

252B.6A External services.

1. Provided that the action is consistent with applicable federal law and regulation, an attorney licensed in this state shall receive compensation as provided in this section for support collected as the direct result of a judicial proceeding maintained by the attorney, if all of the following apply to the case:

a. The unit is providing services under this chapter.

b. The current support obligation is terminated and only arrearages are due under an administrative or court order and there has been no payment under the order for at least the twelve-month period prior to the provision of notice to the unit by the attorney under this section.

c. Support is assigned to the state based upon cash assistance paid under chapter 239B, or its successor.

d. The attorney has provided written notice to the central office of the unit and to the obligee at the last known address of the obligee of the intent to initiate a specified judicial proceeding, at least thirty days prior to initiating the proceeding.

e. The attorney has provided documentation to the unit that the attorney is insured against loss caused by the attorney's legal malpractice or acts or omissions of the attorney which result in loss to the state or other person.

f. The collection is received by the collection services center within ninety days of provision of the notice to the unit. An attorney may provide subsequent notices to the unit to extend the time for receipt of the collection by subsequent ninety-day periods.

2. a. If, prior to February 15, 1998, notice is provided pursuant to subsection 1 to initiate a specific judicial proceeding, this section shall not apply to the proceeding unless the unit consents to the proceeding.

b. (1) If, on or after February 15, 1998, notice is provided pursuant to subsection 1 to initiate a specific judicial proceeding, this section shall apply to the proceeding only if the case is exempt from application of rules adopted by the department pursuant to subparagraph (2) which limit application of this section.

(2) The department shall adopt rules which include, but are not limited to, exemption from application of this section to proceedings based upon, but not limited to, any of the following:

(a) A finding of good cause pursuant to section 252B.3.

(b) The existence of a support obligation due another state based upon public assistance provided by that state.

(c) The maintaining of another proceeding by an attorney under this section for which the unit has not received notice that the proceeding has concluded or the ninety-day period during which a collection may be received pertaining to the same case has not yet expired.

(d) The initiation of a seek employment action under section 252B.21, and the notice from the attorney indicates that the attorney intends to pursue a contempt action.

(e) Any other basis for exemption of a specified proceeding designated by rule which relates to collection and enforcement actions provided by the unit.

3. The unit shall issue a response to the attorney providing notice within ten days of receipt of the notice. The response shall advise the attorney whether the case to which the specified judicial proceeding applies meets the requirements of this section.

4. For the purposes of this section, a "judicial proceeding" means an action to enforce support filed with a court of competent jurisdiction in which the court issues an order which identifies the amount of the support collection which is a direct result of the court proceeding. "Judicial proceedings" include but are not limited to those pursuant to chapters 598, 626, 633, 642, 654, or 684 and also include contempt proceedings if the collection payment is identified in the court order as the result of such a proceeding. "Judicial proceedings" do not include enforcement actions which the unit is required to implement under federal law including, but not limited to, income withholding.

5. All of the following are applicable to a collection which is the result of a judicial proceeding which meets the requirements of this section:

a. All payments made as the result of a judicial proceeding under this section shall be made to the clerk of the district court or to the collection services center and shall not be

made to the attorney. Payments received by the clerk of the district court shall be forwarded to the collection services center as provided in section 252B.15.

b. The attorney shall be entitled to receive an amount which is equal to twenty-five percent of the support collected as the result of the specified judicial proceeding not to exceed the amount of the nonfederal share of assigned support collected as the result of that proceeding. The amount paid under this paragraph is the full amount of compensation due the attorney for a proceeding under this section and is in lieu of any attorney fees. The court shall not order the obligor to pay additional attorney fees. The amount of compensation calculated by the unit is subject, upon application of the attorney, to judicial review.

c. Any support collected shall be disbursed in accordance with federal requirements and any support due the obligee shall be disbursed to the obligee prior to disbursement to the attorney as compensation.

d. The collection services center shall disburse compensation due the attorney only from the nonfederal share of assigned collections. The collection services center shall not disburse any compensation for court costs.

e. The unit may delay disbursement to the attorney pending the resolution of any timely appeal by the obligor or obligee.

f. Negotiation of a partial payment or settlement for support shall not be made without the approval of the unit and the obligee, as applicable.

6. The attorney initiating a judicial proceeding under this section shall notify the unit when the judicial proceeding is completed.

7. a. An attorney who initiates a judicial proceeding under this section represents the state for the sole and limited purpose of collecting support to the extent provided in this section.

b. The attorney is not an employee of the state and has no right to any benefit or compensation other than as specified in this section.

c. The state is not liable or subject to suit for any acts or omissions resulting in any damages as a consequence of the attorney's acts or omissions under this section.

d. The attorney shall hold the state harmless from any act or omissions of the attorney which may result in any penalties or sanctions, including those imposed under federal bankruptcy laws, and the state may recover any penalty or sanction imposed by offsetting any compensation due the attorney under this section for collections received as a result of any judicial proceeding initiated under this section.

e. The attorney initiating a proceeding under this section does not represent the obligor.

8. The unit shall comply with all state and federal laws regarding confidentiality. The unit may release to an attorney who has provided notice under this section, information regarding child support balances due, to the extent provided under such laws.

9. This section shall not be interpreted to prohibit the unit from providing services or taking other actions to enforce support as provided under this chapter.

97 Acts, ch 41, §32; 97 Acts, ch 175, §35