

THE STATE BAR ACT

Evidence relating to claims of malpractice and professional misconduct, shall be admissible only to the extent that those claims bear upon the fees, costs, or both, to which the attorney is entitled. The arbitrators shall not award affirmative relief, in the form of damages or offset or otherwise, for injuries underlying the claim. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the arbitrators from awarding the client a refund of unearned fees, costs, or both previously paid to the attorney.

(b) Even if the parties to the arbitration have not agreed in writing to be bound, the arbitration award shall become binding upon the passage of 30 days after service of notice of the award, unless a party has, within the 30 days, sought a trial after arbitration pursuant to Section 6204. If an action has previously been filed in any court, any petition to confirm, correct, or vacate the award shall be to the court in which the action is pending, and may be served by mail on any party who has appeared, as provided in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1003) of Title 14 of Part 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure; otherwise it shall be in the same manner as provided in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1285) of Title 9 of Part 3 of the Code of Civil Procedure. If no action is pending in any court, the award may be confirmed, corrected, or vacated by petition to the court having jurisdiction over the amount of the arbitration award, but otherwise in the same manner as provided in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 1285) of Title 9 of Part 3 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(c) Neither party to the arbitration may recover costs or attorney's fees incurred in preparation for or in the course of the fee arbitration proceeding with the exception of the filing fee paid pursuant to subdivision (a) of this section. However, a court confirming, correcting, or vacating an award under this section may award to the prevailing party reasonable fees and costs incurred in obtaining confirmation, correction, or vacation of the award including, if applicable, fees and costs on appeal. The party obtaining judgment confirming, correcting, or vacating the award shall be the prevailing party except that, without regard to consideration of who the prevailing party may be, if a party did not appear at the arbitration hearing in the manner provided by the rules adopted by the board of trustees, that party shall not be entitled to attorney's fees or costs upon confirmation, correction, or vacation of the award.

(d) (1) In any matter arbitrated under this article in which the award is binding or has become binding by operation of law or has become a

judgment either after confirmation under subdivision (c) or after a trial after arbitration under Section 6204, or in any matter mediated under this article, if: (A) the award, judgment, or agreement reached after mediation includes a refund of fees or costs, or both, to the client and (B) the attorney has not complied with that award, judgment, or agreement the State Bar shall enforce the award, judgment, or agreement by placing the attorney on involuntary inactive status until the refund has been paid.

(2) The State Bar shall provide for an administrative procedure to determine whether an award, judgment, or agreement should be enforced pursuant to this subdivision. An award, judgment, or agreement shall be so enforced if:

(A) The State Bar shows that the attorney has failed to comply with a binding fee arbitration award, judgment, or agreement rendered pursuant to this article.

(B) The attorney has not proposed a payment plan acceptable to the client or the State Bar.

However, the award, judgment, or agreement shall not be so enforced if the attorney has demonstrated that he or she (i) is not personally responsible for making or ensuring payment of the refund, or (ii) is unable to pay the refund.

(3) An attorney who has failed to comply with a binding award, judgment, or agreement shall pay administrative penalties or reasonable costs, or both, as directed by the State Bar. Penalties imposed shall not exceed 20 percent of the amount to be refunded to the client or one thousand dollars (\$1,000), whichever is greater. Any penalties or costs, or both, that are not paid shall be added to the membership fee of the attorney for the next calendar year.

(4) The board shall terminate the inactive enrollment upon proof that the attorney has complied with the award, judgment, or agreement and upon payment of any costs or penalties, or both, assessed as a result of the attorney's failure to comply.

(5) A request for enforcement under this subdivision shall be made within four years from the date (A) the arbitration award was mailed, (B) the judgment was entered, or (C) the date the agreement was signed. In an arbitrated matter, however, in no event shall a request be made

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prior to 100 days from the date of the service of a signed copy of the award. In cases where the award is appealed, a request shall not be made prior to 100 days from the date the award has become final as set forth in this section. (Added by Stats. 1978, ch. 719. Amended by Stats. 1982, ch. 979; Stats. 1984, ch. 825; Stats. 1989, ch. 1416; Stats. 1990, ch. 483; Stats. 1992, ch. 1265; Stats. 1993, ch. 1262, Stats. 1996, ch. 1104; Stats. 2009, ch. 54; Stats. 2011, ch. 417.)

