



# California LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

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**DIVISION 3. PROFESSIONS AND VOCATIONS GENERALLY [5000 - 9998.11]** ( *Heading of Division 3 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 30.* )

**CHAPTER 4. Attorneys [6000 - 6243]** ( *Chapter 4 added by Stats. 1939, Ch. 34.* )

**ARTICLE 14. Funds for the Provision of Legal Services to Indigent Persons [6210 - 6228]** ( *Article 14 added by Stats. 1981, Ch. 789, Sec. 1.* )

**6210.** 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, Sec. 1.*)

**6211.** (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.

*(Amended by Stats. 2007, Ch. 422, Sec. 2. Effective January 1, 2008.)*

**6212.** 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 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.

*(Amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 129, Sec. 1. Effective January 1, 2010.)*

**6213.** 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).

(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 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.

*(Amended by Stats. 2010, Ch. 328, Sec. 14. Effective January 1, 2011.)*

**6214.** (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 American 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6214.5.** 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, Sec. 2.)*

**6215.** (a) Support centers satisfying the qualifications specified in subdivision (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.

(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, Sec. 1.)*

**6216.** 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 article are in addition to those already funded for qualified legal services projects by other sources.

*(Amended by Stats. 1984, Ch. 784, Sec. 3.)*

**6217.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6218.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6219.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6220.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6221.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6222.** 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.

*(Amended by Stats. 2011, Ch. 417, Sec. 60. Effective January 1, 2012.)*

**6223.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6224.** 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 decision 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6225.** 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.

*(Amended by Stats. 2011, Ch. 417, Sec. 61. Effective January 1, 2012.)*

**6226.** 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.

*(Amended by Stats. 2011, Ch. 417, Sec. 62. Effective January 1, 2012.)*

**6227.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

**6228.** 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, Sec. 1.)*

### TITLE 3. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Adopted July 2007

#### DIVISION 5. PROVIDERS OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

##### Chapter 2. Legal Services Trust Fund Program

##### Article 1. Administration of the Legal Services Trust Fund Program

###### Rule 3.660 Legal Services Trust Fund Commission

The Board of Trustees of the State Bar of California has established a Legal Services Trust Fund Commission ("Commission") to administer, in accordance with legal requirements and these rules ("Trust Fund Requirements"), revenue from IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts) and other funds remitted to the Legal Services Trust Fund Program of the State Bar.

*Rule 3.660 adopted effective March 6, 2009; amended effective January 1, 2012.*

###### Rule 3.661 Duties of the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission

- (A) The Commission must determine an applicant's eligibility for grants and notify each grant applicant that its application has been approved or denied. If the Commission tentatively approves an application, it issues a notice of the grant award, including the tentative allocation. If the notice requires submission of additional information, the Commission considers the application incomplete pending receipt of the information.
- (B) The Commission must monitor and evaluate a recipient's compliance with Trust Fund Requirements and grant terms. The evaluation may be based on
  - (1) application information, grant reports, and additional information reasonably necessary to determine compliance with Trust Fund Requirements;
  - (2) reasonable site visits scheduled upon adequate notice;
  - (3) an evaluation of a recipient by an impartial third party designated and funded by the Commission; or
  - (4) information from other sources, such as an evaluation provided by the Legal Services Corporation or other funding entity.
- (C) The Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid adopted by the American Bar Association's House of Delegates on August 7, 2006, as limited by the general introduction to the standards, are the guidelines used by the Commission in

approving the quality control procedures and reviewing and evaluating the maintenance of quality service and professional standards of applicant and recipient programs. With due notice, the Commission may also rely on other standards that are consistent with law and generally accepted access to justice principles in the legal aid community.

- (D) The Commission may terminate a grant for noncompliance or take other action in accordance with Article 4 of this chapter.

*Rule 3.661 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

#### Rule 3.662 Legal Services Trust Fund Commission membership and terms

The Commission consists of twenty-one voting members and three nonvoting judicial advisors. At least two members must be or have been within five years of appointment indigent persons as defined by statute.<sup>1</sup> No employee or independent contractor acting as a consultant to a potential recipient of Trust Fund grants may be appointed to the Commission.

- (A) The Board of Trustees appoints fourteen voting members, ten of whom must be licensees of the State Bar and four of whom must be public members who have never been admitted to the practice of law in any United States jurisdiction. Each member serves at the pleasure of the Board for a term of three years that begins and ends at the State Bar annual meeting. Upon completion of an initial term, the Board may reappoint a member for a second three-year term. The Board may extend an initial or second term by one or two years to allow a member to serve as chair or vice-chair.
- (B) The chair of the Judicial Council appoints seven voting members, five of whom must be licensees of the State Bar and two of whom must be public members, as well as three nonvoting judges, one of whom must be an appellate justice. Each member serves at the pleasure of the chair of the Judicial Council for a term of three years.
- (C) The Board of Trustees appoints voting members as chair and vice-chair.

*Rule 3.662 adopted effective March 6, 2009; amended effective January 1, 2012; amended effective September 14, 2014; amended effective January 25, 2019.*

#### Article 2. Construction of certain statutory provisions

#### Rule 3.670 Operation in California by qualified entities

- (A) A qualified legal services project is required by statute to be a nonprofit corporation operating exclusively in California or a program operated exclusively

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<sup>1</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(d).

in California by a nonprofit law school accredited by the State Bar.<sup>2</sup> A qualified legal services project that is a California nonprofit corporation with operations outside California may be considered as meeting the statutory requirement if it otherwise meets Trust Fund Requirements and expends Trust Fund Program grant funds only in California.

- (B) A qualified support center is required by statute to be an incorporated nonprofit legal services center that provides through an office in California a significant level of legal support services to qualified legal services projects on a statewide basis.<sup>3</sup>

*Rule 3.670 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

#### Rule 3.671 Primary purpose and function

- (A) A qualified legal services project is required by statute to have as its primary purpose and function providing legal services without charge to indigent persons.<sup>4</sup> A qualified legal services project applying for Trust Fund Program funds is presumed to have such a purpose and function if 75% or more of the budget for the fiscal year for which it is seeking funds is designated to provide free legal services to indigents, and 75% or more of its expenditures for the most recent reporting year were incurred for such services. The calculation of 75% of expenditures may include a reasonable share of administrative and overhead expenses.
- (B) A qualified support center is required by statute to have as its primary purpose and function the provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support without charge.<sup>5</sup> A qualified support center applying for funds is presumed to have such a primary purpose and function if 75% or more of its budget for the fiscal year for which it is seeking funds is designated to provide such support services, and 75% or more of its expenditures for the most recent reporting year were incurred for such services.
- (C) A qualified legal services project or qualified support center that does not meet the 75% test may nevertheless apply, provided that the applicant can satisfactorily demonstrate that it meets the primary purpose and function requirement by other means.

*Rule 3.671 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

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<sup>2</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(a).

<sup>3</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(b).

<sup>4</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(a)(1).

<sup>5</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(b).

### Rule 3.672 Delivery of legal services

- (A) “Legal services” include all professional services provided by a licensee of the State Bar and similar or complementary services of a law student or paralegal under the supervision and control of a licensee of the State Bar in accordance with law.<sup>6</sup>
- (B) “Legal support services” required by statute to be provided by a qualified support center include but are not limited to
  - (1) professional services to qualified legal services projects; and
  - (2) the direct provision of legal services to an indigent client of a qualified legal services project, provided the services are provided directly to the client
    - (a) as co-counsel with an attorney employed or recruited by a qualified legal services project; or
    - (b) at the request of an attorney employed or recruited by a qualified legal services project that is unable to assist the client.<sup>7</sup>

*Rule 3.672 adopted effective March 6, 2009; amended effective January 25, 2019.*

### Rule 3.673 Permissible uses of funds

- (A) A qualified legal services project or qualified support center must use funds received under Business and Professions Code Section 6216 to provide legal assistance to indigent persons or qualified legal services projects as defined by statute.<sup>8</sup> Reasonable administrative expenditures and overhead required to deliver such services meet the statutory requirement.
- (B) No recipient may use an allocation made under Business and Professions Code Section 6216 to provide services in a fee-generating case, except as described in Business and Professions Code Section 6213(e)(1)-(4). If a recipient determines that a case is not fee generating because it qualifies for a statutory exemption,<sup>9</sup> the recipient must maintain records reflecting the facts that led to that conclusion and any action taken to confirm it. Client reimbursements of nominal costs or expenses are not considered fees. If attorney fees are generated in cases funded by Trust Fund Program grants, the fees must be used only for purposes

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<sup>6</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(a).

<sup>7</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(b).

<sup>8</sup> Business & Professions Code §§ 6216 and 6223.

<sup>9</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6213(e)(1).



permitted by statute.<sup>10</sup> Recipients must maintain complete records of all such fees.

*Rule 3.673 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

### Article 3. Applications and distributions

#### Rule 3.680 Application for Trust Fund Program grants

To be considered for a Trust Fund Program grant, a qualified legal services project or qualified support center seeking a Trust Fund Program grant must submit a timely and complete application for funding in the manner prescribed by the Commission. The applicant must agree to use any grant in accordance with grant terms and legal requirements.

