

New Policies on Retaining and Paying Interpreters

Changes to the approval process

At present, SPD billing rules require the private bar to obtain prior approval before retaining the services of an interpreter.

Effective, April 1, 2011 the rule will change as follows:

A private bar attorney may retain the services of an interpreter when necessary without prior approval if:

1) The hourly rate conforms to the reimbursement rates established by the office of the Director of State Courts

The maximum reimbursement rate is \$40 for the first hour and \$20 for each additional ½ hour for using certified interpreters and \$30.00 for the first hour and \$15 for each additional ½ hour for other qualified interpreters.

2) And the total amount of billable interpreter time (professional service + travel) does not exceed 12 hours.

The attorney must complete the Interpreter Request form and provide a copy to the interpreter.

If the attorney needs to retain an interpreter at a higher rate, if an attorney needs more than 12 hours of interpreter time, or if an attorney has used 12 hours of interpreter time and needs additional hours, the attorney must submit an expense authorization form and must receive approval before proceeding.

Billing

Currently, interpreter bills are submitted to the attorney who submits them along with his/her invoice for payment.

Effective April 1, 2011 interpreters shall submit their bills directly to the Wisconsin State Public Defender. This applies to all cases no matter when appointed if the interpreter bill is submitted on or after April 1, 2011.

The interpreter's bill shall be itemized. The bill must list the dates of service and time spent performing interpreter duties. Interpreters may charge \$25/hour for travel time if providing the service involves travel to a destination more than 30 miles, one way, from the interpreter's principal office. Travel time must also be itemized by date and indicate the destination city or location. Interpreters may also charge for mileage as the state rate in effect at the time service is provided.

The interpreter must submit a copy of the completed and signed Interpreter Request form with his/her bill.

Interpreter bills shall be submitted to:

Wisconsin State Public Defender
PO Box 7923
Madison, WI 53707-7923