§ 6204 Agreement to be Bound by Award of Arbitrator; Trial After Arbitration in Absence of Agreement; Prevailing Party; Effect of Award and Determination

(a) The parties may agree in writing to be bound by the award of arbitrators appointed pursuant to this article at any time after the dispute over fees, costs, or both, has arisen. In the absence of such an agreement, either party shall be entitled to a trial after arbitration if sought within 30 days, pursuant to subdivisions (b) and (c), except that if either party willfully fails to appear at the arbitration hearing in the manner provided by the rules adopted by the board of trustees, that party shall not be entitled to a trial after arbitration. The determination of willfulness shall be made by the court. The party who failed to appear at the arbitration shall have the burden of proving that the failure to appear was not willful. In making its determination, the court may consider any findings made by the arbitrators on the subject of a party's failure to appear.

(b) If there is an action pending, the trial after arbitration shall be initiated by filing a rejection of arbitration award and request for trial after arbitration in that action within 30 days after service of notice of the award. If the rejection of arbitration award has been filed by the plaintiff in the pending action, all defendants shall file a responsive pleading within 30 days following service upon the defendant of the rejection of arbitration award and request for trial after arbitration. If the rejection of arbitration award has been filed by the defendant in the pending action, all defendants shall file a responsive pleading within 30 days after the filing of the rejection of arbitration award and request for trial after arbitration. Service may be made by mail on any party who has appeared; otherwise service shall be made in the manner provided in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 413.10) of Title 5 of Part 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Upon service and filing of the rejection of arbitration award, any stay entered pursuant to Section 6201 shall be vacated, without the necessity of a court order.

(c) If no action is pending, the trial after arbitration shall be initiated by the commencement of an action in the court having jurisdiction over the amount of money in controversy within 30 days after service of notice of the award. After the filing of such an action, the action shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of Part 2 (commencing with Section 307) of the Code of Civil Procedure, concerning civil actions generally.

(d) The party seeking a trial after arbitration shall be the prevailing party if that party obtains a judgment more favorable than that provided by the arbitration award, and in all other cases the other party shall be the prevailing party. The prevailing party may, in the discretion of the court, be entitled to an allowance for reasonable attorney's fees and costs incurred in the trial after arbitration, which allowance shall be fixed by the court. In fixing the attorney's fees, the court shall consider the award and determinations of the arbitrators, in addition to any other relevant evidence.

(e) Except as provided in this section, the award and determinations of the arbitrators shall not be admissible nor operate as collateral estoppel or res judicata in any action or proceeding. (Added by Stats. 1978, ch. 719. Amended by Stats. 1979, ch. 878; Stats. 1982, ch. 979; Stats. 1984, ch. 825; Stats. 1992, ch. 1265; Stats. 1996, ch. 1104; Stats. 1998, ch. 798; Stats. 2009, ch. 54; Stats. 2011, ch. 417.)

§ 6204.5 Disqualification of Arbitrators; Post-Arbitration Notice

(a) The State Bar shall provide by rule for an appropriate procedure to disqualify an arbitrator or mediator upon request of either party.

(b) The State Bar, or the local bar association delegated by the State Bar to conduct the arbitration, shall deliver a notice to the parties advising them of their rights to judicial relief subsequent to the arbitration proceeding. (Added by Stats. 1986, ch. 475; Stats. 1996, ch. 1104.)

