



Administrative Policies
And Procedures
Tennessee Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts

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Approved by: Chief Justice Frank F. Drowota, III and Cornelia A. Clark, Director

Subject: Reimbursement of General Office Expenses For Judges

- I. Authority: T. C. A. § 8-26-101
- II. Purpose: To establish policies and guidelines governing the reimbursement of general office expenses for state judges.
- III. Application: Justices of the Supreme Court, Judges of the Intermediate Appellate Courts, Criminal Court Judges, Circuit Court Judges, Chancellors of Tennessee, and Child Support Referees funded by the Administrative Office of the Courts.
- IV. Definitions:

Judge(s): Justices of the Supreme Court, Judges of the Intermediate Appellate Courts, Criminal Court Judges, Circuit Court Judges, Chancellors of Tennessee, and Child Support Referees funded by the Administrative Office of the Courts.
- V. Policy: All Judges shall be reimbursed for their necessary office rent, office supply and equipment expenses. Such expenses are paid in addition to the regular salary of the judge.
- VI. Procedures:
 - A. Reimbursable Office Expenses
 1. Office Space: While some judges may travel to several counties within a judicial district, each judge will have one office. All state judges' offices should be located in local courthouses. See T.C.A. §16-2-505 (d)(1). If it is not possible for the County Executive to furnish suitable space within the courthouse, the County Executive must submit to the judge in writing his/her reasons for refusal. Upon receipt of written notice from the County Executive, the judge may commence the following process to secure a lease for private office space.

When suitable space is located, at least one independent, market value appraisal should be obtained in order to determine the fair market value of such space. The appraisal, the requested lease amount, and a copy of the County Executive's statement regarding the unavailability of space

shall be submitted to the Administrative Office of the Courts for review and approval before any leases are finalized. No reimbursement will be allowed without prior approval of the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

2. Office Supplies and Telephone Expenses: Judges are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable and customary office expenses, including, but not limited to office supplies, cleaning supplies, and business telephone expenses.

When relocating offices, please contact the Finance Division regarding telephone service changes, and the Technology Services Division regarding relocation of computer equipment. This includes relocation within the same building.

Telephone systems purchased and installed by the State require direct monthly billing to the State. No personal calls may be billed to these phones. Therefore, it is anticipated that judges and staff will obtain personal credit cards or make separate billing arrangements when private long distance calls are made on those systems.

Cellular phones are not provided to judges, nor is reimbursement for monthly service. However, the cost of cellular business phone calls will be reimbursed. An itemized cellular bill should be remitted with the expense claim. Each business call should be checked off (✓) to identify all calls to be reimbursed.

3. Purchase of Law Books/Legal Research Materials: The following publications or other materials are normally supplied to each judge as part of his/her minimum law library according to their jurisdiction:
 - a. Tennessee Code Annotated
 - b. Tennessee Decisions
 - c. Tennessee Practice Vol. 3 - 4
 - d. Tennessee Pattern Jury Inst. Civil Vol. 7
 - e. Tennessee Pattern Jury Inst. Criminal Vol. 8
 - f. Tennessee Practice Vol. 9 - 11
 - g. Tennessee Digest or Tennessee Jurisprudence
 - h. Shepard's Tennessee Citations Book & Diskette
 - i. Tennessee Attorney's Memo
 - j. Tennessee Attorney's Directory
 - k. Tennessee Tort Law Letter
 - l. Tennessee Law of Evidence by Paine
 - m. Pritchard on Wills & Estates
 - n. Lexis - Law on Disc
 - o. Lexis online
 - p. Tennessee Rules of Court (State & Federal)

Note. Should any of the above publications be deemed non-essential to office operations, contact the Finance Division.

DO NOT ORDER BOOKS OR PUBLICATIONS DIRECTLY. Write the Finance Division and request legal publications necessary for the operation of your office. Please include the publication title, author's name, publisher's name and address and the cost. Should this office determine such purchases to be necessary and within budgetary guidelines, we will order them for you and notify you of such action.