- (A) A qualified legal services project must meet statutory criteria.
- (B) A qualified support center must agree to offer support services in two or more of the following ways: consultation, representation, information services, and training. The board of directors of the support center must establish priorities for providing such services after consulting with legal services attorneys and other relevant stakeholders.
- (C) A support center not in existence prior to December 31, 1980 must demonstrate that it is deemed to be of special need by a majority of qualified legal services projects in accordance with Trust Fund Program procedures. Upon request, the Commission must make available to the applicant a list of all the names and addresses of qualified legal services projects.
- (D) A nonprofit corporation that believes it meets the criteria for a qualified legal services project and qualified support center may submit two applications, one as a project and one as a support center, indicating in each application whether it is to be considered the primary or secondary application. The Commission will consider the secondary application only if the primary application is not approved. No applicant may receive a grant as a qualified legal services project and as a qualified support center.
- (E) An application must include
  - (1) an audited financial statement by an independent certified public accountant for the fiscal year that concluded during the prior calendar year. A financial review in lieu of an audited financial statement may be submitted by an applicant whose gross corporate expenditures were less than the amount specified in the Schedule of Charges and Deadlines;

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<sup>10</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6223.

- (2) information about the maintenance of quality service and professional standards and how the applicant maintains standards, such as internal quality control and review procedures; experience and educational requirements of attorneys and paralegals; supervisory structure, procedures, and responsibilities; job descriptions and current salaries for all filled and unfilled professional and management positions; and fiscal controls and procedures.
- (3) a budget and budget narrative, which must be submitted within thirty days of receipt of a notice of tentative allocation, explaining how funds will be used to provide civil legal services to indigent persons, especially underserved client groups such as, the elderly, the disabled, juveniles, and non-English-speaking persons within the applicant's service area; and
- (4) information about program activities, such as substantive practice areas, extent and complexity of services, a summary of litigation, and populations served.

*Rule 3.680 adopted effective March 6, 2009; amended effective January 25, 2019.*

#### Rule 3.681 Duties of Trust Fund Program grant recipient

The recipient of a Trust Fund Program grant must

- (A) use the grant in accordance with the terms of the grant agreement and Trust Fund Requirements;
- (B) maintain complete financial records, including budgets, to account for the receipt and expenditure of all grant funds and all income earned by a grant recipient from grant-supported activities, such as income from fees for services (including attorney fee awards and reimbursed costs), training, sales and rentals of real or personal property, and interest earned on grant amounts;
- (C) maintain records for five years after completion of services to a client regarding the eligibility of the client and promptly provide such records to the Commission for inspection upon demand;
- (D) annually submit information that describes, in the manner required by the Commission, the grant recipient's maintenance of quality service and professional standards and compliance with program requirements and, as requested by the Commission,
  - (1) information for evaluative purposes about program activities in the prior grant year; and
  - (2) information to enhance the delivery system of legal services;

- (E) cooperate regarding any reasonable site visit;
- (F) submit timely quarterly financial reports and any other information reasonably required by the Commission; and
- (G) pay any noncompliance fees set forth in the Schedule of Charges and Deadlines for processing documents that are substantially noncompliant with Trust Fund Requirements or that are late without permission.

*Rule 3.681 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

#### Rule 3.682 No abrogation of legal or professional responsibilities

Nothing in these rules may limit or impair in any way the professional responsibility of an attorney to provide a client with legal services appropriate to the client's needs. Trust Fund Program applicants and recipients and their staffs; volunteers; consultants; and clients and prospective clients are entitled to all rights and privileges under the law. Nothing in these rules may be interpreted to require a grant applicant or recipient to violate the law.<sup>11</sup>

*Rule 3.682 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

#### Article 4. Requests for review and complaint process

##### Rule 3.690 Receipt of document

For purposes of this article, receipt of a document mailed by staff or the Commission is deemed to be the earlier of either five days after the date of mailing or is the actual time of receipt when staff or the Commission delivers a document physically by courier or otherwise.

*Rule 3.690 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

##### Rule 3.691 Denial or termination of funding

- (A) The Commission has the authority to deny an application for initial funding or for renewal of funding, or to terminate existing funding in accordance with law and these rules.<sup>12</sup> The applicant or grant recipient is entitled to written notice of the denial or termination.
- (B) The applicant or grant recipient may request reconsideration by the Commission.

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<sup>11</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6217(d).

<sup>12</sup> Business & Professions Code § 6224.

- (1) The request must be provided to the Commission in writing within thirty days of receipt of the notice of denial or termination of funding. The request may include additional information.
  - (2) The Commission may affirm its decision, modify its decision, or schedule an informal conference to be held within ninety days of receipt of the request. The applicant or recipient is entitled to written notice of the date, time and place of the conference, and must have an opportunity to present information at the conference.
  - (3) Unless all parties agree otherwise, the Commission must mail or otherwise deliver a written decision within sixty days of the conference.
- (C) Within thirty days of receipt of written notice of the Commission decision on the request for reconsideration, the applicant or grant recipient may file a request for review by the State Bar Court. The request must be submitted to the State Bar Court in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the State Bar on Legal Services Trust Fund Proceedings. Pending a final decision by the State Bar Court, a current grant recipient must continue to receive funding.
- (D) The decision of the Commission on the request for reconsideration is final if the applicant or grant recipient fails to file a timely request for review by the State Bar Court.

*Rule 3.691 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

#### Rule 3.692 Complaints

- (A) Any person or entity may file a formal written complaint that a grant recipient fails to meet Trust Fund Requirements.
- (B) Staff must provide a copy of a formal written complaint to the grant recipient whom it concerns and attempt to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is not resolved within ninety days after staff receives the complaint, staff must provide the Commission, complainant, and recipient with a written report of its efforts to resolve the complaint and recommendation of what action, if any, is appropriate.
- (C) Within thirty days of receipt of the staff report, the complainant and grant recipient may provide the Commission with a written response that may include additional information and may request review by the Commission.
- (D) Within a reasonable time, the Commission or a committee of its members appointed by the Commission must consider the staff report and any response. The Commission or committee must then dismiss the complaint or schedule an informal conference. The complainant and grant recipient are entitled to written notice of a dismissal or the date, time, and place of the conference.

- (E) At the informal conference, the staff member who conducted the investigation must be present barring extenuating circumstances. The complainant and grant recipient must have an opportunity to present information. The Commission must issue a written notice dismissing the complaint; requiring corrective action; or terminating funds. The complainant and recipient are entitled to written notice of the decision.
- (F) If the Commission or committee decides to dismiss the complaint, the decision is final.
- (G) If the Commission or committee decides to terminate funding, within thirty days of receipt of written notice of the decision the grant recipient may file a request for review by the State Bar Court. The request must be submitted to the State Bar Court in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the State Bar on Legal Services Trust Fund Proceedings. Pending a final decision by the State Bar Court, a current grant recipient must continue to receive funding.
- (H) The decision of the Commission to terminate funding is final if the grant recipient fails to file a timely request for review by the State Bar Court.

*Rule 3.692 adopted effective March 6, 2009.*

TITLE 3, DIVISION 5, CHAPTER 2

LEGAL SERVICES TRUST FUND

*Fees previously adopted by the Board of Trustees or mandated by statute.  
Amended effective March 2, 2012; amended effective January 25, 2019.*

<i>Rule</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
3.680(E)(1)	<p>Threshold amount of gross corporate expenditures requiring submission of an audited financial statement.</p> <p>Deadline for applicant to submit an audited or reviewed financial statement for the fiscal year that concluded during the prior calendar year.</p>	\$500,000	<p>Not applicable</p> <p>Promptly when available, and no later than May 1. Upon written request, an extension up to the application deadline may be granted by the State Bar staff. Upon a showing of extraordinary circumstances, the Commission may grant an extension beyond the application deadline. Under no circumstances shall such extension be granted beyond the date upon which grant allocations are determined.</p>

# **Legal Services Trust Fund Program**

## **Eligibility Guidelines**

### **LEGAL SERVICES PROJECTS ONLY**

**The State Bar of California  
180 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-1617**

# Legal Services Trust Fund Program Eligibility Guidelines

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# **Legal Services Trust Fund Program Eligibility Guidelines**

The Legal Services Trust Fund Program Eligibility Guidelines were designed as a brief statement of factors governing eligibility for an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. The Guidelines, together with their Commentary, are intended to incorporate provisions found in the statute (Business and Professions Code §6210, et seq.) and at Title 3, Rules 3.660-3.692 of the Rules of the State Bar of California.

Commentary follows each guideline and is designed to further assist you in seeking an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. Bracketed references are to the Business and Professions Code (B&P Code) and Rules of the State Bar.

## **Requirements for All Applicants**

- 1. To be considered for a Legal Services Trust Fund Program grant, an applicant must submit a timely and complete application for funding in the manner prescribed by the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission (the Commission). To qualify for an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, an applicant must be either:**
  - a. a qualified legal services project (Legal Services Projects Guidelines 2-2.9); or**
  - b. a qualified support center (Support Centers Guidelines 2-2.9).**

**A single applicant may not qualify as both a legal services project and a support center. [Rule 3.680(D)]**

### ***Commentary:***

The main distinction between a legal services project and a support center is found in the primary purpose of the organization. Compare Legal Services Projects Guideline 2.3 with Support Centers Guideline 2.3. You must indicate on your application the status under which you wish to be considered. You may complete the applications for both a legal services project and a support center. If you qualify in the category of first preference, you will not be considered in the second category. If you do not qualify in the category of your first choice, you will be considered for eligibility under the category of your second choice, if your primary purpose and function qualifies you for that category. [Rule 3.671(A)-(C)]

- 1.1. All applicants must include with their applications an assurance that the applicant will use the funds allocated from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program for the purposes set forth in §§6210-6228 of the Business and Professions Code.**

### ***Commentary:***

The application includes an Assurances form. Execution of that form will satisfy the requirements of Guidelines 1.1 - 1.3.

