



Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

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To: Children's Representation Program Attorneys

From: Jill Malat

Re: Travel Reimbursement Policy

Date: October 6, 2015

The Office of Civil Legal Aid has a limited amount of funds available for reimbursement for case related out-of-county travel. The purpose of this policy is to help OCLA-funded attorneys comply with the Meaningful Legal Representation for Children and Youth in Washington's Child Welfare System Standards of Practice in cases where they are representing children outside of their county of practice. The standards call for attorneys to maintain sufficient and frequent contact with clients, including communicating in person.

In person contact, where possible, is key to the attorney's duty to gain the child's trust and confidence. The standards also call for attorneys to communicate regularly with numerous professionals involved in the child's dependency case. Some of these communications may require attorney to travel to other counties. With these standards in mind, the following policies apply:

- Contractors will be reimbursed for travel outside of county only.
- There is no guarantee that funds will be available. Reimbursement will be provided as long as funds are available.
- Regardless of whether funds are available, attorneys are expected to find ways to meet with their clients, consistent with applicable standards.
- Travel must be directly case related and necessary for standards-based, effective representation.
- Contractor must select the travel alternative that is most economical.
- Contractors will be reimbursed at the rate set by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) which as of 1/1/15 is .54 per mile.
- Prior OCLA approval is required for any air travel. Air travel must be scheduled through the Children's Representation Program Manager.
- Request for prior approval must be submitted at least 10 days prior to date of travel.
- Contractors must complete the travel voucher form provided by OCLA and provide the supporting information/documentation (date of travel, purpose for travel, mileage, starting location and ending location).