TRAVIS COUNTY FEE GUIDELINES
FOR APPOINTED COUNSEL IN FELONY CRIMINAL CASES

EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1, 2026 FOR ASSIGNMENTS ON OR AFTER THAT DATE

Pursuant to C.C.P. Art. 26.05, the following guidelines shall be used to claim attorney fees for counsel assigned in criminal cases.

COMPENSATION FOR REPRESENTATION IN FELONY MATTERS

The Program Administrator, the Capital Area Private Defender Service ("CAPDS"), shall implement hourly compensation for all new assignments on or after the effective date of this order, as follows:

- Capital Murder
    a. Where the State has affirmatively sought the death penalty, the hourly rate shall be $300.
    b. For all other capital cases, including appeals, the hourly rate shall be $200.
- Felony A Assignments, Appeals, and Writs
    a. Where the highest charge is a 1st degree felony or where punishment includes a range greater than 20 years of incarceration, the hourly rate shall be $155.
    b. For all direct appeals of a felony charge and for writs (excluding 11.08 writs and capital cases), the hourly rate shall be $155.
- Felony B Assignments
    a. Where the highest charge is a 2nd degree, a 3rd degree felony, or where punishment includes a range greater than 2 years of incarceration, the hourly rate shall be $125.
- Felony C Assignments
    a. Where the highest charge is a state jail felony or where felony punishment includes a range equal to or less than 2 years of incarceration, the hourly rate shall be $85.

For all assignments the following applies:

- Attorneys shall be eligible for the highest hourly rate authorized based on all charges in an appointment.
- Attorneys shall be compensated only according to the hourly rate.
- Attorneys must submit all requests for payment as directed by CAPDS, in an itemized statement reflecting the date, service performed, and time expended to the 1/10th of an hour.
- CAPDS shall adopt policies and procedures to implement hourly compensation. CAPDS shall determine the reasonableness and necessity of actions undertaken by attorneys.
- Except on capital cases, attorneys assigned by the court or CAPDS to serve as a second chair in any matter shall be compensated at a rate less than that of the first chair based on the scope of the representation and responsibility of the attorney in that matter.

In an unusual case, the considerations set forth in Texas Rules of Professional Conduct Rule 1.04(b) may dictate a fee that is less than or more than the one established by these guidelines. In such event, attorneys must have approval of the Court in capital cases seeking death or approval of CAPDS for all other cases in writing at the conclusion of the pretrial hearings if a claim is to be based on any rate not established here.

An hourly rate of $85 to $200 may be used for cases, except in capital cases seeking death, which will be compensated at no more than $300 per hour. The exact rate will be dependent upon the complexity of the case and the experience and ability of the assigned counsel.

ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION IN CERTAIN ASSIGNMENTS

Assigned counsel will be eligible for additional compensation in certain new assignments, on or after the effective date of this order, as follows:

- Mental Health Assignments
  - For attorneys approved by CAPDS to receive mental health assignments and when assignments are designated as mental health at the time of assignment, counsel is eligible for an additional $20 per hour.
  - Additional compensation eligibility is based on the manner of assignment and is subject to the policies of CAPDS.
  - This rate does not apply to capital cases.

- Non-English-Speaking Defendant Assignments
  - For attorneys approved by CAPDS to receive Spanish-speaking assignments and when assignments are made through the Spanish-speaking panel, counsel is eligible for an additional $40 per hour. For any assignment where the use of interpretation (spoken or sign language) is required to communicate with the defendant, counsel is eligible for an additional $40 per hour.
  - Attorneys requesting additional compensation for when interpretation is required must notify CAPDS as soon as possible as to the need and receive services through the courts to be eligible.
    This rate applies to capital cases and is in addition to the hourly rate established in the fee schedule.