**1.2. Within 30 days after notice of a tentative allocation from the Commission, the applicant must submit a budget and budget narrative for the expenditure of the allocation, including but not limited to:**

**1.2.1. an explanation of how funds shall be utilized to provide civil legal services to indigent persons; and**

**1.2.2. for a qualified legal services project, a description of how the project will make significant efforts to use 20 percent of the funds allocated to increase services to disadvantaged and underserved client groups such as (but not limited to) the elderly, the disabled, juveniles and non-English-speaking persons within the project's service area. [B&P Code §6221; Rule 3.680(E)(3)]**

***Commentary:***

Do not submit a budget with your application. Once the Commission has found your program tentatively eligible and has approved an allocation to your program, you will be notified of a tentative grant allocation. You must then prepare a budget and budget narrative in conformance with Guideline 1.2, explaining your intended use of the funds. This budget and budget narrative will be reviewed by the Commission for conformance with the statute prior to disbursement of funds.

The budget and budget narrative should identify how the proposed allocation will aid in providing civil legal services to indigent persons. The narrative should describe the expected increased benefit to indigent persons as a result of the allocation.

The statute requires that qualified legal services projects make significant efforts to use 20 percent of the allocated funds to increase the availability of service to the elderly, the disabled, juveniles, non-English-speaking persons, or other indigent persons who are members of disadvantaged and underserved groups within your service area. Your narrative should describe specifically how you intend to use 20 percent or more of the proposed allocation to increase services to such disadvantaged and underserved groups.

One method by which a project may demonstrate its use of 20 percent of allocated funds to increase services to disadvantaged and underserved client groups is to enter into subcontracts specifically utilizing 20 percent of the funds for legal services to such client groups.

If you do not demonstrate "significant efforts" through the use of subcontracts, your budget narrative should describe the clients presently served by your project, the additional clients from disadvantaged and underserved client groups that will be served in the future through the use of 20 percent of the funds allocated, and your quantifiable objectives for increased services to such groups.

If your legal services project is part of a corporation that has activities outside California, the proposed budget and budget narrative must explain how the proposed allocation will be used within the state of California, as distinguished

from an increase in the total multi-state budget. The statute prohibits the use of allocated funds outside the state of California.

If your project provides both, legal services and other types of services, your budget and budget narrative must show that the allocation will be used solely for legal services. If your project provides services in both civil and criminal matters, your proposed budget and budget narrative must show that the allocation will be used solely for civil matters. If your project serves some persons who do not fall within the statutory definition of indigent persons (Commentary 2.3.4), your proposed budget and budget narrative must show that the allocation will be used solely for persons who are indigent within that definition. [B&P Code §§6213(d), 6218(a), 6221; Rule 3.680(E)(3)]

If you receive an allocation for more than one county, the budget and budget narrative must show that each allocation will be used to provide services to clients in the county for which it is made.

**1.3. All applications must include an assurance that the applicant:**

***Commentary:***

See Commentary 1.1 above. [B&P Code §§6210, 6217, 6221; Rule 3.682]

- 1.3.1. at all times will honor the attorney-client privilege and will uphold the integrity of the adversary process; and**
- 1.3.2. will not impose restrictions unrelated to statutes and rules of professional conduct on attorneys who provide representation to indigent clients with funds provided in whole or in part from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program; and**
- 1.3.3. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, or age.**

***Commentary:***

The Legal Services Trust Fund Commission recognizes that certain applicants will concentrate on providing legal services to members of specific disadvantaged and underserved groups within their service area, such as elderly, disabled, juveniles, or non-English-speaking persons. The statute is intended to facilitate the provision of free legal services to such disadvantaged and underserved client groups. [B&P Code §§6210 and 6221] The Commission therefore will not regard Guideline 1.3.3 as violated merely by the fact that services are concentrated on (or limited to) specific disadvantaged and underserved client groups within the meaning of Business and Professions Code §§6210 and 6221, so long as the basis for such concentration and limitation is reasonably designed to benefit distinct disadvantaged and underserved groups. The certification required by Guideline 1.3.3 does prohibit any discrimination within the targeted client groups, and prohibits any discrimination on matters other than the selection of eligible clients.

- 1.4. If the Commission or staff requests any further information relating to an applicant's eligibility, or related to the amount of the allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, the applicant must supply that information. However, the Commission is not required to notify applicants if their initial application fails to include information sufficient to demonstrate eligibility. Failure to provide information necessary to the Commission's decisions on eligibility or eligible expenditures (or failure to supply requested information relevant to those decisions) will be grounds for denial of eligibility, or for refusal to recognize part of the applicant's expenditures within the allocation formula. [Rules 3.680(E) and 3.691(A)]

## **Requirements for Legal Services Projects**

2. To be a qualified legal services project, the applicant must meet (a) each of the requirements of Guidelines 1.1-1.3 above, and (b) each of the following requirements of Guidelines 2.1-2.4, and (c) the requirements of either Guideline 2.5 or 2.6. For the Commission to determine the amount of funds to which each qualified legal services project is entitled from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, applicants must also submit the information required in Guidelines 2.7 and 2.8 below. Applicants that meet the requirements of Guideline 2.9 below (*pro bono* programs) will be entitled to additional funds from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program.

***Commentary:***

A qualified legal services project must meet: (1) the requirements applicable to all applicants (see Guidelines 1.1-1.3); (2) the mandatory requirements of 2.1-2.4 applicable to all legal services projects; and (3) either the eligibility presumption described by 2.5 or the requirements for annual cash funds, community support, and special services described by 2.6. In addition to this eligibility information, the applicant must submit the information required in 2.7 and 2.8 in order that the Commission may determine the amount of the allocation. If an applicant recruits attorneys in private practice as its principal means of delivering legal services, it may qualify for an additional allocation under 2.9 below.

- 2.1. The applicant must be a California nonprofit corporation.

***Commentary:***

In order to demonstrate your status as a California corporation, copies of the Articles of Incorporation certified by the California Secretary of State and a current Certificate of Status from the California Secretary of State showing that the corporation is in good legal standing must be filed with the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. To demonstrate your nonprofit status, copies of (1) the determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service granting your application for exemption from the appropriate provisions of subchapter (f) of Chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended and (2) the determination letter from the State Franchise Tax Board granting your application for exemption from the appropriate section of the California Revenue and Taxation Code must be filed with the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. If you have not received such determination letter(s), attach

copy(ies) of your application(s) for exemption, together with an explanation of its/their status. [B&P Code §6213(a)(1); Rules 3.670(A), 3.680(A)]

If you are part of a law school, submit the information described above with respect to the law school. The school must be a nonprofit law school accredited by the State Bar of California, and your program must be an identifiable unit of the school. [B&P Code §§6213(a)(2), 6214.5; Rule 3.670(A)]

**2.2. The organization must operate exclusively in California. An applicant that is part of a corporation that conducts other activities outside California can meet this requirement if all funds granted will be expended in California.**

***Commentary:***

Your legal services project must be operated exclusively in California. If you are part of a corporation that conducts activities outside California, you must assure the Commission that all money granted from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program will be expended exclusively in California. If your corporation conducts activities outside California, explain the nature of those activities and how you propose to segregate funds allocated under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program to assure that they will be expended solely in California.

**2.3. The application must demonstrate through objective information that the organization:**

***Commentary:***

Objective information must be provided to assure that you meet the definitional provisions of Guideline 2.3. Such information must describe the organization specifically and factually, using quantitative information where needed, to demonstrate that it meets each of the requirements of Guidelines 2.3.1-2.3.5. [B&P Code §6213(a); Rules 3.670(A), 3.671(A), 3.680(E)(2)]

Quantitative information that may demonstrate how that organization's services meet the requirements includes the following: numbers of clients who were served during the previous year; hours of time spent on different kinds of services, or on services to different clients in the previous year; accounting records for expenses incurred in providing different kinds of services or services to different clients during the previous year.

If you rely on estimates to demonstrate that you have met these requirements, you must demonstrate that the estimates were derived by a method that is reasonably related to the actual expenditure of funds, and explain the basis of the estimates.

**2.3.1. provides civil legal services**

***Commentary:***

You must provide legal services within the definition of Rule 3.672(A). That rule provides that "legal services include all professional services provided by a member of the State Bar, and similar or complementary services of a law student or a paralegal under the supervision and control of a member of the State Bar in accordance with law." If your organization provides services in

addition to legal services, your application must describe those other activities, identify the percentage of the overall services provided that are not legal services, and state the basis by which you computed that percentage. [Rule 3.671(A)]

### **2.3.2. without charge**

#### ***Commentary:***

Payments by clients for costs and expenses or a processing fee of \$20 or less shall not be considered a “charge” for legal services, so long as the processing fee is administered so that it does not prevent indigent persons from receiving services. If you charge a processing fee, you must establish procedures for waiving the fee for all clients who cannot afford it. You must inform prospective clients of the availability of a waiver at the same time and in the same manner that they are informed of the fee, and in a language the client can understand.

