

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.

The attorney should present the court with a completed Attorney Fees Expense Claim Form and itemized billing for jail/prison pleas upon disposition of the case, but in no event more than 20 days after disposition of the case. All bills for the 431st District Court should be submitted directly to the 431st District Court; District Court Administration does not review these bills.

**** Hard copies of attorney fee expense claim forms are required; electronic copies will not be accepted. ****

If a defendant will be receiving probation or Pre-Trial Diversion, appointed counsel will need to submit their request for payment **TWO** business days before the Plea date. This will allow time for District Court Administration to review the bill and make a recommendation to the Court on attorney fees and ensure said attorney fees are included in the probation Order/Judgement. Pre-Trial Diversion requires an Order for payment of attorneys fees be signed prior to Pre-Trial Diversion contract being entered so that defendant reimburses Denton County for court appointed attorney fees. **This is required.**

The current authorized fees for District Court are as follows:

Attorney Rate **\$125/hour**

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. ***

Mileage Rate **\$.575/mile**

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 (except for cases out of the 431st District Court). 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.

Itemized billing statements are to be submitted in **duplicate**. Please **only submit the itemized billing statement** to District Court Administration for review and recommendation, then attach it to your attorney fee expense claim form for the Court to consider. 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