



Attorney Services Fund

2025 Annual Report





Attorney Services Fund Annual Report

Summary of Activity for Fiscal Year 2025
and Report on Allocations for Fiscal Year 2026

October 2025

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THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO

To: Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy and Justices
Members of the Ohio Bar
Members of the Public

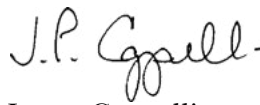
This Annual Report on the Attorney Services Fund provides a summary of the activity of the Attorney Services Fund for Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) and sets out budget allocations from the fund as approved by the Supreme Court for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026).

The report includes a review of the fund's balance and projections, audit information, and investment policy. This information is provided for informational purposes only and is not to be considered a final or complete audit or financial statement of fund activity during the period covered in the report. The Auditor of State conducts an audit of the fund as part of the regular biennial audit of the Supreme Court of Ohio.

Respectfully submitted,



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I. Attorney Services Fund; Registration Requirements and Fees

Article IV of the Ohio Constitution vests plenary authority with the Supreme Court of Ohio to regulate all aspects of the practice of law in Ohio, including admission to the practice of law and the discipline of persons so admitted. In furtherance of this responsibility and to maintain an independent and self-funded regulatory system, the Supreme Court assesses and collects various fees and other moneys pursuant to the Supreme Court Rules for the Government of the Bar of Ohio. The moneys collected are deposited into the Attorney Services Fund.

Admission-Related Fees

The Supreme Court collects and deposits into the Attorney Services Fund the following fees and assessments:

Revenue Sources

Gov.Bar R. I requires certain fees for admissions-related activities, including applications for admission by examination, Uniform Bar Exam (“UBE”) score transfer, and motion, and requests for military spouse admission.

- Applicants seeking admission by examination must pay a \$75 registration fee on or before November 15th of the applicant’s second year of law school. An additional bar exam application fee of \$330 is due approximately four months before the exam.
 - A late registration application incurs a \$200 late fee.
 - A late bar exam application incurs a \$100 late fee.
- Applicants seeking admission by UBE score transfer (i.e., those who took the UBE in another jurisdiction and received a score considered passing in Ohio) must pay a \$750 application fee.
- Applicants seeking admission by motion (i.e., those licensed and practicing in another jurisdiction for at least five years) must pay a \$1,500 application fee.
- An out-of-state attorney seeking temporary admission in Ohio as the spouse of a military service member stationed in Ohio must pay a \$75 application fee.
- For any application for admission by examination, UBE transfer, or motion, if any of the qualifying education was not received in the United States, an additional foreign education review fee of \$150 is required.



Attorney Registration Fees

Gov.Bar. R VI requires attorneys to register and pay certain fees based on their practice status. Registration is required when first admitted to the practice of law and on or before the first day of September in each odd-numbered year thereafter.

- Most attorneys register for “active” status. The registration fee for that status for the 2023/2025 biennium (September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2025) was \$400; the fee increased to \$450 for the 2025/2027 biennium (September 1, 2025, to August 31, 2027).
 - The registration fee is reduced or waived for attorneys who are admitted to practice in the second year of the registration biennium.
 - An attorney who fails to register by the September 1 deadline, but who does so within sixty days thereafter, incurs a \$100 late fee.
 - An attorney who remains unregistered more than sixty days after the deadline for registration is summarily suspended from the practice of law and must register, pay all outstanding registration fees, and pay a \$300 reinstatement fee to be reinstated to the practice of law.
- An attorney who is licensed in another jurisdiction and working for a non-government, non-law firm employer within this state can register as “corporate counsel”

rather than seeking Ohio admission. This registration requires a \$500 application fee, and biennial registration thereafter as is required for “active” attorneys.

- An Ohio attorney who wishes to provide legal services solely on a pro bono basis with a qualified organization can register for emeritus pro bono status and pay an application fee and reduced biennial registration fee of \$75.
- All attorneys may pay an additional, voluntary \$50 fee to fund civil legal aid services for low-income or disadvantaged populations in Ohio.

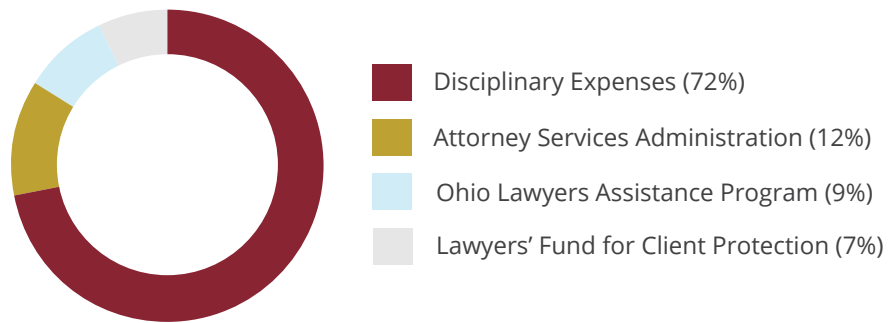
Revenues from attorney registration fees are significantly lower in odd-numbered fiscal years because attorneys are required to register with the Supreme Court during even-numbered fiscal years.

