

Attorney Fees for Indigent Defendants; HB 2605

HB 2605 increases the maximum hourly rate of compensation for attorneys appointed to represent indigent defendants in felony criminal cases from \$80 per hour to a minimum of \$120 per hour, with a maximum rate of \$140 per hour.

[*Note:* Under law, the specified hourly rate only applies to private attorneys appointed by a court to perform services for an indigent person and does not include public defenders, assistant public defenders, or contract counsel. The Board of Indigents' Defense Services has operated under appropriations proviso language providing authority and funds to pay an hourly rate of \$100 per hour in FY 2022 and \$120 per hour in FY 2023, FY 2024, and FY 2025.]

The bill also replaces a reference to the \$80 per hour rate in law that allows the chief judge of any judicial district to negotiate an hourly rate less than the maximum rate for attorneys who voluntarily accept appointments in that district with a reference to the "maximum rate."