§ 6206 Arbitration Barred if Time for Commencing Civil Action Barred; Exception

The time for filing a civil action seeking judicial resolution of a dispute subject to arbitration under this article shall be tolled from the time an arbitration is initiated in accordance with the rules adopted by the board of trustees until (a) 30 days after receipt of notice of the award of the arbitrators, or (b) receipt of notice that the arbitration is otherwise terminated, whichever

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comes first. Arbitration may not be commenced under this article if a civil action requesting the same relief would be barred by any provision of Title 2 (commencing with Section 312) of Part 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure; provided that this limitation shall not apply to a request for arbitration by a client, pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (b) of Section 6201, following the filing of a civil action by the attorney. (Added by Stats. 1978, ch. 719. Amended by Stats. 1984, ch. 825; Stats. 2011, ch. 417.)

ARTICLE 14 FUNDS FOR THE PROVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES TO INDIGENT PERSONS

§ 6210 Legislative Findings; Purpose of Program

The Legislature finds that, due to insufficient funding, existing programs providing free legal services in civil matters to indigent persons, especially underserved client groups, such as the elderly, the disabled, juveniles, and non-English-speaking persons, do not adequately meet the needs of these persons. It is the purpose of this article to expand the availability and improve the quality of existing free legal services in civil matters to indigent persons, and to initiate new programs that will provide services to them. The Legislature finds that the use of funds collected by the State Bar pursuant to this article for these purposes is in the public interest, is a proper use of the funds, and is consistent with essential public and governmental purposes in the judicial branch of government. The Legislature further finds that the expansion, improvement, and initiation of legal services to indigent persons will aid in the advancement of the science of jurisprudence and the improvement of the administration of justice. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6211 Definition of Funds to be Deposited in Interest Bearing Demand Trust Account; Interest Earned Paid to State Bar; Other Accounts or Trust Investments; Rules of Professional Conduct; Disciplinary Authority of Supreme Court or State Bar

(a) An attorney or law firm that, in the course of the practice of law receives or disburses trust funds shall establish and maintain an IOLTA account in which the attorney or law firm shall deposit or invest all client

deposits or funds that are nominal in amount or are on deposit or invested for a short period of time. All such client funds may be deposited or invested in a single unsegregated account. The interest and dividends earned on all those accounts shall be paid to the State Bar of California to be used for the purposes set forth in this article.

(b) Nothing in this article shall be construed to prohibit an attorney or law firm from establishing one or more interest bearing bank trust deposit accounts or dividend-paying trust investment accounts as may be permitted by the Supreme Court, with the interest or dividends earned on the accounts payable to clients for trust funds not deposited or invested in accordance with subdivision (a).

(c) With the approval of the Supreme Court, the State Bar may formulate and enforce rules of professional conduct pertaining to the use by attorneys or law firms of an IOLTA account for unsegregated client funds pursuant to this article.

(d) Nothing in this article shall be construed as affecting or impairing the disciplinary powers and authority of the Supreme Court or of the State Bar or as modifying the statutes and rules governing the conduct of members of the State Bar. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 2007, ch. 422.)

§ 6212 Requirements in Establishing Client Trust Accounts; Amount of Interest; Remittance to State Bar; Statements and Reports

An attorney who, or a law firm that, establishes an IOLTA account pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 6211 shall comply with all of the following provisions:

(a) The IOLTA account shall be established and maintained with an eligible institution offering or making available an IOLTA account that meets the requirements of this article. The IOLTA account shall be established and maintained consistent with the attorney's or law firm's duties of professional responsibility. An eligible financial institution shall have no responsibility for selecting the deposit or investment product chosen for the IOLTA account.

(b) Except as provided in subdivision (f), the rate of interest or dividends payable on any IOLTA account shall not be less than the interest rate or dividends generally paid by the eligible institution to nonattorney customers on accounts of the same type meeting the same minimum balance and other eligibility

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requirements as the IOLTA account. In determining the interest rate or dividend payable on any IOLTA account, an eligible institution may consider, in addition to the balance in the IOLTA account, risk or other factors customarily considered by the eligible institution when setting the interest rate or dividends for its non-IOLTA accounts, provided that the factors do not discriminate between IOLTA customers and non-IOLTA customers and that these factors do not include the fact that the account is an IOLTA account. The eligible institution shall calculate interest and dividends in accordance with its standard practice for non-IOLTA customers. Nothing in this article shall preclude an eligible institution from paying a higher interest rate or dividend on an IOLTA account or from electing to waive any fees and service charges on an IOLTA account.

