

Disbursements block payment

Effective April 18, 2007, a new disbursements block payment will provide lawyers with a simple alternative for billing standard low-cost disbursements such as photocopying, faxing, and long distance. The Legal Services Society is introducing this block payment as a further step in the tariff renewal process.

The disbursements block payment will be billable once per referral. It is available for all referrals *except* those issued under the **Appeals and Judicial Reviews Tariff** or the **Duty Counsel Tariff**. It will compensate for the following disbursement items:

- **Courier services (code 0893)**
- **Long distance charges — telephone/fax transmissions (code 0834)**
- **Photocopying and receiving faxes — in house (code 0157)**
- **Photocopying and receiving faxes — third party (code 1826)**
- **Postage (code 0869)**

Billing process

Billing for the above disbursements using the new block payment is optional:

- If you choose to bill the block payment, you cannot bill separately for any of the disbursement items listed above.
- If you bill the disbursements block payment, you can still bill the actual costs of any other disbursement items not included in the block payment (for example, service of court documents, computer research).
- If you opt to bill the actual costs of one or more of the listed disbursement items, you must track actual costs, retain your receipts, and/or logs, and forego billing the disbursements block payment.

Please note: You may bill the disbursements block payment only on those referrals for which you also bill fees for legal services. This payment is available for referrals that have not been final billed as of April 18, 2007, but only if you have not previously billed any of the disbursement items included in the block payment. LSS will deduct the disbursements block payment from your account if our records show that you have previously billed for one or more of those disbursement items.

The disbursements block payment will be billable at the following rates, which reflect differences in typical disbursements costs for different case types:

Referral type	Rate	Tariff code
Criminal	\$10	190
Criminal — s.278 victim/witness referrals	\$10	270
CFCSA	\$18	530
Family	\$28	460
Immigration	\$38	770

Upcoming tariff revisions

The next revision of the *Guide to Legal Aid Tariffs* is scheduled for July 2007. At that time, LSS expects to implement several changes that will represent the final step of the tariff renewal process that began in early 2005. LSS welcomes your feedback about its tariff renewal initiatives. Please direct any comments to lawyersresources@lss.bc.ca.

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