

BCMA RATES

The BCMA has announced increases to its Guide to Fees for both April 1, 2000 and April 1, 2001. The Legal Services Society pays current BCMA rates. This will continue until further notice. Please note, however, that LSS does not pay for all BCMA items. The items to be paid for are specified in the Tariff Guide.

LSS has reviewed its support for BCMA rates on several occasions. The result each time has been that the Society needed to adapt its rates to BCMA rates to ensure that counsel who require medical legal services are able to obtain them. Accordingly the increased cost will be absorbed by LSS in order to maintain support for the services legal aid clients need.

Please note that LSS does not pay any block or cancellation fees under BCMA rates and that prior authorization is required for travel fees and expenses as well as for several other items relating to preparation time for experts.

DUTY COUNSEL RATES

The new LSS bill processing system calculates time in hours and tenths. The duty counsel system in place prior to February 21, 2000 had a number of maximum rates (\$270.00 and \$300.00) that were not evenly divisible by hours and tenths. To remedy this problem and in an effort to use the system to process the accounts, all bills submitted for \$270.00 will be treated as if billed at \$272.00, accounts rendered at \$300.00 will be treated as if they were rendered at \$304.00. This memo is for your information in order to permit you to reconcile the bills paid after the reduction of holdbacks.

CASE FLOW MANAGEMENT RULES – FEES FOR THE ARRAIGNMENT PROCESS

In September we advised you that there would be funding for the arraignment court process that would expire March 31, 2000, because we had not then been able to obtain a commitment for government funding for this initiative beyond that date. LSS has continued to work with government to ensure the Society has sufficient and stable funding to provide the arraignment court tariff item.

We are pleased to advise that further negotiations have resulted in the Ministry of the Attorney General providing funding for arraignment court through to June 30, 2000. Unless additional funding is available, the arraignment process item will not apply to services after that date.

Please bill in accordance with the existing provision until June 30, 2000. We will advise of any further extensions as soon as possible.

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Director, Tariff

Nancy Peck,
Director, Finance