(c) Reasonable fees may be deducted from the interest or dividends remitted on an IOLTA account only at the rates and in accordance with the customary practices of the eligible institution for non-IOLTA customers. No other fees or service charges may be deducted from the interest or dividends earned on an IOLTA account. Unless and until the State Bar enacts regulations exempting from compliance with subdivision (a) of Section 6211 those accounts for which maintenance fees exceed the interest or dividends paid, an eligible institution may deduct the fees and service charges in excess of the interest or dividends paid on an IOLTA account from the aggregate interest and dividends remitted to the State Bar. Fees and service charges other than reasonable fees shall be the sole responsibility of, and may only be charged to, the attorney or law firm maintaining the IOLTA account. Fees and charges shall not be assessed against or deducted from the principal of any IOLTA account. It is the intent of the Legislature that the State Bar develop policies so that eligible institutions do not incur uncompensated administrative costs in adapting their systems to comply with the provisions of Chapter 422 of the Statutes of 2007 or in making investment products available to IOLTA members.

(d) The attorney or law firm shall report IOLTA account compliance and all other IOLTA account information required by the State Bar in the manner specified by the State Bar.

(e) The eligible institution shall be directed to do all of the following:

- (1) To remit interest or dividends on the IOLTA account, less reasonable fees, to the State Bar, at least quarterly.
- (2) To transmit to the State Bar with each

remittance a statement showing the name of the attorney or law firm for which the remittance is sent, for each account the rate of interest applied or dividend paid, the amount and type of fees deducted, if any, and the average balance for each account for each month of the period for which the report is made.

(3) To transmit to the attorney or law firm customer at the same time a report showing the amount paid to the State Bar for that period, the rate of interest or dividend applied, the amount of fees and service charges deducted, if any, and the average daily account balance for each month of the period for which the report is made.

(f) An eligible institution has no affirmative duty to offer or make investment products available to IOLTA customers. However, if an eligible institution offers or makes investment products available to non-IOLTA customers, in order to remain an IOLTA-eligible institution, it shall make those products available to IOLTA customers or pay an interest rate on the IOLTA deposit account that is comparable to the rate of return or the dividends generally paid on that investment product for similar customers meeting the same minimum balance and other requirements applicable to the investment product. If the eligible institution elects to pay that higher interest rate, the eligible institution may subject the IOLTA deposit account to equivalent fees and charges assessable against the investment product. [See Appendix A for Supreme Court order pursuant to Statutes 1981, Chapter 789.] (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 2007, ch. 422; Stats. 2008, ch. 179; Stats. 2009, ch. 129.)

§ 6213 Definitions

As used in this article:

(a) “Qualified legal services project” means either of the following:

(1) A nonprofit project incorporated and operated exclusively in California that provides as its primary purpose and function legal services without charge to indigent persons and that has quality control procedures approved by the State Bar of California.

(2) A program operated exclusively in California by a nonprofit law school accredited by the State Bar of California that meets the requirements of subparagraphs (A) and (B).

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(A) The program shall have operated for at least two years at a cost of at least twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per year as an identifiable law school unit with a primary purpose and function of providing legal services without charge to indigent persons.

(B) The program shall have quality control procedures approved by the State Bar of California.

(b) “Qualified support center” means an incorporated nonprofit legal services center that has as its primary purpose and function the provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support without charge and which actually provides through an office in California a significant level of legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support without charge to qualified legal services projects on a statewide basis in California.

(c) “Recipient” means a qualified legal services project or support center receiving financial assistance under this article.