Other Fees

The fund receives additional revenue from other sources pursuant to the Rules for the Government of the Bar, including fees for the following items:

- Certified legal intern applications (\$25 application fee per Gov.Bar R. II);
- Cost reimbursements from disciplined attorneys, and civil penalties and costs assessed against persons who are found to have engaged in the unauthorized practice of law (Gov.Bar R. V and VII);
- Issuance of a certificate of good standing (\$20 fee for standard; \$35 fee for certificate with disciplinary information; and \$50 fee for an expedited same-day certificate per Gov.Bar R. VI);
- Temporary certification program application (\$300 application fee per Gov.Bar R. IX);
- Continuing legal education established sponsor fees and program applications (generally, \$25-\$50 application fee per Gov.Bar R. X);
- Foreign legal consultant applications (\$550 application fee under Gov.Bar R. XI); and
- Pro hac vice application and annual registration (\$500 fee per Gov.Bar R. XII).

Figure 1: Fiscal Year 2025 Expenditures



Fund Expenditures

Pursuant to Gov.Bar R. VI, Sec. 14, Attorney Services Fund moneys are used for the following purposes: (1) investigate complaints alleging misconduct pursuant to Gov.Bar R. V or Gov.Jud. R. II and alleging unauthorized practice of law pursuant to Gov.Bar R. VII; (2) support the activities of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection, the Commission on Continuing Legal Education, and the Board on the Unauthorized Practice of Law; (3) fund any activity considered necessary by the Supreme Court for the government of the bar and the judiciary of Ohio; (4) fund matters approved by the Court and related to the admission of applicants to the practice of law, including support for the Court's Board of Bar Examiners and Board of Commissioners on Character & Fitness; and (5) support any activities related to the administration of justice considered necessary by the Supreme Court.

Schedule 1 of this Report contains a summary of fund expenditures for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 and allocations for Fiscal Year 2026.

II. Fund Activity in Fiscal Year 2025

Fund Income and Balance

The fund realized income and revenue of \$2,876,937 in Fiscal Year 2025 from the following sources:

- Biennial registration fees, including late fees, reinstatement fees, and fees collected pursuant to Gov. Bar R. XIV (Certification of Attorneys as Specialists) (\$394,350).
- Reimbursement of costs in disciplinary matters (Gov. Bar R. V) and reimbursement of costs and payment of civil penalties in Unauthorized Practice of Law cases (Gov. Bar R. VII) (\$61,190).
- Investment income (net income after calculating costs of credit card usage payment fees and associated bank fees) (\$271).
- Revenue relating to Continuing Legal Education (\$461,803).
- Revenue collected for Certificates of Good Standing (\$129,300).
- Revenue collected pursuant to Gov. Bar R. I (Bar Admissions) (\$1,280,714).
- Revenue collected pursuant to Gov. Bar R. XII, Sec. 2(A) (4) for Pro Hac Vice registration (\$932,500) (\$279,750 of which was transferred to the Civil Justice Grant Program Fund).
- Voluntary fee paid to the Civil Justice Grant Program Fund by attorneys and judges as part of the biennial attorney registration process (\$2,700).

The fund had an estimated average monthly cash and investment balance of \$8,696,771 in Fiscal Year 2025.

Expenses

In Fiscal Year 2025, \$9,313,648 was expended from the Attorney Services Fund.

Disciplinary-Related Expenses

In Fiscal Year 2025, \$6,740,032 was used to fund the disciplinary process established by the Court in Gov. Bar R. V; no funds were used for Gov. Jud. R. II, "Disciplinary Procedure." This is 72% of total fund expenditures in FY 2025. Of this amount, \$4,155,473 was expended by the Office of Disciplinary Counsel, which accounts for the entire operational budget of that office.

Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection

A total of \$641,663 was expended by the Board of Professional Conduct to fund its operations. An additional \$1,942,896 was expended by the Board to reimburse local bar association certified grievance committees for disciplinary-related activities.

Since 1985, the Supreme Court has allocated moneys from the Attorney Services Fund to compensate clients who are victims of theft, embezzlement, or misappropriation by dishonest attorneys. The Board of Commissioners of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection administers the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection, which was established by Gov.Bar R. VIII.

