

Title 25: Indians

[PART 23—INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT](#)

[Subpart B—Notice of Involuntary Child Custody Proceedings and Payment for Appointed Counsel in State Courts](#)

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§ 23.13 Payment for appointed counsel in involuntary Indian child custody proceedings in state courts.

(a) When a state court appoints counsel for an indigent Indian party in an involuntary Indian child custody proceeding for which the appointment of counsel is not authorized under state law, the court shall send written notice of the appointment to the BIA Area Director designated for that state in §23.11. The notice shall include the following:

- (1) Name, address, and telephone number of attorney who has been appointed.
- (2) Name and address of client for whom counsel is appointed.
- (3) Relationship of client to child.
- (4) Name of Indian child's tribe.
- (5) Copy of the petition or complaint.
- (6) Certification by the court that state law makes no provision for appointment of counsel in such proceedings.
- (7) Certification by the court that the Indian client is indigent.

(b) The Area Director shall certify that the client is eligible to have his or her appointed counsel compensated by the BIA unless:

- (1) The litigation does not involve a child custody proceeding as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903 (1);
- (2) The child who is the subject of the litigation is not an Indian child as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903 (4);
- (3) The client is neither the Indian child who is the subject of the litigation, the Indian child's parent as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903 (9), nor the child's Indian custodian as defined in 25 U.S.C. 1903 (6);
- (4) State law provides for appointment of counsel in such proceedings;
- (5) The notice to the Area Director of appointment of counsel is incomplete; or
- (6) Funds are not available for the particular fiscal year.

(c) No later than 10 days after receipt of the notice of appointment of counsel, the Area Director shall notify the court, the client, and the attorney in writing whether the client has been certified as eligible to have his or her attorney fees and expenses paid by the BIA. If certification is denied, the notice shall include written reasons for that decision, together with a statement that complies

with 25 CFR 2.7 and that informs the applicant that the decision may be appealed to the Assistant Secretary. The Assistant Secretary shall consider appeals under this subsection in accordance with 25 CFR 2.20 (c) through (e). Appeal procedures shall be as set out in part 2 of this chapter.

(d) When determining attorney fees and expenses, the court shall:

(1) Determine the amount of payment due appointed counsel by the same procedures and criteria it uses in determining the fees and expenses to be paid appointed counsel in state juvenile delinquency proceedings; and

(2) Submit approved vouchers to the Area Director who certified eligibility for BIA payment, together with the court's certification that the amount requested is reasonable under the state standards considering the work actually performed in light of criteria that apply in determining fees and expenses for appointed counsel in state juvenile delinquency proceedings.

(e) The Area Director shall authorize the payment of attorney fees and expenses in the amount requested in the voucher approved by the court unless:

(1) The amount of payment due the state-appointed counsel is inconsistent with the fees and expenses specified in §23.13 (d)(1); or

(2) The client has not been certified previously as eligible under paragraph (c) of this section; or

(3) The voucher is submitted later than 90 days after completion of the legal action involving a client certified as eligible for payment of legal fees under paragraph (b) of this section.

(f) No later than 15 days after receipt of a payment voucher, the Area Director shall send written notice to the court, the client, and the attorney stating the amount of payment, if any, that has been authorized. If the payment has been denied, or the amount authorized is less than the amount requested in the voucher approved by the court, the notice shall include a written statement of the reasons for the decision together with a statement that complies with 25 CFR 2.7 and that informs the client that the decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Indian Appeals in accordance with 25 CFR 2.4 (e); 43 CFR 4.310 through 4.318 and 43 CFR 4.330 through 4.340.

(g) Failure of the Area Director to meet the deadline specified in paragraphs (c) and (f) of this section may be treated as a denial for purposes of appeal under paragraph (f) of this section.

(h) Payment for appointed counsel does not extend to Indian tribes involved in state court child custody proceedings or to Indian families involved in Indian child custody proceedings in tribal courts.