



# Assigned Counsel Division Newsletter

## Time Reporting

Volume 23—August 2020

ACD runs reports on daily hourly totals. Attorneys need to be very careful that they aren't inadvertently reporting time on the wrong date or reporting time that has already been reported on a previously submitted time slip (this often occurs with travel entries). The SPD can't amend a time slip submitted with inaccurate entries. An attorney who submits an inaccurate time slip may be asked to recreate and resubmit the time slip. Attorneys billing over 12 hours a day or other unusual totals, may be contacted and asked to verify time slips.

On a related matter, "bundling" is the practice of reporting multiple differing tasks in one time slip entry. For example, selecting "Legal Work Other—Explain" as the Detail Type and then in the Detail column explaining, "reviewed discovery, researched other acts, phone call with client." Each of the three tasks has its own Detail Type (Review Discovery, Legal Research—Explain, Client Phone/Video Conference) and should be a separate time slip entry under the correct Detail Type. An attorney who submits a time slip with bundled entries may be asked to recreate and resubmit the time slip.



## In-Court Wait Time

Attorneys may bill only for the time actually spent providing professional legal services on a case. If an attorney has hearings or conferences for multiple clients in a day, the total in-court and waiting time must be split between the cases. If wait time occurs while the attorney is in his or her office, and/or while the attorney can be doing other work, the wait time is not reimbursable.



## Companion Cases

"Companion Cases" are two or more cases to which an attorney is appointed to represent the same client, which proceed during roughly the same time frame, and which have the same drop down menu in the SPD online billing site. SPD policy calls for an attorney to bill his/her time and expenses for all companion cases on an invoice for one companion cases and submit other invoices for \$0 for the other companion cases.

The "Text File Drop\_Down Options" document on the Instructions page of the SPD Online Billing Site lists the types of cases that have the same drop-down menus. For example, a felony and a misdemeanor have the same drop-down menus, so they can be billed as companion cases. A revocation and a misdemeanor do not have the same drop-down menus, so they can't be billed as companion cases.

If an attorney mistakenly submits invoices for 2 or more non-companion cases as if they were companion cases, ACD will send the attorney a copy of the timeslip and delete the invoices. This will cause cases to reappear on the attorney's billable cases list and the attorney can then bill time for each case.

## Billing Questions???

You will find answers to many of your questions on our website. [Click here](#) to be redirected to our website Billing Terms and Conditions.

**CLE Credits**  
An attorney must complete six (6) credits of continuing legal education each calendar year in SPD case type areas in order to remain on the SPD appointment list. You have until September 4, 2020, to submit 2019 credits. Credits are reported through the SPD online billing system. If you have any questions, please contact: Mark Rinehart - rinehartm@opd.wi.gov.

## Danny Berkos Award

The Wisconsin State Public Defender is now accepting nominations for the 3rd Annual Danny Berkos Private Bar Award. The award recognizes a member of the Assigned Counsel pool for his or her exceptional service to indigent defense. The ideal candidate will have consistently displayed great dedication and excellence representing SPD clients and by working to help improve services for indigent defense. The recipient will be chosen by members of the SPD Board and the award will be presented during the SPD's Annual Criminal Defense Conference in November. The SPD is grateful for all that the private bar attorneys do to improve defense services and to provide high quality legal services to our clients.

[Click here](#) to be directed to the nomination form

### Upcoming Events:

#### Hold the date:

The Training Division has announced that the 2020 Annual Criminal Defense Conference will be held November 5-6, 2020 and conducted virtually. Watch your email for details.

If you still need credits for this year, please [click here](#) and be redirected to our Training Division website page.