If you charge a processing fee, your application must include information about established procedures for waiving the fee for clients who cannot afford it. The maximum of \$10 per processing fee will be regarded as a qualified expenditure.

If you charge some clients amounts in excess of costs, your application must state the percentage of your work in which such charges are made, and the basis for computing that percentage.

If attorneys’ fees are generated through court awards, such fees must be used to provide further civil legal services without charge to indigent persons. [Rule 3.673(B)]

“Costs and expenses” include any out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the organization (or by *pro bono* attorneys recruited by the organization), including recoverable costs of litigation, copying charges, telephone charges, postage charges, and other out-of-pocket expenses normally charged to clients by attorneys in private practice. An applicant may be considered as providing legal services without charge within the meaning of Guideline 2.3.2 in spite of charges to clients for such items. [Rule 3.673(B)]

### **2.3.3. to persons**

#### ***Commentary:***

You may consider legal services provided to an organization (e.g., an unincorporated association, partnership, or corporation) as services to indigent persons if the organization provides benefits primarily to persons who are indigent as described below in the Commentary on Guideline 2.3.4. In determining whether an organization so qualifies, the Commission will consider at least the following factors: (a) whether the organization is tax exempt under I.R.C. §501(c)(3); (b) the organization’s primary purpose as stated in its bylaws or articles; (c) the number and percentage of indigent persons on the board of directors or principal advisory body of the organization; and (d) the percentage of its members who are indigent persons.

If you provide more than ten percent of your services to organizations (whether qualifying or non-qualifying), your application must identify the five organizations that received the most legal services during the prior calendar year and, for each such organization, supply the information identified above. You need not disclose information protected by the attorney-client privilege. If you provide some portion of your legal services to organizations that do not so qualify, identify the percentage of overall services provided to such non-qualifying organizations, and explain the basis of your computation.

#### **2.3.4. who are indigent**

***Commentary:***

An indigent person is defined by the Business and Professions Code §§6213(d), 6213(g), 6213(h), and 6213(i) as follows:

*“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 which 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 §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.”*

Your application must state the percentage of your organization’s services that were provided during the previous calendar year to clients who did not fall within this definition. You must adopt written financial eligibility guidelines. If your eligibility criteria includes persons who are not indigent within the definition of §6213(d) above, explain how you determined the percentage of clients served that falls outside the definition. If you did not have written financial eligibility guidelines in the prior year, your application must explain the basis of your computation of percentage and supply objective support for the computation. [B&P Code §§6213(d) and 6218]

If you provide legal services for the benefit of a group or class of persons beyond the specific individuals or organizations who are your clients, you may consider the services as “legal services provided to indigent persons” only if the legal matter is primarily for the benefit of indigent persons.

In determining whether a legal matter is primarily for the benefit of indigent persons, the Commission may consider the following factors and any others that aid in making that determination: (1) the forum in which the matter is being pursued, e.g., courts, administrative agency, legislature, etc.; (2) whether named clients are indigent persons or qualifying organizations (under Commentary 2.3.3 above); (3) in the case of a class action, the definition of the class contained in the complaint and proposed or actual class certification orders; (4) a description of the group of individuals that would benefit from a favorable resolution of the legal matter; (5) whether a majority of those who

would benefit are indigent persons; (6) the relation of the legal issues raised by the matter to the needs of indigent persons; and (7) whether indigent persons are disproportionately impacted by the legal issues raised by the matter.

If legal services for the benefit of a group or class of persons beyond the specific individuals or organizations who are your clients constitute more than ten percent of your legal services, your application must identify the ten such legal matters on which you expended the largest amount of funds in the prior calendar year. For each of the matters so identified in your application, describe who would benefit from the services, state whether the matter is primarily for the benefit of indigent persons and, if so, explain the reasons you reached that conclusion. For any such matter that is primarily for the benefit of indigent persons, your description should include the information listed as items (1) through (7) in the preceding paragraph; you must quantify the percentage of your clients who are indigent persons (or organizations qualifying under Commentary 2.3.3 above) and the percentage of the persons who would benefit from the services who are indigent persons. Explain the basis of this information. You need not disclose information protected by the attorney-client privilege.

If some portion of your legal services are for the benefit of a group or class of persons beyond your specific clients and are not primarily for the benefit of indigent persons, identify the percentage of overall services provided in such matters and explain the basis of your computation.

### **2.3.5. as the primary purpose and function of the corporation.**

#### ***Commentary:***

Your application must state the net percentage of the corporation's overall expenses that were incurred in the previous calendar year to provide civil legal services without charge to persons who are indigent. You are required to demonstrate the corporation's primary purpose, and not simply the primary purpose of a part of the corporation. (If your project is operated by a law school, see the last section of this Commentary on Guideline 2.3.5.)

If more than 75 percent of the corporation's expenditure budget for the fiscal year for which it is seeking an allocation is designated for the provision of civil legal services without charge to persons who are indigent, and if 75 percent of its expenditures for the most recent reporting year were incurred for such legal services, the corporation will be presumed to meet the primary purpose and function test. In demonstrating your compliance with this 75 percent test, you cannot include the value of donated services. [Rule 3.671(A)]

An applicant not qualifying for the 75 percent presumption may nevertheless apply for an allocation, demonstrating its purpose and function by other means. An applicant not qualifying for the presumption shall state separately each purpose and function of the corporation, and state what percentage of the expenditures in the most recent calendar year, and what percentage of the budget in the upcoming year, are allocated to each of these separate purposes and functions. The application shall further state the basis for these allocations. [Rule 3.671(C)]



In addition to this submission of expenditure and of budget information, primary purpose and function can be additionally supported by historic expenditure information, by the organization's stated purpose in articles, bylaws or policy statements or case priority guidelines, or by the demonstrated track record of the applicant in providing legal services without charge to indigent persons.

An applicant that operated in previous years as a project within an organization providing substantial services other than legal services to indigent persons, or as an entity other than a corporation, but which has since become a separate California nonprofit corporation whose primary purpose and function is the provision of legal services without charge to indigent persons, may establish its status as a qualified legal services project and its proportionate entitlement to funds based upon financial statements which strictly segregate that portion of the organization's expenditures in prior years which were devoted to civil legal services for indigents. Thus, if you are recently incorporated and previously operated as a part of an umbrella organization, you may utilize the expenditures of your predecessor organization so long as financial statements strictly segregate the expenditures for such legal services.

If your legal services program is operated by an accredited nonprofit law school, you are required only to demonstrate the program's primary purpose, and not the corporation's primary purpose. Your program must be operated exclusively in California and the law school must be accredited by the State Bar of California. The program must have operated for at least two years at a cost of at least \$20,000 per year, as an identifiable law school unit with the primary purpose and function of providing civil legal services without charge to indigent persons. The program may meet the primary purpose test according to the 75 percent test described above or by demonstrating its purpose and function through other means described above. [B&P Code §6213(a)(2)]

**2.4. The application must include a description of the organization's quality control procedures and standards, including but not limited to the matters described in Guidelines 2.4.1-2.4.4:**

***Commentary:***

The American Bar Association's *Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid* are the quality control standards for the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, pursuant to Business & Professions Code §6225 and Rule 3.661(C). These standards are the State Bar's guidelines for review and approval of applicant and recipient program practices.

If you are already subject to quality control reviews by the Legal Services Corporation or the California Department of Aging, describe the quality control review procedures to which you are subject.

Describe your quality control standards and how compliance with each of the subjects listed in Guidelines 2.4.1-2.4.4 is ensured. The Commission is particularly interested in your standards and procedures regarding supervisorial structure, procedures, and responsibilities. [B&P Code §§6123(a) and 6217(a); Rule 3.680(E)(2)]

- 2.4.1. the minimum experience and education requirements for attorney and paralegal employees;
  - 2.4.2. the current salaries and job descriptions for all filled and unfilled management and professional positions, including paralegal personnel;
  - 2.4.3. the minimum experience and educational requirements for attorney supervisors; and
  - 2.4.4. the supervisory structure, procedures and responsibilities.
- 2.5. Applicants must meet the requirements of this, Guideline 2.5, or the requirements of Guideline 2.6. To meet the requirements of this, Guideline 2.5, the applicant must receive at least some funding either:
- 2.5.1. from a grant made to the organization by the Legal Services Corporation or by an Area Agency on Aging distributing Older Americans Act funds; or
  - 2.5.2. from an approved contract with another organization that is a grant recipient meeting the terms of Guideline 2.5.1.

***Commentary:***

In order to qualify under Guideline 2.5 (and thereby waiving the requirements of 2.6), you must receive at least some funding either directly from the Legal Services Corporation (or from an Area Agency on Aging) or by contract with an LSC-funded organization (or by a contract with an Area Agency on Aging-funded organization). If your funding is by contract, the contract must have been approved by LSC or by the state or local agency administering the Older Americans Act funds.

*Legal Services Corporation* is defined in the Business and Professions Code §6213(f) as the Legal Services Corporation established under the Legal Services Corporation Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-355; 42 U.S.C. 2996 and following). *Older Americans Act* is defined in the Business and Professions Code §6213(g) as the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended (Public Law 89-73; 42 U.S.C. 3001, and following). [B&P Code §§6213(f), 6213(g), 6214(a)]

- 2.6. An applicant that does not meet the requirements of Guideline 2.5 must meet each of the requirements of Guidelines 2.6.1-2.6.3 below:
- 2.6.1. The applicant must receive at least \$20,000 annual cash funds from sources other than the Legal Services Trust Fund Program to support the program described in Guideline 2.3 above, and

***Commentary:***

In order to qualify under Guideline 2.6.1, you must demonstrate at least \$20,000 annual cash funds from sources other than the Legal Services Trust Fund Program to support the provision of civil legal services without charge to indigent persons. If you did not receive at least \$20,000 cash funds from such sources in the year immediately preceding the application, you must

demonstrate that your average annual cash funds over some period of years have been at least \$20,000 per year. This computation cannot include the value of any donated services or equipment.