COMPENSATION FOR REPRESENTATION AT MAGISTRATION

The Program Administrator shall implement a program for panel attorney participation at first appearance (magistration) as approved by Travis County. Compensation for assigned counsel will range from $75 per hour to $150 per hour based on the day and time of the shift and include additional compensation for shifts occurring on holidays recognized by Travis County. The CAPDS shall implement a schedule for assigned counsel, a schedule of approved compensation, and review and authorize payment according to the policies and procedures adopted by CAPDS.

COMPENSATION FOR REPRESENTATION IN CERTAIN RELATED MATTERS

The Program Administrator shall implement a pilot program for representation in a limited number of matters related to criminal cases. All representation must be approved by CAPDS in advance and be related to a criminal charge eligible for assigned counsel. Compensation will be at the hourly rate for the related criminal matter. The Program Administrator may limit the number of hours compensated for any related matter.

The matters permitted are:

- Protective Orders and Emergency Protective Orders
- Parole Hearings
- Administrative License Revocation Hearings
- Expunctions, where the client is eligible at the time of disposition or within 30 days of disposition.

COMPENSATION FOR THE VISITATION OF INCARCERATED CLIENTS

Assigned counsel shall be compensated for reasonable and necessary travel to facilitate in-person visitation with incarcerated clients, as follows:

- Attorneys will be compensated for the time spent at the jail visiting a client pursuant to the policies of CAPDS.
- For visitation of clients housed at the Travis County Jail, no additional compensation is authorized.
- For visitation of clients housed within Travis County, but not at the Travis County Jail, attorneys may claim a travel fee of $50. This fee may only be claimed once per location per day and only for the first client visited. This fee is the total compensation for the travel to and from any eligible location. No additional compensation for travel is authorized. The payment of a travel fee is subject to the policies of CAPDS and will only be paid for reasonable and necessary travel.
- For visitation of clients housed outside of Travis County, attorneys must have prior written approval of CAPDS to be compensated for reasonable and necessary travel. Attorneys will receive 50% of the hourly rate for time spent actively traveling and mileage based on the approved IRS mileage rate. The payment of a travel fee is subject to the policies of CAPDS. Additional travel expenses may be approved by CAPDS only when they are reasonable and necessary.

SPECIALTY COURT ASSIGNED ATTORNEYS

Attorneys assigned by CAPDS or the court to serve as program-specific counsel for a specialty court shall be compensated at an hourly rate of $85 per hour.

INVESTIGATOR COMPENSATION

Investigators shall be compensated at an hourly rate of $75 per hour for services provided on or after the effective date of this order, subject to the policies and procedures of the courts and CAPDS. In exceptional cases, where the State has announced it will seek the death penalty, a higher rate may be approved based on the experience and ability of the investigator.

For investigative matters requiring out-of-county travel, investigators must have prior written approval of CAPDS to be compensated for reasonable and necessary travel. Investigators will receive 50% of the hourly rate for time spent actively traveling and mileage based on the approved IRS mileage rate. The payment of a travel fee is subject to the policies of CAPDS. Additional travel expenses may be approved by CAPDS only when they are reasonable and necessary.

MITIGATION SPECIALIST COMPENSATION

Mitigation specialists shall be compensated at an hourly rate of $85 per hour, subject to the policies and procedures of the courts and CAPDS.

EXPENSES

Assigned counsel will be compensated for all necessary and reasonable expenses approved by the Program Administrator prior to the expense being incurred, excluding capital cases seeking death, which require written approval of the Court for major expenses.

REQUESTS FOR PAYMENTS

Requests for payment should be submitted no later than 30 days after disposition utilizing the online vouchering system and under the policies adopted by the Program Administrator. Failure to provide timely requests for payment may result in denial of payment and other disciplinary action.

Approved and Ordered this 3rd day of November, 2026.

Judge Clifford Brown
147th District Court

Judge Dayna Blazey
167th District Court

Judge Karen Sage
299th District Court

Judge Chantal Eldridge
331st District Court

Judge Julie Kocurek
390th District Court

Judge Brandy Mueller
403rd District Court

Judge Tamara Needles
427th District Court

Judge Brad Urrutia
450th District Court

Judge Selena Alvarenga
460th District Court