Office of Administrative Hearings
Overview of Rates
$120 per ALJ Billable Hour
June 10, 2014
The Legislature created OAH in 1981 to increase appellants’ confidence in the independence and fairness of their appeal. The Chief Administrative Law Judge is appointed by the Governor to five year terms following Senate approval. Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) are experienced attorneys appointed as exempt employees by the Chief Administrative Law Judge.

- 111 Administrative Law Judges
- 83 Field Office Support Staff and HQ Admin Staff
OAH provides all participants a prompt, fair, and accessible opportunity to be heard on disputed matters involving state and local agencies.

- ALJs conduct hearings for people and businesses who disagree with actions taken by state and local government agencies.
- The ALJ issues a written order that upholds or reverses the agency action.
  - Hearings have relaxed rules of procedure.
  - Parties do not need attorneys to adequately represent themselves.
  - No filing fees for litigants.
OAH OFFICE LOCATIONS
ABOUT OAH

WE HOLD HEARINGS FOR MANY STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INCLUDING:

- Employment Security Department
- Department of Social and Health Services
- Health Care Authority
- Department of Licensing
- Gambling Commission
- Washington State Patrol
- Liquor Control Board
- Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- Executive Ethics Board
- Department of Labor and Industries
- Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- State Human Rights Commission
- Department of Financial Institutions
- Washington Lottery
- Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises
- Department of Early Learning
- Local Government Agencies
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Fish and Wildlife
OAH RESOLVES MORE THAN 130,000 CASES A YEAR

In 2013, OAH resolved more than 65,000 cases involving people applying for or receiving public assistance, unemployment benefits or child support and almost 66,000 alleged toll violations for the Highway 520 and Tacoma Narrows Bridges.

80% of all appeals were resolved within 90 days in FY 2013.
WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE RESULTS

OAH works with agencies to improve the efficiency and results of each agency’s unique hearing needs and business processes. For example:

• Unemployment benefit appeals were improved through a new case management system that eliminated paper at both agencies and improved service.
  • In March 2014, 92.7% of unemployment appeals were resolved in 30 days.
• Launching new case management system to improve the management of appeals and enhance performance data.
  • Initial agency implementation for Health Care Authority’s appeals beginning June 1, 2014.
RATe: $120.00

The current rate is $120.00 per hour of Judge’s billable time.

The rate is all-inclusive:

• Administrative Law Judges;
• Support staff;
• Interpreter services;
• Facilities, security, and management; and
• Other necessary FTE costs (travel, goods and services, etc.)

June 10, 2014
The rate was set based on historical data of the number of judge hours in a year and dividing it by the current appropriation.

Judges use a positive time reporting management system to track their hours.

Agencies are billed each month only for the hours of work on their caseloads.
FACTORS AFFECTING FUTURE RATES

• OAH moved from billing some agencies up to three months in advance for work expected to be performed to monthly bills for work actually performed in the prior month.
  • This created a fund balance problem.
  • Rates will likely have to be adjusted to establish a two-month working capital reserve to avoid periodic cash deficits during the month.
QUESTIONS?

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