

District Court Appointed Felony Attorney Fee Processing Guidelines

The Court will not pay travel time. The Court will consider reimbursement for mileage upon request; mileage traveling to the Courts Building will *not* be considered. All attorney bills must be reviewed by District Court Administration unless authorized by the Court – *or* – the attorney is requesting a flat fee. Here is a [link to the current fee schedule for the Criminal District Courts of Denton County, Texas](#).

Attorney bills for probation, pretrial diversion, and specialty courts must be submitted to District Court Administration **two business days prior to the date of the plea hearing**. If these bills are not submitted timely the attorney may be required to accept a flat fee, reset the plea hearing, or have the Court review and approve the bill.

Attorney bills for jail or prison time can be turned in prior to the date of the plea hearing, at the time of the plea hearing, or after the disposition of the case(s). If the attorney bill is submitted over one year after date of disposition, the Court will have the discretion to accept the bill and process for payment.

Attorney bills for cases the attorney has been removed from (e.g. substituted) can be submitted after the date of removal. Attorney bills for cases, which have been dismissed or declined, can be submitted after date of disposition. Attorney bills for adjudication/revocation proceedings, which have been withdrawn or disposed of, can be submitted after resolution of the case. If the attorney bill is submitted over one year after date of disposition, the Court will have the discretion to accept the bill and process for payment.

Except on good cause shown, no partial payment or advance payment will be made on cases. However, payment for the trial court disposition may be paid pending appeal with payment for the services performed on appeal made at the conclusion of all appeals.

The current authorized fees for District Court are as follows:

Attorney Rate **\$125/hour** **\$200/hour for lead counsel on capital murder**

Legal Assistant Rate **\$65.00/hour**

Investigator Rate **\$75.00/hour**

Attorneys are required to file a Motion to Appoint and corresponding Order Appointing a Private Investigator. If additional funds are required, an Amended Motion and Order must be submitted to the Court. The Court may consider not paying a private investigation bill if no Order for payment was authorized in advance.

Mileage Rate **Standard IRS Mileage Rate at time of visit: [IRS Mileage Website](#)**

All attorneys appointed to complete an Appeal **are required to submit a hard copy of the BRIEF** with Attorney Fees Expense Claim Form to District Court Administration. Electronic copies of appeal briefs are not accepted.

Jail visits must be documented by the jail for each attorney visit. If the visit is not documented the Court may consider not accounting time for the visit. ****Attorneys will have the ability to submit supporting documentation such as information for the other defendant they were visiting on the same day for those funds to be considered for payment.****

Attorney office visits and phone calls will *not* be paid for updating their client's family/friends. This [link](#) will help provide family members the reasons why attorneys are not required to talk to them about their client's case. If a family member is being used as a witness in a trial, helping provide medical records, working on a bond, etc. then the itemized billing should designate this information clearly to be considered for payment.

One copy of an itemized billing statement is required when submitting attorney bills which are not the flat fee. District Court Administration no longer accepts bills being emailed; they must be efiled or provided in hard copy form. **Disputes regarding the amount of payment should be addressed with the designated District Court judge**. If the case is unfiled, please contact District Court Administration so you can be directed to the appropriate judge.

Attorneys on an appointment list are required to have an e-mail address and fax number on file with the Court. **All attorneys are required to have their primary business address within Denton County and registered with the Texas State Bar for verification or attorney will be automatically removed from Felony Appointment List.** We appreciate everyone's commitment to serve the citizens of Denton County.

If a defendant fails to appear [FTA] in a felony case and a Judgment Nisi is issued then **appointed counsel can submit a bill for payment after the defendant has been missing for 30 days**. Counsel will be removed, and a new application will be processed upon defendant's arrest.

District Court Administration : 7-15-09; 1-27-10; 7-19-10; 10-13-10; 3-14-11; 5-13-11; 1-6-12 ;12-4-12; 4-3-13; 1-8-14; 9-15-14; 3-19-15; 4-10-15; 9-17-15; 1-6-16, 9-21-17, 6-22/18, 8-18-20, 3/11/21, 10/7/21, 9/14/22