

Assembly Bill No. 648

CHAPTER 454

An act to amend Section 68086 of the Government Code, relating to courts, and making an appropriation therefor.

[Approved by Governor October 1, 2013. Filed with
Secretary of State October 1, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 648, Jones-Sawyer. Court reporters.

Existing law requires the charge of an official court reporter fee, in addition to any other fee required in civil actions or cases. For each proceeding lasting more than one hour, a fee equal to the actual cost of providing that service is required to be charged per $\frac{1}{2}$ day of services to the parties, on a pro rata basis. For each proceeding lasting less than one hour, a fee of \$30 is required to be charged for the reasonable cost of the services of an official court reporter. Fees collected pursuant to this provision may be used only to pay for services of an official court reporter in civil proceedings.

This bill would require, for each proceeding anticipated to last one hour or less, the \$30 fee to be charged to the party, or parties if filing jointly, that filed the paper that resulted in the proceeding being scheduled. The bill would require, if no fee is charged, and a party subsequently requests a court reporter, that the requesting party be charged a fee if a court reporter is to be provided by the court. The bill would require the fee to be charged once per case for all proceedings conducted within the same hour if the total time taken by those proceedings is one hour or less. The bill would provide for the deposit of the fee collected into the Trial Court Trust Fund and would provide for the distribution of the fee back to the court from which the fee was collected, thereby making an appropriation. The bill would waive the fee for a person who has been granted a fee waiver.

Appropriation: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 68086 of the Government Code is amended to read:

68086. The following provisions apply in superior court:

(a) In addition to any other fee required in civil actions or cases:

(1) For each proceeding anticipated to last one hour or less, a fee of thirty dollars (\$30) shall be charged for the reasonable cost of the court reporting

services provided at the expense of the court by an official court reporter pursuant to Section 269 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(A) The fee shall be charged to the party, or parties if filing jointly, that filed the paper that resulted in the proceeding being scheduled. If no fee has been charged, and a party subsequently requests a court reporter, that party shall be charged the fee if a reporter is to be provided by the court.

(B) All parties paying the fee shall deposit the fee with the clerk of the court as specified by the court, but not later than the conclusion of each day's court session.

(C) The fee shall be charged once per case for all proceedings conducted within the same hour if the total time taken by those proceedings is one hour or less. If the total time taken exceeds one hour, the fee shall be charged and collected pursuant to paragraph (2).

(D) The fee shall be deposited into the Trial Court Trust Fund and distributed back to the court from which the fee was collected on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

(E) The fee shall be refunded as soon as practicable to the remitting party or parties if no court reporting services were provided.

(2) For each proceeding lasting more than one hour, a fee equal to the actual cost of providing that service shall be charged per one-half day of services to the parties, on a pro rata basis, for the services of an official court reporter on the first and each succeeding judicial day those services are provided pursuant to Section 269 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(A) All parties shall deposit their pro rata shares of these fees with the clerk of the court as specified by the court, but not later than the conclusion of each day's court session.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, "one-half day" means any period of judicial time, in excess of one hour, but not more than four hours, during either the morning or afternoon court session.

(b) The fee shall be waived for a person who has been granted a fee waiver under Section 68631.

(c) The costs for the services of the official court reporter shall be recoverable as taxable costs by the prevailing party as otherwise provided by law.

(d) The Judicial Council shall adopt rules to ensure all of the following:

(1) That parties are given adequate and timely notice of the availability of an official court reporter.

(2) That if an official court reporter is not available, a party may arrange for the presence of a certified shorthand reporter to serve as an official pro tempore reporter, the costs therefor recoverable as provided in subdivision (c).

(3) That if the services of an official pro tempore reporter are utilized pursuant to paragraph (2), no other charge shall be made to the parties.

(e) The fees collected pursuant to this section shall be used only to pay the cost for services of an official court reporter in civil proceedings.

(f) The Judicial Council shall report on or before February 1 of each year to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee on the fees collected by courts

pursuant to this section and Section 68086.1 and on the total amount spent for services of official court reporters in civil proceedings statewide in the prior fiscal year.

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