You cannot include money received from fee-generating cases or from court-awarded attorneys' fees. [B&P Code §6214(b)(1)]

If you are applying as a law school program, you must demonstrate the program has operated for at least two years at a cost of at least \$20,000 per year. [B&P Code §6213(2)(A)]

**2.6.2. The applicant must have demonstrated community support for the operation of a viable ongoing program, and**

***Commentary:***

If you have received at least \$20,000 per year annual cash funds from local sources in the community in which you provide your services, such support is sufficient to meet the requirements of Guideline 2.6.2. You may not count contributions from employees of your organization toward the local support requirement of this Guideline 2.6.2, though it can be counted for 2.6.1.

If you cannot show \$20,000 annual local community financial support, you may demonstrate community support through the donation of services or other non-cash contributions, by service of local community leaders on your board of directors, fundraising committees, etc., or by otherwise demonstrating that the community actually supports the operation of a viable ongoing program.

Letters of support from local community leaders are not sufficient to demonstrate the community support required by Guideline 2.6.2. [B&P Code §6214(b)(2)]

**2.6.3. The applicant must provide at least one of the following special services:**

**2.6.3.1. Recruiting substantial numbers of attorneys in private practice who serve without compensation providing the legal services referred to in Guideline 2.3 above, or**

***Commentary:***

In deciding whether you are eligible to apply as a project that recruits substantial numbers of attorneys, the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission will consider several factors. At a minimum you must meet at least one of the following tests:

- a. you recruited at least 30 attorneys who provided services in the previous calendar year; or
- b. you recruited at least five percent of the licensed attorneys in the county you serve who provided services in the previous calendar year; or
- c. the attorneys you recruited donated at least 1,000 hours of legal services for your clients in the previous calendar year.

Provided you meet one of these minimum tests, you may demonstrate your project's recruitment of substantial numbers of attorneys in one or more of the following ways:

- a. the number of attorneys recruited;
- b. the percentage of attorneys in your local service area that donated services through your project;
- c. the verified value of donated civil legal services in comparison to your expenditures and budget;
- d. the number of hours donated by each attorney;
- e. the number of attorneys in your area who have special expertise needed to provide the services your project offers; or
- f. other considerations that may affect the availability of volunteer attorneys in your service area.

Any attorney who is not an employee of the applicant can be considered in private practice, and attorneys may be considered in private practice even though they work for government agencies, corporations, or in non-legal occupations.

Attorneys can be considered to serve without compensation even when they are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, whether by the client, the applicant, or other sources. [B&P Code §6214(b)(3)(A); Guideline 2.3.2 and supporting Commentary]

**2.6.3.2. Providing legal representation, training, or technical assistance on matters concerning special client groups or on matters of specialized substantive law important to special client groups.**

***Commentary:***

*Special client groups* include any underserved or disadvantaged groups, including, without limitation, the elderly, disabled, juveniles, or non-English-speaking persons. [B&P Code §6214 (b)(3)(B)]

**2.7. The application must include a financial statement that includes the total expenditures of the applicant. The financial statement must meet the requirements of Guideline 2.7.1 below.**

**2.7.1. The statement must show expenditures for the completed fiscal year ended most recently before the application deadline, and must be audited or reviewed by an independent certified public accountant. A financial review, in lieu of an audited financial statement, may be submitted by an applicant whose gross corporate expenditures were less than the amount specified in the Schedule of Charges and Deadlines. Applicants must submit a financial statement no later than 90 days after the end of their fiscal year. The required financial statement must be received prior to the disbursement of any funds from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program.**

***Commentary:***

Independent CPA-audited or reviewed statements are required of organizations with gross expenditures of less than \$500,000. Organizations with gross

expenditures in excess of \$500,000 must submit audited statements. If such a statement is unavailable at the time of the application, you may substitute an approximated financial statement, but you must submit an audited or reviewed statement no more than 90 days after the end of their fiscal year. [B&P Code §6222; Rule 3.680(E)(1); Schedule of Charges and Deadlines]

- 2.7.2. The financial statement need not distinguish between legal services without charge to persons who are indigent (within the definition of Guideline 2.3.4 above) and other services performed by the project. However, if an applicant does provide other services, the application must include the approximated information requested on the expenditure form(s) identifying expenses incurred providing any of the following services: legal services/other activities, civil/criminal, free/charged, indigent/non-indigent clients, in-state/out-of-state expenditures.**

***Commentary:***

The amount of your grant will be based in part on the amount of your expenditures in your previous fiscal year for civil legal services without charge to indigent persons. See Guidelines 2.3.1 through 2.3.4 for the definitions the Commission will use to determine the portion of your expenditures that are qualified to be counted in determining your grant allocation. [B&P Code §6216(b)]

Records that may be used to demonstrate the portion of the organization's expenses that qualify to be counted in determining the grant allocation include the following: records of the numbers of clients served during the previous year; records reflecting time spent on different kinds of services or on services to indigent/non-indigent clients in the previous year; accounting records reflecting expenses incurred providing different kinds of services or on services to indigent/non-indigent clients during the previous year.

If you rely on estimates to establish the amount of your qualified expenditures, you must make the estimates by a method that is reasonably related to the actual expenditure of funds and explain the basis of the estimates.

- 2.7.3. The financial statement must disclose and segregate any amounts paid to or received from another program applying for an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program.**

***Commentary:***

In order to avoid double counting, funds contributed by one program to another program, when both are applicants for an allocation from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, must be disclosed in the financial statements of both programs. In determining allocations, such funds will be counted only for the program receiving the funds, unless those programs have executed a contrary agreement differently allocating the credit for the contributed funds between the two programs. If an agreement is made, both programs must provide a copy of such agreement to the Commission.

- 2.8. The application must state the counties in which the legal services described in Guideline 2.3 above are provided. An applicant that provides such services in more than one county must state the total expenditures made for services in each county and explain the basis of the by-county allocation. In allocating total expenditures among counties on Legal Services Trust Fund Program applications, an applicant must use a method that is reasonably related to the actual expenditure of funds and explain the basis of the allocation.**

***Commentary:***

You may qualify for allocations only in counties you are presently serving. If you are presently serving more than one county, allocate the expenditures that meet the requirements of Guideline 2.3 by county, explaining the basis for your allocation. The Commission will evaluate whether your allocation is reasonably related to the actual expenditure of funds in light of the particular characteristics of your organization and your services. The allocation information does not need to be audited. [B&P Code §6216(b)]

The following are some of the bases for allocation of expenses among counties served that the Commission has found in past years to be reasonable under appropriate circumstances: numbers of clients served who reside in each county; number of cases handled in each county; actual or estimated hours of service provided in each county, or provided to clients who reside in each county; actual expenses of providing service to clients in each county, including both personnel and non-personnel expenses; statistics that establish the geographic distribution by county of persons who will benefit from the services provided. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to use a combination of these or other methods to arrive at an allocation method that is reasonably related to the actual expenditure of funds. If you rely on estimates, you must make the estimates by a method that is reasonably related to the expenditure of funds and explain the basis of the estimates.

If you allocate expenses to counties other than those in which your individual or organizational clients reside, or those in which you provided the services, the allocation must be reasonably related to the geographic distribution of the indigent persons who will benefit from the services. In evaluating the reasonableness of such allocations, the Commission may consider the following factors and any others that aid in making that determination: (1) the forum in which the matter is being pursued, e.g., courts, administrative agency, legislature, etc.; (2) whether the matter can be expected to establish a precedent and the anticipated scope or breadth of that precedent; (3) in the case of a class action, the definition of the class contained in the complaint and proposed or actual class certification orders; (4) a description of the group of individuals that would benefit from a favorable resolution of the legal matter; and (5) the legal issues raised by the matter.

For a legal matter or matters for which you allocate expenses based on residence of persons other than your individual clients, your application must identify the legal matters and, for each matter, provide the information listed in items (1) through (5) in the preceding paragraph. You should also identify the geographic and numeric distribution of the persons the matter may benefit and your approximate expenditures for the matter. Explain the basis of this

information. You need not disclose information protected by the attorney-client privilege.

**2.9. An applicant wishing to qualify for the additional allocation reserved for organizations that demonstrate the volunteer services of private lawyers as their principal means of delivering legal services must meet each of the following requirements:**

**2.9.1 the requirements of Guideline 2.6.3.1 above; and**

**2.9.2 the applicant's principal means of delivering legal services is the recruitment of attorneys in private practice.**

***Commentary:***

See Commentary concerning Guideline 2.6.3.1. One method by which you may demonstrate that such recruitment is your project's principal means of legal services delivery is to show by objective evidence that the attorneys recruited actually provided substantial free civil legal services and that the number of hours of services so provided in the previous calendar year by attorneys recruited exceeded the number of hours of services provided by lawyer staff employed by the applicant.