(d) “Indigent person” means a person whose income is (1) 125 percent or less of the current poverty threshold established by the United States Office of Management and Budget, or (2) who is eligible for Supplemental Security Income or free services under the Older Americans Act or Developmentally Disabled Assistance Act. With regard to a project that provides free services of attorneys in private practice without compensation, “indigent person” also means a person whose income is 75 percent or less of the maximum levels of income for lower income households as defined in Section 50079.5 of the Health and Safety Code. For the purpose of this subdivision, the income of a person who is disabled shall be determined after deducting the costs of medical and other disability-related special expenses.

(e) “Fee generating case” means a case or matter that, if undertaken on behalf of an indigent person by an attorney in private practice, reasonably may be expected to result in payment of a fee for legal services from an award to a client, from public funds, or from the opposing party. A case shall not be considered fee generating if adequate representation is unavailable and any of the following circumstances exist:

(1) The recipient has determined that free referral is not possible because of any of the following reasons:

(A) The case has been rejected by the local lawyer referral service, or if there is no such service, by two attorneys in private practice who have experience in the subject matter of the case.

(B) Neither the referral service nor any attorney will consider the case without payment of a consultation fee.

(C) The case is of the type that attorneys in private practice in the area ordinarily do not accept, or do not accept without prepayment of a fee.

(D) Emergency circumstances compel immediate action before referral can be made, but the client is advised that, if appropriate and consistent with professional responsibility, referral will be attempted at a later time.

(2) Recovery of damages is not the principal object of the case and a request for damages is merely ancillary to an action for equitable or other nonpecuniary relief, or inclusion of a counterclaim requesting damages is necessary for effective defense or because of applicable rules governing joinder of counterclaims.

(3) A court has appointed a recipient or an employee of a recipient pursuant to a statute or a court rule or practice of equal applicability to all attorneys in the jurisdiction.

(4) The case involves the rights of a claimant under a publicly supported benefit program for which entitlement to benefit is based on need.

(f) “Legal Services Corporation” means the Legal Services Corporation established under the Legal Services Corporation Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-355; 42 U.S.C. Sec. 2996 et seq.).

(g) “Older Americans Act” means the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended (P.L. 89-73; 42 U.S.C. Sec. 3001 et seq.).

(h) “Developmentally Disabled Assistance Act” means the Developmentally Disabled Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, as amended (P.L. 94-103; 42 U.S.C. Sec. 6001 et seq.).

(i) “Supplemental security income recipient” means an individual receiving or eligible to receive payments under Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act, or

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payments under Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 12000) of Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

(j) "IOLTA account" means an account or investment product established and maintained pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 6211 that is any of the following:

- (1) An interest-bearing checking account.
- (2) An investment sweep product that is a daily (overnight) financial institution repurchase agreement or an open-end money market fund.
- (3) An investment product authorized by California Supreme Court rule or order.

A daily financial institution repurchase agreement shall be fully collateralized by United States Government Securities or other comparably conservative debt securities, and may be established only with any eligible institution that is "well-capitalized" or "adequately capitalized" as those terms are defined by applicable federal statutes and regulations. An open-end money-market fund shall be invested solely in United States Government Securities or repurchase agreements fully collateralized by United States Government Securities or other comparably conservative debt securities, shall hold itself out as a "money-market fund" as that term is defined by federal statutes and regulations under the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. Sec. 80a-1 et seq.), and, at the time of the investment, shall have total assets of at least two hundred fifty million dollars (\$250,000,000).

(k) "Eligible institution" means either of the following:

- (1) A bank, savings and loan, or other financial institution regulated by a federal or state agency that pays interest or dividends in the IOLTA account and carries deposit insurance from an agency of the federal government.
- (2) Any other type of financial institution authorized by the California Supreme Court. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 1984, ch. 784; Stats. 2007, ch. 422; Stats. 2008, ch. 179; Stats. 2009, ch. 129; Stats. 2010, ch. 328.)

§ 6214 Qualified Legal Service Projects

(a) Projects meeting the requirements of subdivision (a) of section 6213 which are funded either in whole or

part by the Legal Services Corporation or with Older Americans Act funds shall be presumed qualified legal services projects for the purpose of this article.