Judges who elect to have the state update their own sets of previously purchased books are deemed to have donated those books to the state. At the conclusion of service those supplemented or replaced sets remain the property of the state.

Upon receipt of books/publications, send any shipping or packing receipts to our office for our records. If no receipt was included, please notify our office. Send all your shipping/packing receipts or letters written by you verifying receipt with your monthly expense claims to our office.

If you are receiving books and/or supplements that are no longer necessary, please write us and we will discontinue your subscription.

4. Computer Equipment and Internet Access. The Technology Services Division will provide you with a list of standard equipment and services provided to each judge and assistant. State-provided computer equipment is for business use only, and only state approved software may be operated on the equipment. See guidelines for appropriate usage in Policy 1.03 *Policy Regarding the Use of State Owned Computers*.

Judges may request a dial up Internet Access account. Such request should be directed to the Assistant Director of Technology Services. All accounts are provided through Earthlink ISP, where there are local access numbers, or an ISP local to the judge. Earthlink accounts will be paid for directly by the AOC and require no reimbursement claim. Local ISP billing must be arranged between the judge and the ISP. Expenses incurred must be filed on a separate Internet Access Claim form. Billings can be paid monthly or annually. Internet Access Claims should be submitted to:

Administrative Office of the Courts
Technology Services
Suite 520
511 Union Street
Nashville, TN 37219

On accounts established with Local ISPs, the following guidelines should be noted:

- The AOC will not be responsible for direct billing of the ISP.
 - The Local ISP must allow the use of Microsoft Internet Explorer.
 - The AOC will not be responsible for maintaining or supporting the account.
 - The AOC will support State provided phone lines and modems.
5. Furnishings and Equipment: Books, computers, furniture and office equipment are to be passed to a new judge by his or her predecessor. Requests for new or replacement office furnishings or equipment that cost more than \$100.00 should be submitted in writing to the Administrative Director for prior approval. No reimbursement will be allowed without prior approval. Contact the Fiscal Office for assistance in procuring furniture, fax and copy machines. Computer-related purchases should be requested through the Technology Division.

Annual inventories are conducted and all equipment must be accounted for each year. A departing judge may also be asked to assist in a special inventory before leaving service, and will be personally responsible for any failure to return state equipment in good condition.

Contact the Finance Division of the Administrative Office of the Courts regarding the transfer, removal, disposal, or theft of any office inventory items. Where appropriate, that Division will also notify the Technology Services Division.

6. Judicial Robes: Judges are entitled to reasonable reimbursement for the purchase of robes, not to exceed \$250.00. You may contact someone locally to purchase robes or contact the following out-of-state vendors:

Academic Choir Apparel
6867 Farmdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91605
(818) 886-8697

Harbro Church Arts, Inc.
196 S. Van Brunt Street
Englewood, NJ 07631
(800) 223-0040

Josten's
Post Office Box 527
Owatonna, MN 55060-0527
(800) 845-9291

B. General Provisions

1. No reimbursements will be allowed without original receipts or invoices.
2. No gifts, money, or anything of value whatsoever should be accepted from any person or firm with whom purchases of materials, supplies or equipment are made.

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3. Claims for reimbursement should be submitted no later than thirty (30) days after the invoice is paid. Claims submitted after thirty (30) days must include an explanation of the delay. Prior fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) expenses will not be paid if received after August 15 of the next fiscal year.
4. Reimbursement forms (electronic or hardcopy) available from the AOC must be submitted for all expense claims. All requested information must be provided.
5. Charges for long distance business telephone calls will be reimbursed. Long distance charges for personal calls will not be reimbursed.
6. No reimbursement will be allowed to anyone reimbursed by another government entity for such expenses.
7. All requests for supplies, reimbursement or other correspondence related to this policy should be sent to the following:

Administrative Office of the Courts
Finance Division
Nashville City Center, Suite 600
511 Union Street
Nashville, TN 37219