

## Litigation Fund FAQs

### Where can I find the policy and required forms?

The Litigation Fund policy can be found at:

<https://probonomd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/FY2024-2025-Litigation-Fund-Policy.pdf>

The online request form can be found at:

<https://www.tfaforms.com/4753444>

### What cases are eligible for the Litigation Fund?

The Litigation Fund is only available to volunteer attorneys handling cases through MLSC-funded organizations, and cases must be pro bono, Judicare, collaborative family law cases through the Judicare Project, or, in some instances, low bono/reduced fee. A list of MLSC-funded organizations can be found at: <https://www.mlsc.org/grants/current/>. If you are unsure of your case's eligibility, please contact Liz Twigg at [ltwigg@probonomd.org](mailto:ltwigg@probonomd.org).

### Is there special timing that I should keep in mind?

The Litigation Fund operates on a fiscal year calendar (July 1 to June 30) and closes each year on July 1. Generally, you should plan to submit requests within 60 days of the incurred expense. However, all requests for reimbursement of FY2025 expenses (expenses incurred July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) MUST be submitted to PBRC no later than July 1, 2025 to be considered for reimbursement under the Fund.

### Are there minimum and maximum amounts for requests from the Fund?

Yes. Per the Litigation Fund Policy, PBRC automatically denies requests that total \$10.00 or less. Up to \$1,000 can be used per year toward litigation expenses in one or more pro bono cases. If desired, the full cap of \$1,500 can be used to support litigation expenses in one or more Judicare cases. Cases that span more than one year may receive up to a total of \$2,000 over the lifetime of the case. The Litigation Fund is a limited resource, however, and PBRC cannot guarantee that every volunteer or case will receive the maximum allowed. Please negotiate a pro bono or reduced fee rate whenever feasible.

### Does the Litigation Fund ever run out?

Sometimes the entire Fund is exhausted before the end of the fiscal year. As a result, PBRC encourages you to be as timely as possible in submitting requests (generally within 60 days of the incurred expense but no later than July 1, 2025 for expenses incurred July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) and to seek preapproval before incurring large expenses you expect to be reimbursed.

### What do I need to submit besides the request form?

Along with the request form, please include documentation for each claimed expense (e.g., receipts, invoices, cancelled checks, etc.). If you are requesting mileage reimbursement, please you are encouraged to include documentation from Google Maps or MapQuest showing your claimed mileage.

If you are seeking funds for an expert or a deposition, these requests MUST be pre-approved by PBRC to be considered for full reimbursement. Additionally, they are reimbursed only where the attorney

supports the request with a statement that there were no less costly alternatives available that would have been acceptable under general standards of professional practice. Every effort should be made to negotiate a reduced fee from an expert witness.

**What if my exact type of expense is not specified on the policy?**

The Litigation Fund Policy does not specify all allowed expenses, and the Fund has been used to cover expenses like transcripts, process servers, reproduction of subpoenaed records, and publication fees, for example. If you have an eligibility question about an expense, please contact Liz Twigg at [ltwigg@probonomd.org](mailto:ltwigg@probonomd.org)

**What is the sponsoring agency?**

The sponsoring agency is the organization which placed the case with you (for example, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service or Mid-Shore Pro Bono).

**Can I submit expenses for more than one case on the same form?**

The new online request form enables you to include multiple cases on each submission. After you complete all expense information for the first case, click “Add another case’s expenses” at the bottom right.

**How fast are requests processed?**

Generally, you will receive your reimbursement check about 3 weeks after PBRC receives your request. PBRC. If you have an urgent or time-sensitive request, please contact Liz Twigg at [ltwigg@probonomd.org](mailto:ltwigg@probonomd.org) or 443-703-3055 as soon as possible to discuss whether expedited processing is feasible.

**I anticipate incurring a large expense in my case, and I will eventually submit a request for reimbursement or direct pay. Should I do anything now?**

Yes! PBRC encourages you to submit a request for pre-approval. Once a request is pre-approved, PBRC will place a hold on the requested funds and will disperse them to you once final documentation is received. Pre-approval helps avoid the possibility of a volunteer incurring an expense and subsequently finding out that there is an eligibility issue or the Fund has been exhausted for the current fiscal year.

**I don’t have the money to cover a large litigation expense; can the Litigation Fund pay for it directly?**

If funding is still available for the fiscal year and other eligibility criteria are met, the answer is usually yes. PBRC encourages you to seek pre-approval of this expense and, particularly if it is time-sensitive, consider contacting Liz Twigg at [ltwigg@probonomd.org](mailto:ltwigg@probonomd.org) or 443-703-3055 as soon as possible to discuss. To request direct payment, select “Direct Pay” on the request form and be sure to indicate the correct payee.

**How do I get funds for an expert witness or a deposition?**

These requests MUST be pre-approved by PBRC to be considered for full reimbursement. Additionally, they are reimbursed only where the attorney supports the request with a statement that there were no less costly alternatives available that would have been acceptable under general standards of professional practice. Every effort should be made to negotiate a reduced fee from an expert witness.