(b) Projects meeting the requirements of subdivision (a) of section 6213 but not qualifying under the presumption specified in subdivision (a) shall qualify for funds under this article if they meet all of the following additional criteria:

- (1) They receive cash funds from other sources in the amount of at least twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per year to support free legal representation to indigent persons.
- (2) They have demonstrated community support for the operation of a viable ongoing program.
- (3) They provide one or both of the following special services:

(A) The coordination of the recruitment of substantial numbers of attorneys in private practice to provide free legal representation to indigent persons or to qualified legal services projects in California.

(B) The provision of legal representation, training, or technical assistance on matters concerning special client groups, including the elderly, the disabled, juveniles, and non-English-speaking groups, or on matters of specialized substantive law important to the special client groups. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6214.5 Law School Program—Date of Eligibility for Funding

A law school program that meets the definition of a "qualified legal services project" as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 6213, and that applied to the State Bar for funding under this article not later than February 17, 1984, shall be deemed eligible for all distributions of funds made under Section 6216. (Added by Stats. 1984, ch. 784.)

§ 6215 Qualified Support Centers

(a) Support centers satisfying the qualifications specified in subdivisions (b) of section 6213 which were operating an office and providing services in California on December 31, 1980, shall be presumed to be qualified support centers for the purposes of this article.

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(b) Support centers not qualifying under the presumption specified in subdivision (a) may qualify as a support center by meeting both of the following additional criteria:

- (1) Meeting quality control standards established by the State Bar.
- (2) Being deemed to be of special need by a majority of the qualified legal services projects. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6216 Distribution of Funds

The State Bar shall distribute all moneys received under the program established by this article for the provision of civil legal services to indigent persons. The funds first shall be distributed 18 months from the effective date of this article, or upon such a date, as shall be determined by the State Bar, that adequate funds are available to initiate the program. Thereafter, the funds shall be distributed on an annual basis. All distributions of funds shall be made in the following order and in the following manner:

(a) To pay the actual administrative costs of the program, including any costs incurred after the adoption of this article and a reasonable reserve therefor.

(b) Eighty-five percent of the funds remaining after payment of administrative costs allocated pursuant to this article shall be distributed to qualified legal services projects. Distribution shall be by a pro rata county-by-county formula based upon the number of persons whose income is 125 percent or less of the current poverty threshold per county. For the purposes of this section, the source of data identifying the number of persons per county shall be the latest available figures from the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Projects from more than one county may pool their funds to operate a joint, multicounty legal services project serving each of their respective counties.

- (1) (A) In any county which is served by more than one qualified legal services project, the State Bar shall distribute funds for the county to those projects which apply on a pro rata basis, based upon the amount of their total budget expended in the prior year for legal services in that county as compared to the total expended in the prior year for legal services by all qualified legal services projects applying therefor in the county. In determining the amount of funds to be

allocated to a qualified legal services project specified in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 6213, the State Bar shall recognize only expenditures attributable to the representation of indigent persons as constituting the budget of the program.

(B) The State Bar shall reserve 10 percent of the funds allocated to the county for distribution to programs meeting the standards of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3) and paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 6214 and which perform the services described in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3) of Section 6214 as their principal means of delivering legal services. The State Bar shall distribute the funds for that county to those programs which apply on a pro rata basis, based upon the amount of their total budget expended for free legal services in that county as compared to the total expended for free legal services by all programs meeting the standards of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3) and paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (b) of Section 6214 in that county. The State Bar shall distribute any funds for which no program has qualified pursuant hereto, in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) of this subdivision.

(2) In any county in which there is no qualified legal services projects providing services, the State Bar shall reserve for the remainder of the fiscal year for distribution the pro rata share of funds as provided for by this article. Upon application of a qualified legal services project proposing to provide legal services to the indigent of the county, the State Bar shall distribute the funds to the project. Any funds not so distributed shall be added to the funds to be distributed the following year.