An alternative method by which you may demonstrate that such recruitment is your project's principal means of legal services delivery is to show by objective evidence (1) that the attorneys recruited actually provided substantial free civil legal services; (2) that the combined number of hours of service by volunteers, both attorneys and paralegals, exceeds the combined number of hours of service by staff attorneys and paralegals; and (3) that the number of hours of service by volunteer attorneys is more than half as many as the combined number of hours of service by staff attorneys and paralegals.

If you do not use either of these methods to demonstrate your principal delivery means, you should describe and explain in your application the method used.  
[B&P Code §6216(b)(1)(B)]

# **Legal Services Trust Fund Program**

## **Eligibility Guidelines**

**SUPPORT CENTERS ONLY**

The State Bar of California  
180 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-1617



# **Legal Services Trust Fund Program Eligibility Guidelines**

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# **Legal Services Trust Fund Program Eligibility Guidelines**

The Legal Services Trust Fund Program Eligibility Guidelines were designed as a brief statement of factors governing eligibility for an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. The Guidelines, together with their Commentary, are intended to incorporate provisions found in the statute (Business and Professions Code §6210, et seq.) and at Title 3, Rules 3.660-3.692 of the Rules of the State Bar of California.

Commentary follows each guideline and is designed to further assist you in seeking an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. Bracketed references are to the Business and Professions Code (B&P Code) and Rules of the State Bar.

## **Requirements for All Applicants**

- 1. To be considered for a Legal Services Trust Fund Program grant, an applicant must submit a timely and complete application for funding in the manner prescribed by the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission (the Commission). To qualify for an allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, an applicant must be either:**
  - a. a qualified legal services project (Legal Services Projects Guidelines 2-2.9); or**
  - b. a qualified support center (Support Centers Guidelines 2-2.9).**

**A single applicant may not qualify as both a legal services project and a support center. [Rule 3.680(D)]**

### ***Commentary:***

The main distinction between a legal services project and a support center is found in the primary purpose of the organization. Compare Legal Services Projects Guideline 2.3 with Support Centers Guideline 2.3. You must indicate on your application the status under which you wish to be considered. You may complete the applications for both a legal services project and a support center. If you qualify in the category of first preference, you will not be considered in the second category. If you do not qualify in the category of your first choice, you will be considered for eligibility under the category of your second choice, if your primary purpose and function qualifies you for that category. [Rule 3.671(A)-(C)]

- 1.1. All applicants must include with their applications an assurance that the applicant will use the funds allocated from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program for the purposes set forth in §§6210-6228 of the Business and Professions Code.**

### ***Commentary:***

The application includes an Assurances form. Execution of that form will satisfy the requirements of Guidelines 1.1-1.3.

- 1.2. Within 30 days after notice of a tentative allocation from the Commission, the applicant must submit a budget and budget narrative for the expenditure of the allocation.
  - 1.2.1. For support centers, the budget and budget narrative must show that all funds allocated from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program will be used in support of qualified legal services projects providing free legal services in California.
- 1.3. All applications must include an assurance that the applicant:
  - 1.3.1. at all times will honor the attorney-client privilege and will uphold the integrity of the adversary process; and
  - 1.3.2. will not impose restrictions unrelated to statutes and rules of professional conduct on attorneys who provide representation to indigent clients with funds provided in whole or in part from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program; and
  - 1.3.3. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap, or age.

*Commentary:*  
See Commentary 1.1 above. [B&P Code §§6210, 6217, 6221; Rule 3.682]
- 1.4. If the Commission or staff requests any further information relating to an applicant's eligibility, or related to the amount of the allocation under the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, the applicant must supply that information. However, the Commission is not required to notify applicants if their initial application fails to include information sufficient to demonstrate eligibility. Failure to provide information necessary to the Commission's decisions on eligibility or eligible expenditures (or failure to supply requested information relevant to those decisions) will be grounds for denial of eligibility, or for refusal to recognize part of the applicant's expenditures within the allocation formula. [Rules 3.680(E) and 3.691(A)]

## **Requirements for Support Centers**

2. To be a qualified support center, the applicant must meet (a) each of the requirements of Guidelines 1.1-1.3 above, and (b) each of the following Guidelines 2.1-2.7, and (c) the requirements of either Guideline 2.8 or 2.9.

*Commentary:*

The qualified support center must meet: (1) the requirements applicable to all applicants (see Guidelines 1.1-1.3); (2) the mandatory requirements of Guidelines 2.1-2.7 applicable to all support centers; and (3) either the eligibility presumption established by Guideline 2.8, or the requirements for quality control and "special need" set forth in Guideline 2.9.

The mandatory requirements applicable to all support centers (Guidelines 2.1-2.7) contain two separate requirements. A support center must demonstrate that it provides a significant level of legal support services to qualified legal services projects in California (the “significant level” test). Additionally, a support center must demonstrate that its primary purpose and function is the provision of legal support services (the “primary purpose and function” test). [Rule 3.680(A)]

**2.1. The applicant must be a nonprofit corporation (in California or another state).**

***Commentary:***

In order to demonstrate your status as a California corporation, copies of the Articles of Incorporation certified by the California Secretary of State and a current Certificate of Status from the California Secretary of State showing that the corporation is in good legal standing must be filed with the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. To demonstrate your nonprofit status, copies of (1) the determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service granting your application for exemption from the appropriate provisions of subchapter (f) of Chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended and (2) the determination letter from the State Franchise Tax Board granting your application for exemption from the appropriate section of the California Revenue and Taxation Code must be filed with the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. If you have not received such determination letter(s), attach copy(ies) of your application(s) for exemption together with an explanation of its/their status. [B&P Code §6213(a)(1); Rules 3.670(A), 3.680(A)]

**2.2. The application must demonstrate through objective information that the organization currently:**

***Commentary:***

The statute requires that applicants must **currently** be providing the services described in Guidelines 2.2.1-2.2.4.

The regulations require that you demonstrate with “objective information” that you provide the required services. Objective information that can be used to demonstrate your services is described in Guidelines 2.2.1-2.2.3. See also Commentary 2.3. [B&P Code §6213(b); Rule 3.670(B), 3.671(B), 3.680(E)(2), 3.680(E)(4)]

**2.2.1. provides a significant level of legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support to qualified legal services projects**

***Commentary:***

You must demonstrate that you are currently providing **a significant level of** legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support to programs that are qualified for Legal Services Trust Fund Program allocations as legal services projects. In order to meet this test, the services provided must be offered on a regular and consistent basis.

Such training, assistance or support include, but are not limited to, the direct provision of civil legal services to an indigent person, either as co-counsel with

an attorney employed or recruited by a qualified legal services project, or at the request of an attorney employed or recruited by a qualified legal services project that is unable to assist the client [see Rule 3.672(B)(2)], provided that:

- a. you keep written records to demonstrate that the direct provision of services was either as co-counsel with an attorney employed or recruited by a qualified legal services project, or at the request of such an attorney [Rules 3.672(B), 3.682]; and
- b. you establish and use policies and procedures that encourage qualified legal services projects to participate in the organization's representation of persons referred by them.

Support services provided to organizations that are not qualified legal services projects, or to attorneys in private practice who were not recruited by a qualified legal services project, will not be taken into consideration for purposes of demonstrating that a support center provides a significant level of services to qualified legal services projects.

In deciding whether you meet the "significant level" test, the Legal Services Trust Fund Commission will consider several factors. At a minimum, you must demonstrate that in the last year you have provided legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support to at least ten qualified legal services projects. For purposes of this test, services provided to more than one office of a multi-office legal services project shall only count as services to one project. In addition, for purposes of this test, you **cannot** count the distribution of newsletters, general mailings, or the provision of other materials of general distribution. You must maintain written records of requests for services to demonstrate the number of projects to which you provided services.

You must provide services to at least ten projects to qualify as a support center. Applicants that fail to meet this test will be found not to have provided a significant level of services to qualified legal services projects.

Provided you meet this minimum test, you must also demonstrate through objective information that the nature and content of the services you provided were significant. In determining whether a support center's services were significant, the Commission may consider the following factors and any others that aid in making that determination:

- a. The provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, and advocacy support to a large number of projects is relevant data for demonstrating a significant level of support. However, numbers alone will not be the sole test.
- b. Services must be substantial in nature, not merely simple or intermittent responses to requests for assistance. For example, responding to ten simple requests for assistance will not itself demonstrate a significant level of support services. One large-scale complex lawsuit that takes a substantial amount of attorney time to complete will demonstrate a more significant level of services than a simple individual action. However,

handling a substantial number of individual actions may also demonstrate a significant level of work. Distribution of newsletters or other educational material will not itself meet the “significant level” test, but development of useful resources for qualified legal services projects is relevant data for demonstrating a significant level of support.

**2.2.2. and such training, assistance, or support is not only actually available statewide**

***Commentary:***

Your services must actually be available statewide. You must hold your services available on request on a statewide basis to all qualified legal services projects irrespective of where they are located within the state and publicize the availability of such services on a statewide basis. This publicity should ordinarily include at least two written communications during each calendar year, directed to every qualified legal services project in California, in which you describe the availability of your services. These written communications may be included in newsletters or other regular publications. You should send a copy of the communications to the Legal Services Trust Fund Program when you send them to the legal services projects.

