



Ohio Revised Code

Section 2941.51 Counsel for indigents.

Effective: October 17, 2019

Legislation: House Bill 166 - 133rd General Assembly

(A) Counsel appointed to a case or selected by an indigent person under division (E) of section 120.16 or division (E) of section 120.26 of the Revised Code, or otherwise appointed by the court, except for counsel appointed by the court to provide legal representation for a person charged with a violation of an ordinance of a municipal corporation, shall be paid for their services by the county the compensation and expenses that the trial court approves. Each request for payment shall include a financial disclosure form completed by the indigent person on a form prescribed by the state public defender. Compensation and expenses shall not exceed the amounts fixed by the board of county commissioners pursuant to division (B) of this section.

(B) The board of county commissioners shall establish a schedule of fees by case or on an hourly basis to be paid by the county for legal services provided by appointed counsel. Prior to establishing such schedule, the board shall request the bar association or associations of the county to submit a proposed schedule for cases other than capital cases. The schedule submitted shall be subject to the review, amendment, and approval of the board of county commissioners, except with respect to capital cases. With respect to capital cases, the schedule shall provide for fees by case or on an hourly basis to be paid to counsel in the amount or at the rate set by the capital case attorney fee council pursuant to division (D) of section 120.33 of the Revised Code, and the board of county commissioners shall approve that amount or rate.

With respect to capital cases, counsel shall be paid compensation and expenses in accordance with the amount or at the rate set by the capital case attorney fee council pursuant to division (D) of section 120.33 of the Revised Code.

(C) In a case where counsel have been appointed to conduct an appeal under Chapter 120. of the Revised Code, such compensation shall be fixed by the court of appeals or the supreme court, as provided in divisions (A) and (B) of this section.

(D) The fees and expenses approved by the court under this section shall not be taxed as part of the



costs and shall be paid by the county. However, if the person represented has, or reasonably may be expected to have, the means to meet some part of the cost of the services rendered to the person, the person shall pay the county an amount that the person reasonably can be expected to pay. Pursuant to section 120.04 of the Revised Code, the county shall pay to the state public defender a percentage of the payment received from the person in an amount proportionate to the percentage of the costs of the person's case that were paid to the county by the state public defender pursuant to this section. The money paid to the state public defender shall be credited to the client payment fund created pursuant to division (B)(5) of section 120.04 of the Revised Code.

(E) The county auditor shall draw a warrant on the county treasurer for the payment of such counsel in the amount fixed by the court, plus the expenses that the court fixes and certifies to the auditor. The county auditor shall report periodically, but not less than annually, to the board of county commissioners and to the Ohio public defender commission the amounts paid out pursuant to the approval of the court under this section, separately stating costs and expenses that are reimbursable under section 120.35 of the Revised Code. The board, after review and approval of the auditor's report, may then certify it to the state public defender for reimbursement. The request for reimbursement shall be accompanied by a financial disclosure form completed by each indigent person for whom counsel was provided on a form prescribed by the state public defender. The state public defender shall review the report and, in accordance with the standards, guidelines, and maximums established pursuant to divisions (B)(7) and (8) of section 120.04 of the Revised Code and the payment determination provisions of section 120.34 of the Revised Code, pay the cost, other than costs and expenses that are reimbursable under section 120.35 of the Revised Code, if any, of paying appointed counsel in each county and pay costs and expenses that are reimbursable under section 120.35 of the Revised Code, if any, to the board. The amount of payments the state public defender is to make shall be determined as specified in section 120.34 of the Revised Code.

(F) If any county system for paying appointed counsel fails to maintain the standards for the conduct of the system established by the rules of the Ohio public defender commission pursuant to divisions (B) and (C) of section 120.03 of the Revised Code or the standards established by the state public defender pursuant to division (B)(7) of section 120.04 of the Revised Code, the commission shall notify the board of county commissioners of the county that the county system for paying appointed counsel has failed to comply with its rules. Unless the board corrects the conduct of its appointed counsel system to comply with the rules within ninety days after the date of the notice, the state



public defender may deny all or part of the county's reimbursement from the state provided for in this section.