(c) Fifteen percent of the funds remaining after payment of administrative costs allocated for the purposes of this article shall be distributed equally by the State Bar to qualified support centers which apply for the funds. The funds provided to support centers shall be used only for the provision of legal services within California. Qualified support centers that receive funds to provide services to qualified legal services projects from sources other than this article, shall submit and shall have approved by the State Bar a plan assuring that the services funded under this

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article are in addition to those already funded for qualified legal services projects by other sources. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 1984, ch. 784.)

§ 6217 Maintenance of Quality Services, Professional Standards, Attorney-Client Privilege; Funds to be Expended in Accordance with Article; Interference with Attorney Prohibited

With respect to the provision of legal assistance under this article, each recipient shall ensure all of the following:

- (a) The maintenance of quality service and professional standards.
- (b) The expenditure of funds received in accordance with the provisions of this article.
- (c) The preservation of the attorney-client privilege in any case, and the protection of the integrity of the adversary process from any impairment in furnishing legal assistance to indigent persons.
- (d) That no one shall interfere with any attorney funded in whole or in part by this article in carrying out his or her professional responsibility to his or her client as established by the rules of professional responsibility and this chapter. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6218 Eligibility for Services; Establishment of Guidelines; Funds to be Expended in Accordance with Article

All legal services projects and support centers receiving funds pursuant to this article shall adopt financial eligibility guidelines for indigent persons.

- (a) Qualified legal services programs shall ensure that funds appropriated pursuant to this article shall be used solely to defray the costs of providing legal services to indigent persons or for such other purposes as set forth in this article.
- (b) Funds received pursuant to this article by support centers shall only be used to provide services to qualified legal services projects as defined in subdivision (a) of section 6213 which are used pursuant to a plan as required by subdivision (c) of section 6216, or as permitted by section 6219. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6219 Provisions of Work Opportunities and Scholarships for Disadvantaged Law Students

Qualified legal services projects and support centers may use funds provided under this article to provide work opportunities with pay, and where feasible, scholarships for disadvantaged law students to help defray their law school expenses. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6220 Private Attorneys Providing Legal Services Without Charge; Support Center Services

Attorneys in private practice who are providing legal services without charge to indigent persons shall not be disqualified from receiving the services of the qualified support centers. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6221 Services for Indigent Members of Disadvantaged and Underserved Groups

Qualified legal services projects shall make significant efforts to utilize 20 percent of the funds allocated under this article for increasing the availability of services to the elderly, the disabled, juveniles, or other indigent persons who are members of disadvantaged and underserved groups within their service area. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6222 Financial Statements; Submission to State Bar; State Bar Report

A recipient of funds allocated pursuant to this article annually shall submit a financial statement to the State Bar, including an audit of the funds by a certified public accountant or a fiscal review approved by the State Bar, a report demonstrating the programs on which they were expended, a report on the recipient's compliance with the requirements of Section 6217, and progress in meeting the service expansion requirements of Section 6221.

The Board of Trustees of the State Bar shall include a report of receipts of funds under this article, expenditures for administrative costs, and disbursements of the funds, on a county-by-county basis, in the annual report of State Bar receipts and expenditures required pursuant to Section 6145. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 2011, ch. 417.)

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§ 6223 Expenditure of Funds; Prohibitions

No funds allocated by the State Bar pursuant to this article shall be used for any of the following purposes:

- (a) The provision of legal assistance with respect to any fee generating case, except in accordance with guidelines which shall be promulgated by the State Bar.
- (b) The provision of legal assistance with respect to any criminal proceeding.
- (c) The provision of legal assistance, except to indigent persons or except to provide support services to qualified legal services projects as defined by this article. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6224 State Bar; Powers; Determination of Qualifications to Receive Funds; Denial of Funds; Termination; Procedures

The State Bar shall have the power to determine that an applicant for funding is not qualified to receive funding, to deny future funding, or to terminate existing funding because the recipient is not operating in compliance with the requirements or restrictions of this article.