In Fiscal Year 2025, \$630,661.74 was expended by the Board of Commissioners of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection for its operations. This amount represents 7% of Attorney Services Fund expenditures. The Supreme Court did not allocate any additional funds to the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection Trust Fund to replenish that fund in Fiscal Year 2025.

In Fiscal Year 2025, the Board awarded a total of \$606,758.68 from the Trust Fund to reimburse 48 eligible claims. As of June 30, 2025, there were 70 claims pending, representing a potential liability to the fund of \$1,441,997.05. For more information regarding claims filed with the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection, please see the most recent annual report prepared by the Board of Commissioners of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection.

Attorney Services Administration

The Office of Attorney Services of the Supreme Court is comprised of the Attorney Registration and CLE Section and the Bar Admissions Section. These two sections are charged with supporting the Court in the exercise of its constitutional responsibility to regulate the practice of law in Ohio. The Attorney Registration and CLE Section has many responsibilities, including registering attorneys each biennium, verifying attorneys' statuses and issuing certificates of good standing, administering the Lawyer Mentoring Program, and maintaining attorney and judge attorney registration and continuing legal education records. The Bar Admissions Section oversees all admissions processes and supports the Board of Commissioners on Character and Fitness and the Board of Bar Examiners.

A total of \$1,127,954 was expended for the Office of Attorney Services in Fiscal Year 2025. These moneys, which represent 12% of total fund expenditures, supported the Attorney Registration and CLE Section

(\$406,998); the Bar Admissions Section (\$653,149); the Commission on Professionalism (\$1,473); and the Board on the Unauthorized Practice of Law (\$505). Further, \$65,829 was expended on reimbursement of expenses related to the investigation and prosecution of unauthorized practice of law matters. The fund also supports the Commission on Certification of Attorneys as Specialists, for which no funds were expended in 2025.

Discretionary Grants

In Fiscal Year 2025, the Court awarded a grant of \$815,000 to the Ohio Lawyers Assistance Program. This grant represents 9% of fund expenditures. The Ohio Lawyers Assistance Program provides intervention and monitoring assistance to Ohio lawyers, judges, and law students who are suffering from alcoholism, substance abuse, or mental illness. In addition to moneys allocated from the fund, the program receives contributions from the Ohio State Bar Association, the Ohio Bar Liability Insurance Company, and other entities.

III. Allocations for Fiscal Year 2026

The Supreme Court has allocated \$10,496,737 from the Attorney Services Fund for fiscal year 2026. The allocations are made to nine entities.

Disciplinary-Related Allocations

The Court allocated \$7,611,119 (72%) of total fund allocations to support the operation of the disciplinary process. This figure includes separate allocations of \$4,649,882 to fund the Office of Disciplinary Counsel; \$961,237 to fund the operations of the Board on Professional Conduct; and \$2,000,000 to reimburse certified local grievance committees for their work in investigating and prosecuting disciplinary matters.

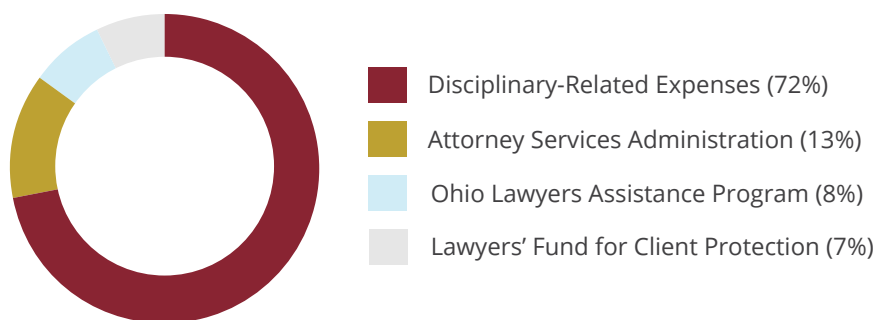
Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection

The operations of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection are funded by an allocation of \$701,786. This allocation represents 7% of the total fund allocations.

Attorney Services Administration

A total of \$1,368,832 (13% of total fund allocations) was allocated to fund the activities of the Office of Attorney Services Division of the Supreme Court. This allocation includes: (1) \$505,832 to the Registration and Continuing Legal Education Section; (2) \$713,500 to the Bar Admissions Section; (3) \$5,250 to support the operation of the Board on the Unauthorized Practice of Law and an additional \$90,000 to reimburse bar associations for costs incurred in investigating and prosecuting allegations of the unauthorized practice of law; and (4) \$54,250 to support the activities of Commission on Professionalism.

Figure 2: Fiscal Year 2026 Allocations



Discretionary Grants

The Court awarded a grant of \$815,000 to the Ohio Lawyers Assistance Program for alcohol, substance abuse, and mental health intervention programs. This grant represents 8% of the fund allocations for Fiscal Year 2026.