Second, you must also demonstrate through objective information that your services are actually available and publicized throughout the state. In determining whether this requirement is met, the Commission may consider such factors as your staff’s participation in task forces and other training forums, your distribution of newsletters and general mailings, and any other efforts you make to give notice of the availability of services.

**2.2.3. but is also actually provided statewide**

***Commentary:***

You must also demonstrate that you provide services on a statewide basis. Your services must have actually been utilized within the last year in a majority of the nine State Bar Districts that existed prior to July 1, 2010, and in at least two Northern California counties and two Southern California counties. Southern California counties shall include the counties of San Luis Obispo, Kern, San Bernardino and counties further south. At the end of these Guidelines, is a list of the counties assigned to each of the nine State Bar Districts.

In determining whether a support center’s services were statewide, the Commission may consider the following factors and any other objective information that aids in making the determination:

- a. The provision of support services to a number of State Bar Districts or counties larger than the minimum stated above would be relevant data for demonstrating a geographic distribution of service. However, numbers alone will not be the sole test.
- b. Statewide services must be substantial in nature, not merely simple or intermittent responses to requests for assistance. For example, providing

most services in one or a few counties but occasionally responding to inquiries from other parts of the state will not itself demonstrate a statewide distribution of services.

For purposes of determining whether your services were actually provided on a statewide basis, the Commission will consider only the provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, and advocacy support. Other services provided, such as general information, the distribution of newsletters, and general mailings, will not be sufficient to demonstrate that an applicant is not local but statewide, or that an applicant has provided services in a majority of the State Bar Districts.

#### **2.2.4. without charge**

***Commentary:***

The “without charge” standard is fully met when services are provided without imposing any fee or requiring any payment. However, training services may still be considered “without charge” when the fee imposed is directly tied to the actual additional expense incurred in training an individual and does not include general expenses that are incurred in providing the training to the community at large. To illustrate:

- a. Direct expenses that can be charged to individuals participating in training events include the actual cost of their own refreshments, lodging, materials distributed (including manuals, workbooks, and binders), per participant webinar fees, and similar costs associated with individual participation.
- b. Training expenses that should not be charged to participants include the costs of facilities rental for the training event; general costs of materials, equipment, and services necessary to conduct trainings (such as visual aids, projectors, IT services, licensing fees, and delivery charges); expenses associated with travel, food, or lodging for staff or outside trainers; costs of developing materials (including staff salaries and consultant fees/expenses); and organizational expenses, including but not limited to insurance, audit costs, library costs, overhead, or telecommunications expenses.

Under Business and Professions Code §6213(b), the “without charge” standard applies to assistance provided to qualified legal services projects. It would be consistent with the spirit of the Legal Services Trust Fund statute, whenever possible, to also extend this consideration to fellow qualified support centers.

#### **2.2.5. through an office in California.**

***Commentary:***

You must actually have a regularly functioning office physically located in California and provide these services through that office. The office must have been in existence and operating prior to your application for a Legal Services Trust Fund Program grant.

**2.3. The provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support without charge must be the primary purpose and function of the corporation.**

***Commentary:***

You must demonstrate that it is the primary purpose and function of the **corporation** viewed as a whole, and not simply that of part of the corporation, to provide free legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support. You may consider the provision of similar services in other states when determining the primary purpose and function of the corporation.

To be considered legal training, legal technical assistance, and advocacy support, the services must meet the following criteria:

- a. Services must be provided (1) to attorneys or lay advocates or others involved in the direction or operation of legal services projects that provide legal services to indigent persons; or (2) to attorneys in private practice who are providing legal services without charge to indigent persons; or (3) directly to indigent persons when requested to do so by a qualified legal services project.
- b. The content of the training and technical assistance must be directed toward meeting the legal needs of indigent persons or the functioning of the legal services project.
- c. The direct provision of legal services to clients is not a “support service” unless it is delivered (1) as co-counsel with a qualified legal services project; or (2) as co-counsel at the request of a private attorney representing indigent clients without charge; or (3) after a referral from a qualified legal services project.
- d. The provision of similar legal support services in states other than California will be considered in determining the primary purpose and function of the corporation.

A support center shall be presumed to meet the “primary purpose and function” test if the services described above constitute more than 75 percent of the corporation’s expenditure budget in the year for which it is seeking an allocation from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program.

If the organization cannot meet the “primary purpose and function” test by complying with this presumption, you may demonstrate the primary purpose and function by other means. You will need to demonstrate that the primary purpose of the organization is to assist legal services advocates who provide direct civil legal services to indigent clients through the provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, and advocacy support. You must show that the primary purpose is not the direct provision of legal services to clients and that the support services consist of training, technical assistance, and advocacy support. [B&P Code §6213(b); Rule 3.671(B), (C)]



- 2.4. If the organization receives funds from sources other than the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, the applicant must submit a plan assuring that the services funded from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program are in addition to those already funded from other sources.**

***Commentary:***

Describe the sources, amounts, and conditions of your funding other than the Legal Services Trust Fund Program and the additional services you intend to provide with the monies allocated by the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. You must also submit a plan to maintain your current level of funding from sources other than the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. [B&P Code §6216(c)]

- 2.5. The application must include an agreement by the organization to use all funds allocated from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program in support of qualified legal services projects providing free legal services in California, and to restrict use of funds allocated from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program to matters directly related to the needs of legal services clients.**

***Commentary:***

You may meet this requirement by signing the Assurances form that is part of the application. [B&P Code §6216(c)]

- 2.6. The application must include a resolution of the board of directors of the corporation establishing the organization's priorities for the provision of legal support services. The adoption of this resolution must have followed consultation with legal services attorneys, members of the private bar, and eligible clients.**

***Commentary:***

You must attach to your application a resolution adopted by your board of directors within the last two years establishing the organization's priorities. In addition, you must describe the manner in which legal services attorneys, members of the private bar, and eligible clients were consulted for purposes of establishing priorities. Those consulted to meet this requirement must include persons who are not members of your board of directors. [Rule 3.680(B)]

- 2.7. The organization must offer a range of services including more than one of the following: consultation, representation, information services, and training.**

***Commentary:***

Describe the manner in which the organization offers services falling under at least two of the headings: consultation, representation, information services, and training. [Rule 3.680(B)]

- 2.8. The organization must meet either the requirements of this Guideline 2.8, or the requirements of Guideline 2.9. To meet the requirements of this Guideline 2.8, the organization must have met the requirements of Guidelines 2.2-2.3 on December 31, 1980.**

***Commentary:***

If the organization has met the general requirements applicable to all applicants, Guidelines 1.1-1.4, and has met the requirements of Guidelines 2.1-2.7, it must also meet either the requirements of this Guideline 2.8, or the requirements of Guideline 2.9.

In order to meet the requirements of Guideline 2.8 (and thus avoid the necessity of complying with Guideline 2.9), the organization must, on December 31, 1980, have been a nonprofit organization which had as its primary purpose and function the provision of legal training, legal technical assistance, or advocacy support without charge, and which was actually providing a significant level of such services to qualified legal services projects, and such training, assistance, or support must have been available statewide without charge through an office in California at that time. [B&P Code §6215(a)]

If the organization has previously been determined by the Commission to meet this requirement, you do not need to reestablish it each grant year.

**2.9. An applicant that does not meet the requirements of Guideline 2.8 must meet the requirements of Guidelines 2.9.1 and 2.9.2 below:**

**2.9.1. The organization must be deemed to be of special need by a majority of the qualified legal services projects. If an applicant was affirmatively deemed of special need for one grant period, the Commission will assume (without need for further information) that it continues to be so deemed for the immediately following two grant periods.**

***Commentary:***

If you do not meet the presumption established by Guideline 2.8, the organization must be deemed of special need by a majority of legal services projects which receive allocations from the Legal Services Trust Fund Program. The statute requires that the organization presently be so deemed.

Evidence of such deeming in prior years, while it may be considered by the Commission as relevant evidence, is not determinative of the issue before the Commission except in the two funding periods after the grant period for which you were so deemed. The Commission itself intends to solicit the views of qualified legal services projects as to whether the organization is presently deemed of special need in every third year, starting with their application for the first funding period. Therefore, you must (for your first, fourth, seventh, etc., funding periods) supply the Commission with a one-page description of the organization.

The Commission will solicit advice from qualified legal services projects whether they presently deem the organization to be of special need. More than one-half of those whose advice is solicited must respond affirmatively in order for the organization to be eligible. Upon request, the Commission will make available to you a list of the names and addresses of the qualified legal services projects from which the Commission will solicit views.

In deciding whether they deem a support center to be of special need, projects will be instructed to consider what support the legal services projects in California need in delivering legal services to indigent persons, and to evaluate how the organization's services meet that need, including such issues as the quality and/or quantity of the organization's work. Project directors will be encouraged to consult with service providers or others associated with the project in making their decision. [B&P Code §6215(b)(2); Rule 3.680(C)]

**2.9.2. The application must include a description of the organization's quality control procedures and standards, including, but not limited to, the matters described below:**

***Commentary:***

The State Bar's Board of Governors adopted the American Bar Association's Standards for the Provision of Civil Legal Aid as the quality control standards for the Legal Services Trust Fund Program, pursuant to Business & Professions Code §6225 and Rule 3.661(C). These standards are the State Bar's guidelines for review and approval of applicant and recipient program practices.