A denial of an application for funding or for future funding or an action by the State Bar to terminate an existing grant of funds under this article shall not become final until the applicant or recipient has been afforded reasonable notice and an opportunity for a timely and fair hearing. Pending final determination of any hearing held with reference to termination of funding, financial assistance shall be continued at its existing level on a month-to-month basis. Hearings for denial shall be conducted by an impartial hearing officer whose decisions shall be final. The hearing officer shall render a decision no later than 30 days after the conclusion of the hearing. Specific procedures governing the conduct of the hearings of this section shall be determined by the State Bar pursuant to section 6225. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6225 Implementation of Article; Adoption of Rules and Regulations; Procedures

The Board of Trustees of the State Bar shall adopt the regulations and procedures necessary to implement this article and to ensure that the funds allocated herein are utilized to provide civil legal services to indigent persons, especially underserved client groups such as

but not limited to the elderly, the disabled, juveniles, and non-English-speaking persons.

In adopting the regulations the Board of Trustees shall comply with the following procedures:

- (a) The board shall publish a preliminary draft of the regulations and procedures, which shall be distributed, together with notice of the hearings required by subdivision (b), to commercial banking institutions, to members of the State Bar, and to potential recipients of funds.
- (b) The board shall hold at least two public hearings, one in southern California and one in northern California where affected and interested parties shall be afforded an opportunity to present oral and written testimony regarding the proposed regulations and procedures. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 2011, ch. 417.)

§ 6226 Implementation of Article; Resolution

The program authorized by this article shall become operative only upon the adoption of a resolution by the Board of Trustees of the State Bar stating that regulations have been adopted pursuant to Section 6225 which conform the program to all applicable tax and banking statutes, regulations, and rulings. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789. Amended by Stats. 2011, ch. 417.)

§ 6227 Credit of State Not Pledged

Nothing in this article shall create an obligation or pledge of the credit of the State of California or of the State Bar of California. Claims arising by reason of acts done pursuant to this article shall be limited to the moneys generated hereunder. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

§ 6228 Severability

If any provision of this article or the application thereof to any group or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the other provisions or applications of this article which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this article are severable. (Added by Stats. 1981, ch. 789.)

THE STATE BAR ACT

§ 6243 Written Contract for Legal Services; Reporting of Complaints; Languages for Form of Notice; Failure to Comply

- (a) (1) When a contract for legal services is required in writing pursuant to Section 6148, or is subject to Section 1632 of the Civil Code, an attorney providing immigration reform act services shall provide a written notice informing the client that he or she may report complaints to the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the United States Department of Justice, to the State Bar of California, or to the bar of the court of any state, possession, territory, or commonwealth of the United States or of the District of Columbia where the attorney is admitted to practice law. The notice shall include the toll-free telephone numbers and Internet Web sites of those entities.
- (2) The notice shall be in English and in one of the languages of the forms translated by the State Bar pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (b), if the contract for immigration reform act services was negotiated in one of those languages.
- (3) The notice shall be attached or incorporated into any written contract for immigration reform act services. If the notice is attached to a written contract, it shall be signed by both the attorney and the client.
- (b) (1) The State Bar shall provide the form of the notice required in subdivision (a) and shall post the form and translations on its Internet Web site. The State Bar shall translate the form into the following languages: Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean, Armenian, Persian, Japanese, Russian, Hindi, Arabic, French, Punjabi, Portuguese, Mon-Khmer, Hmong, Thai, Gujarati. The State Bar, upon request, may translate the forms into other languages.
- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), an attorney providing immigration reform act services who meets the criteria of subdivision (b) of Section 6241 shall be responsible for adding and translating the name of, toll-free telephone number of, and information on the Internet Web site for, the bar of the court of any state, possession, territory, or commonwealth of the United States or the District of Columbia in which he or she is admitted to practice law.
- (c) Failure to comply with any provision of this section renders the contract voidable at the option of the

client, and the attorney shall, upon the contract being voided, be entitled to collect a reasonable fee.

(d) This section shall become operative when the State Bar posts on its Internet Web site the form and translations required by paragraph (1) of subdivision (b). The State Bar shall post the form and translations as soon as practicable, but no later than 45 days after the effective date of this section. (Added by Stats. 2013, ch. 574.)