

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

SENATE BILL 899

By: Weaver

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to the Indigent Defense Act; amending 22 O.S. 2021, Sections 1355.7, 1355.13, and 1358, which relate to appointment of private attorneys, death penalty cases, and reassignment of cases; authorizing reassignment of certain cases for conflict of interest; expanding authorization for payment at certain rate for certain cases; increasing limit on compensation for certain attorneys in capital cases; authorizing reassignment of cases for certain purposes; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 22 O.S. 2021, Section 1355.7, is amended to read as follows:

Section 1355.7. A. If the Executive Director determines that a conflict of interest exists ~~at the trial level~~ between a ~~defendant~~ client of the Oklahoma Indigent Defense System and an attorney employed or contracted by the System, or that efficient management of System resources justify reassignment, the case may be reassigned by the Executive Director to another attorney employed by the System, or to a private attorney with whom the System has a contract

1 for indigent defense or who is included on a list of attorneys as
2 provided in subsection ~~E~~ B of this section.

3 ~~B. If the Executive Director determines that a conflict of
4 interest exists at the trial level between a defendant and an
5 attorney who represents indigents either pursuant to a contract with
6 the System or as assigned by the System, the case may be reassigned
7 by the Executive Director to an attorney employed by the System,
8 another attorney who represents indigents pursuant to a contract
9 with the System, or another private attorney who has agreed to
10 accept such assignments pursuant to subsection C of this section.~~

11 ~~E.~~ Assignment of a case by the System to a private attorney in
12 all counties of this state served by the System shall be from a list
13 of attorneys willing to accept ~~such~~ assignments and who meet the
14 qualifications established by the System for ~~such~~ the assignments.

15 ~~D. C.~~ Payment to ~~such~~ private attorneys shall be made by the
16 System and shall be at rates approved by the System, subject to the
17 statutory limits established in Sections 1355.8 and 1355.13 of this
18 title ~~for cases at the trial level.~~

19 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 22 O.S. 2021, Section 1355.13, is
20 amended to read as follows:

21 Section 1355.13. A. In every case in which the defendant is
22 subject to the death penalty and an attorney or attorneys other than
23 an attorney or attorneys employed by the Indigent Defense System are
24 assigned to the case by the System to provide representation, an
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1 attorney or attorneys must submit a claim or claims in accordance
2 with the provisions of the Indigent Defense Act in such detail as
3 required by the System. Except as provided in subsection B of this
4 section, total compensation for non-System attorneys who serve as
5 ~~lead~~ counsel in capital cases shall not exceed ~~Twenty Thousand~~
6 ~~Dollars (\$20,000.00) per case. Total compensation for a non-System~~
7 ~~attorney who is co-counsel with a System or non-System attorney in a~~
8 ~~capital case shall not exceed Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00)~~
9 Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) per case.

10 B. The maximum statutory fee established in this section may be
11 exceeded only upon a determination made by the Executive Director
12 and approved by the Board that the case is an exceptional one which
13 requires an extraordinary amount of time to litigate, and that the
14 request for extraordinary attorney fees is reasonable.

15 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 22 O.S. 2021, Section 1358, is
16 amended to read as follows:

17 Section 1358. If the Executive Director determines that a
18 conflict exists after evaluating a case assigned pursuant to Section
19 1356 of this title or that the efficient management of System
20 resources justify reassignment, the Executive Director shall
21 reassign the case in the same manner as is provided for ~~conflicts~~
22 case reassignments at the trial level in Section 1355.7 of this
23 title, unless the case is from a county subject to the provisions of
24 Section 138.1a of Title 19 of the Oklahoma Statutes and the indigent

1 defendant was not represented at trial by the county indigent
2 defender. If the Executive Director determines a conflict exists in
3 a case from a county subject to the provisions of Section 138.1a of
4 Title 19 of the Oklahoma Statutes and the indigent defendant was not
5 represented at trial by the county indigent defender, the county
6 indigent defender shall be appointed to represent the indigent
7 defendant. The appointment of the county indigent defender shall be
8 made by the district court at the time the appeal is initiated or by
9 the Court of Criminal Appeals after the appeal is initiated. If the
10 district court, at the time the appeal is initiated, or the Court of
11 Criminal Appeals, after the appeal has been initiated, determines
12 that the county indigent defender also has a conflict of interest in
13 the case, the district court, initially or on remand from the Court
14 of Criminal Appeals, shall appoint counsel in the same manner as is
15 provided for conflicts at the trial level in Section 138.7 of Title
16 19 of the Oklahoma Statutes, by reassigning the case to another
17 county indigent defender, an attorney who represents indigents
18 pursuant to contract, or a private attorney has agreed to accept
19 such appointments.

20 SECTION 4. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

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