

2022 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 219

BY SENATOR JACKSON

COURTS. Authorizes judicial district indigent defender funds to be used for the purposes of retaining expert witnesses. (8/1/22)

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 15:168(F), relative to the judicial district indigent defender fund; to provide for payments to expert witnesses; to provide for who qualifies for the funds; to provide for disbursement of the funds; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 15:168(F) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§168. Judicial district indigent defender fund

* * *

F.(1) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, each judicial district is allowed to accumulate funds for the purposes of retaining expert witnesses. The district public defender, in his discretion, shall determine how payments shall be administered and which experts shall be paid.

(2) Any person who has retained private counsel, but is found to be indigent, may apply for funds for expert witnesses in the same manner as public defender clients. Each person shall apply for the funds by making application to the district defender of the district having jurisdiction and shall be subject to the same requirements as indigent clients.

- 1 **(3) No court shall have jurisdiction to order the payment of any funds**
2 **administered by the Louisiana Public Defender Board or district public**
3 **defender for expert witnesses.**
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The original instrument was prepared by Michael Bell. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Ann S. Brown.

DIGEST

SB 219 Reengrossed

2022 Regular Session

Jackson

Proposed law authorizes judicial districts to accumulate funds for the purposes of retaining expert witnesses, and provides that the district public defender, in his discretion, will determine how payments will be administered and which experts will be paid.

Proposed law allows a person who has retained private counsel, but is found to be indigent, to apply for funds for expert witnesses in the same manner as public defender clients.

Proposed law prohibits court jurisdiction over the payment of funds, administered by the Louisiana Public Defender Board or district public defender, for expert witnesses.

Effective August 1, 2022.

(Adds R.S. 15:168(F))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill

1. Adds a provision prohibiting court jurisdiction to order the payment of funds for expert witnesses from funds administered by the Louisiana Public Defender Board or district public defender.