

FOR DAVIDSON COUNTY ATTORNEYS:
MEETING REGARDING JUDICIAL HOSPITALIZATION CONTRACTS

Wednesday, May 13, 2015 1:00 PM

A recent amendment to Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 13 authorizes the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to enter into contracts for representation of indigent litigants by attorneys working on various types of cases, including representation of indigent Respondents facing involuntary emergency judicial hospitalization pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 33-6-401 et seq..

The AOC will be hosting a meeting in Nashville on Wednesday, May 13, to introduce plans for the transition to attorney contracts for these cases. All licensed attorneys are welcome to attend.

These cases have been identified as a top priority for the use of contracts. Over the years, the overall cost of that representation has been high, even though individual fee claims admittedly have not. This is the result of a system based on hourly billing that by design may have attorneys billing for repetitive tasks in increments that, although small, appear to be a distortion of the time actually needed to complete the tasks being billed. The AOC has determined that method of billing for these cases needs to be modified to more accurately reflect the work being performed. The replacement will be a contract system that will pay attorneys taking these cases a flat rate per docket that they handle.

Judges will continue to have the discretion to assign attorneys, but only attorneys who have agreed to do this work on these terms will receive appointments. Attorneys will simply submit one invoice to the AOC (as opposed to completing numerous fee claims) for each docket along with a copy or copies of the order(s) appointing him or her to that docket. Because the invoice substantially decreases the paperwork associated with the underlying cases, attorneys will be paid more quickly. This system should result in approximately the same average payment for each individual case based on historical data from Davidson County.

The meeting will be held in the 3rd floor multi-purpose room of the A.A. Birch Building. Go through the main AABB security and take the public elevators to 3rd floor. There will be staff there to allow you into the private meeting room. The meeting will begin at 1:00 PM, Wednesday, May 13. All interested attorneys are invited to attend.