

# ABOUT THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

Created by the California State Legislature in 1927, the State Bar is an administrative arm of the California Supreme Court. Its mission is to serve the people of California through careful oversight of the legal profession. The State Bar's primary functions are:

- Licensing the 250,000 attorneys in California
- Regulating the profession and practice of law
- Enforcing the Rules of Professional Conduct and State Bar Act for attorneys
- Disciplining attorneys who violate rules and laws
- Administering the California Bar Exam
- Advancing access to justice
- Promoting diversity and inclusion in the legal system

The State Bar cannot represent clients or refer them to a particular attorney. If you need an attorney, the State Bar can connect you with legal aid providers or a lawyer referral service in your community that you can trust.

## Follow the State Bar:



## THE CLIENT SECURITY FUND



For more information about the Client Security Fund, write or call:

*The State Bar of California  
Client Security Fund  
845 South Figueroa Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90017-2515  
213-765-1140  
[clientsecurityfund@calbar.ca.gov](mailto:clientsecurityfund@calbar.ca.gov)  
[www.calbar.ca.gov/Client-Security-Fund](http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Client-Security-Fund)*



To file a discipline complaint against a California attorney, go online to our website, write or call:

*The State Bar of California  
Intake Unit  
845 South Figueroa Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90017-2515  
800-843-9053  
[www.calbar.ca.gov/FileComplaint](http://www.calbar.ca.gov/FileComplaint)*



For information in languages other than English, call:

*California State Bar Multilingual  
Complaint Hotline  
800-843-9053*



The State Bar *of California*

Information in this pamphlet is valid as of October 2019.

## THE CLIENT SECURITY FUND

We are here to help

Have You Lost  
Money or Property  
Because of Attorney  
Misconduct?



The State Bar  
*of California*

# THE CLIENT SECURITY FUND

The Client Security Fund reimburses people who have lost money or property because of the dishonest conduct of an attorney. The State Bar manages the Fund, which is entirely paid for by California attorneys.

The Fund has helped thousands of people recover losses due to the dishonest conduct of attorneys and has distributed millions of dollars to victims.

To qualify for reimbursement, you must show that the attorney received money or property from you—or settlement or other funds that were owed to you—and then acted dishonestly, as defined in the Client Security Fund's rules. Generally, the attorney must have been disciplined, disbarred, or resigned from the State Bar, or be deceased. Each application is evaluated individually to determine if it meets these and other Fund rules.

Filing an application for reimbursement from the Fund is free. To apply, you do not need an attorney to represent you, and you do not need to be a U.S. citizen. If your loss qualifies, the Fund can reimburse the amount of the loss you suffered, up to a maximum of \$100,000.



Looking for information about legal services in your native language?  
Call the State Bar at 866-44-CA-LAW.

This pamphlet is also available in:

Spanish Español • Vietnamese Tiếng Việt  
Korean 한국어 • Chinese 中文  
• Russian Русский • Tagalog

## HOW THE CLIENT SECURITY FUND CAN HELP YOU

The Client Security Fund was established to reimburse people who have lost money or property because of the dishonest conduct of an attorney.



### What losses qualify?

Here are examples of losses that may qualify for reimbursement:

- Theft of personal injury settlement funds or other funds entrusted to the attorney
- The attorney's failure to refund unearned fees when the attorney did not perform services
- Borrowing money from a client without the intention or ability to repay it



### What losses do not qualify?

The Fund does not reimburse a loss unless an attorney acted dishonestly as defined by the Fund's rules. The Fund does not reimburse interest, expenses, or consequential losses caused by the attorney, such as fees paid to another attorney or damages caused by the attorney's malpractice, negligence, or incompetence.



### Who can apply?

If you meet the criteria, you can apply for reimbursement. However, certain people are not eligible. For example, if you are the spouse or close relative of the attorney, or are the attorney's business partner, employer, or employee, the Fund cannot reimburse you. You do not need to be a U.S. citizen to apply.



### Who decides whether an application will be paid?

The Client Security Fund Commission administers the Fund. The Commission is made up of five volunteers—three attorneys and two people who are not attorneys—appointed by the State Bar's Board of Trustees.



### How can I apply?

Application forms are available online. You may also write or call the State Bar's Client Security Fund, and we can mail the forms to you. See contact information on the back panel of this pamphlet.



### What other actions do I need to take?

You should gather and save all of your receipts, bank records and other relevant documents that show the payments you made to the attorney or payment the attorney received on your behalf. If you have not already done so, you need to file a complaint against the attorney with the State Bar. The complaint form is available on the State Bar's website ([www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov)) in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Russian. See additional contact information on the back panel of this pamphlet.