If you are already subject to quality control reviews by any non-Trust Fund Program funding source or entity, describe the quality control review procedures to which you are subject, and attach the most recent comprehensive written quality control review by that entity in lieu of the information requested by Guidelines 2.9.2.1-2.9.2.4. (It is not necessary to explain in detail the review procedures followed.)

If you are not subject to such review procedures, describe your quality control standards and how compliance with each of the subjects listed in Guidelines 2.9.2.1–2.9.2.4 is ensured. The Commission is particularly interested in the standards and procedures regarding supervisory structure, procedures, and responsibilities. [B&P Code §§6123(b) and 6217(a); Rule 3.680(E)(2)]

**2.9.2.1. the minimum experience and education requirements for attorney and paralegal employees;**

**2.9.2.2. the current salaries and job descriptions for all filled and unfilled management and professional positions, including paralegal personnel;**

**2.9.2.3. the minimum experience and educational requirements for attorney supervisors;**

**2.9.2.4. the supervisory structure, procedures, and responsibilities.**

## State Bar of California Districts Prior to July 1, 2010

### District 1

Butte  
Colusa  
Del Norte  
Glenn  
Humboldt  
Lake  
Lassen  
Mendocino  
Modoc  
Nevada  
Placer  
Plumas  
Shasta  
Sierra  
Siskiyou  
Sutter  
Tehama  
Trinity  
Yuba

### District 2

Napa  
Sacramento  
Solano  
Sonoma  
Yolo

### District 3

Alameda  
Contra Costa

### District 4

Marin  
San Francisco  
San Mateo

### District 5

Alpine  
Amador  
Calaveras  
El Dorado  
Fresno  
Inyo  
Kern  
Kings  
Madera  
Mariposa  
Merced  
Mono  
Monterey  
San Benito  
San Joaquin  
San Luis Obispo  
Santa Cruz  
Stanislaus  
Tulare  
Tuolumne

### District 6

Santa Clara

### District 7

Los Angeles

### District 8

Orange  
Santa Barbara  
Ventura

### District 9

Imperial  
Riverside  
San Bernardino  
San Diego

**Revision to Guidelines for Support Centers with respect to determination of whether or not the Support Center is providing services “statewide” in California.**

**Background:** Support Centers must establish that their services are available, and are actually provided, on a “statewide” basis. Since the Program’s inception, the Trust Fund Program has been using State Bar Board of Trustee districts to demonstrate that a Support Center’s breadth of service is “statewide.” For reasons unrelated to Trust Fund Program grants, the Board of Trustees revised its districts in 2012 in a way that did not work for Trust Fund Program purposes. Therefore, the Commission determined to use the old districts (2010 Map attached) pending a resolution adopting a new regional map to define “statewide” for support centers.

At its June 2016 meeting, the Commission defined new regions for viewing “statewide” support, and after vetting the recommendations at LAAC Support Center meetings, and at a State Bar bi-monthly call with Legal Services programs, adopted the resolution at its December meeting. The new map for defining “statewide” better achieves its intended goals than the previous criteria, including assuring services outside the Bay Area and Los Angeles corridors.

Beginning 2017, Support Centers must demonstrate that they provide services in 5 of the 7 attached regions.

**Previous Eligibility Guideline 2.2.3 for Support Centers:**

*Commentary:*

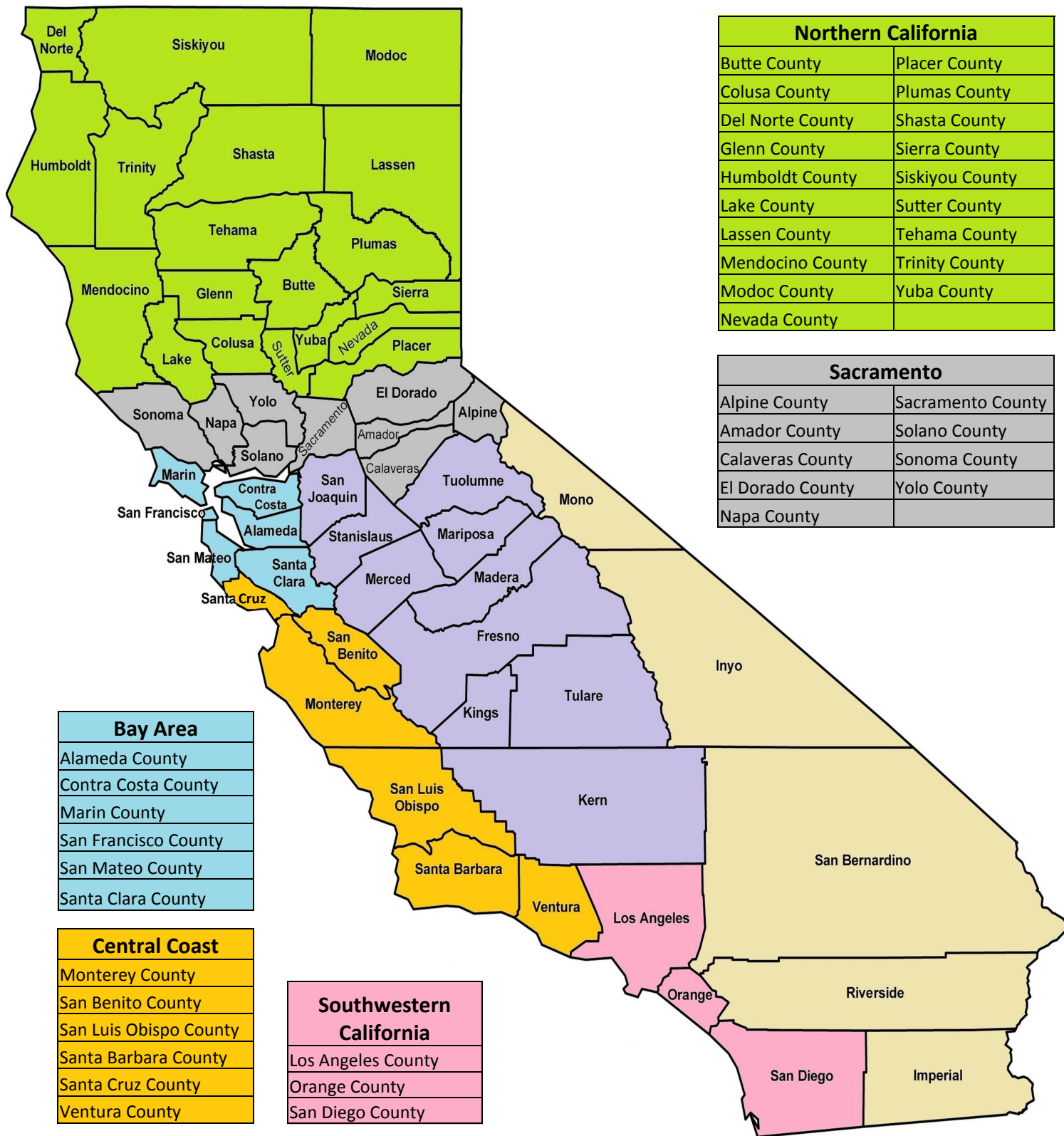
You must also demonstrate that you provide services on a statewide basis. Your services must have actually been utilized within the last year in a majority of the nine State Bar Districts that existed prior to July 1, 2010, and in at least two Northern California counties and two Southern California counties. Southern California counties shall include the counties of San Luis Obispo, Kern, San Bernardino and counties further south. At the end of these Guidelines, is a list of the counties assigned to each of the nine State Bar Districts. . . . .

**Approved Revision to Eligibility Guideline 2.2.3 for Support Centers:**

*Commentary:*

You must also demonstrate that you provide services on a statewide basis. Effective January 2017, your services must be utilized in five of the following seven districts: Northern California, Sacramento Area, Bay Area, Central Coast, Central Valley, Eastern California, and Southwestern California. At the end of these guidelines is a list of the counties assigned to each of the regions. (see, Legal Services Trust Fund Program, Support Center – 2017 Regional map)

Note: For services provided in 2016, Support Centers may apply the new regions, or rely on the prior requirement that the services were utilized within the last year in a majority of the nine State Bar Districts that existed prior to July 1, 2010, and in at least two Northern California counties and two Southern California counties. (see State Bar Districts, 2010 map)



Northern California	
Butte County	Placer County
Colusa County	Plumas County
Del Norte County	Shasta County
Glenn County	Sierra County
Humboldt County	Siskiyou County
Lake County	Sutter County
Lassen County	Tehama County
Mendocino County	Trinity County
Modoc County	Yuba County
Nevada County	

Sacramento	
Alpine County	Sacramento County
Amador County	Solano County
Calaveras County	Sonoma County
El Dorado County	Yolo County
Napa County	

Bay Area
Alameda County
Contra Costa County
Marin County
San Francisco County
San Mateo County
Santa Clara County

Central Coast
Monterey County
San Benito County
San Luis Obispo County
Santa Barbara County
Santa Cruz County
Ventura County

Southwestern California
Los Angeles County
Orange County
San Diego County

Central Valley	
Fresno County	Merced County
Kern County	San Joaquin County
Kings County	Stanislaus County
Madera County	Tulare County
Mariposa County	Tuolumne County

Eastern California
Imperial County
Inyo County
Mono County
Riverside County
San Bernardino County

**Legal Services Trust**

**Fund Program**

Support Center — 2017 Regional Map

## STATE BAR DISTRICTS

The composition of State Bar Districts and the number of elected seats (in parentheses) on the Board of Governors in each District are as follows:

