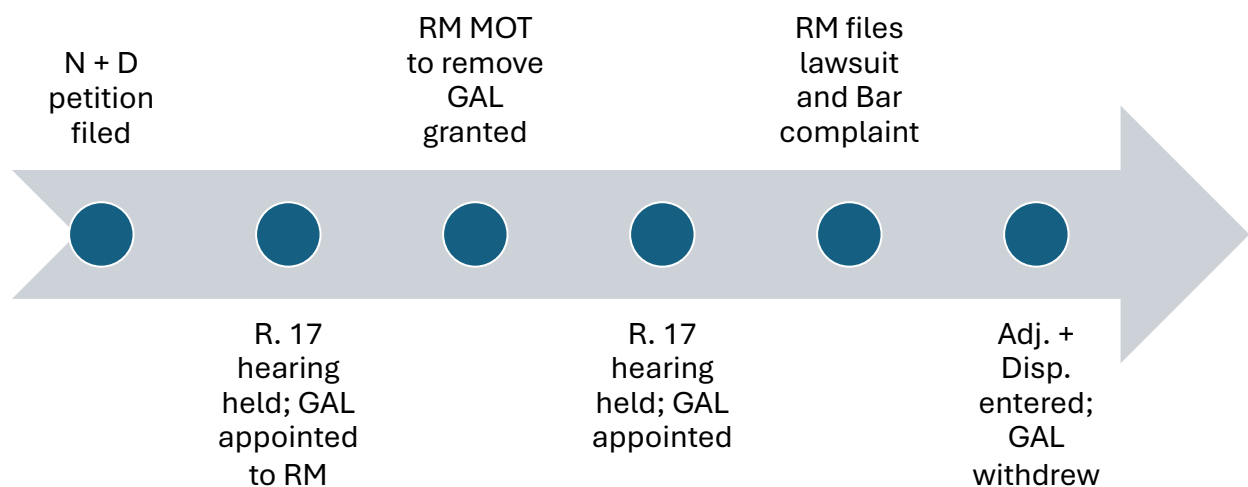
In re A.T., 301 N.C. App. 331 (2025)

- Court may act sua sponte, but...
 - Substantial question requires inquiry
 - Cannot unfairly deprive of right to conduct own litigation
- How much notice? See, e.g., *Brincefield*, __ N.C. App. __ (Aug. 5, '26)
- Don't count on R. App. P. 2!

5

In re K.R., __ N.C. App. __ (May 20, 2026)

p. 3



6

Abuse of discretion to
appoint a new R. 17 GAL
when the court decided
twice that she did not
need one?

7



In re K.R., __ N.C. App. __ (May 20, 2026)

- GAL + counsel fill distinct roles
- Unless restored, gets new GAL
- Considerations:
 - Difficult = withdraw?
 - Discreet person available?
 - Calendar motions together

8

In re A.H.-G., __ N.C. App. __ (Dec. 17, 2025)
p. 3

- Infant with multiple rounds of injuries indicating nonaccidental trauma
- Minor RM (16) appointed GAL
- RM compelled to testify over counsel's objection. Informed of 5th Amend. Rights by court.



9

May a minor parent with R.
17 GAL compelled to testify
decide whether to waive 5th
amendment right against
self-incrimination?

10

In re A.H.-G., __ N.C. App. __ (Dec. 17, 2025)

- Substitutive role
(divests parent of right
to conduct litigation)
- Preserve opportunity
to exercise rights w/in
comprehension



11

In re A.H.-G., __ N.C. App. __ (Dec. 17, 2025)

- Active participation ≠
repeating attorney
- Procedurally sound
- Only incompetent
because of age



12



In re A.H.-G., __ N.C. App. __
(Dec. 17, 2025)

- No blanket rule incompetent parents can't decide re: 5th
- GAL communicate with parent
- Coordinate w/ attorney
- Open questions:
 - May GAL assert 5th?
 - What about non-minors?

13



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