IV. Fund Balance and Projections

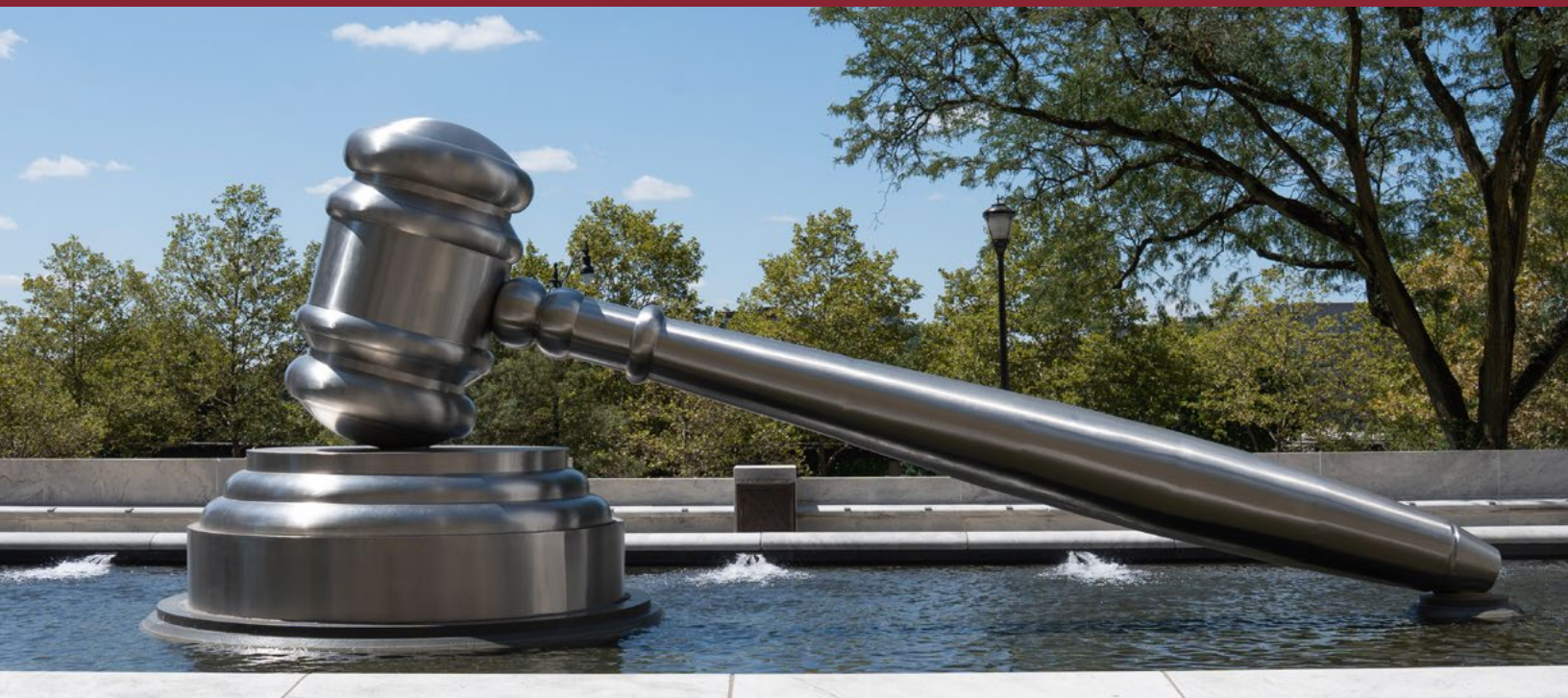
On June 30, 2025, the fund had a balance of \$5,771,556. The fund is projected to realize income of \$22,258,152 (including fees, reimbursements, and interest income) and expend an estimated \$9,949,673 in Fiscal Year 2026. It is projected that the fund will have an estimated balance of \$18,080,035 on June 30, 2026.

V. Audit

The Auditor of State conducts a complete audit of the Attorney Services Fund on a regular basis. The audit occurs at the same time as the audit of other funds that are appropriated to or collected by the Supreme Court. The most recent audit was conducted in the summer of 2025 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. At this point, we are not aware of any findings or instances of noncompliance or internal control weaknesses reported for the Attorney Services Fund. The audit report is not expected to be released by the Auditor of the State until December 2025.

VI. Investment Policy

The Attorney Services Fund's moneys are managed in a conservative, risk-averse manner through investments made in compliance with the Uniform Depository Act, as set forth in Ohio Revised Code Chapter 135, and amended by the Investment Reform Act of 1996. These and other state and federal laws require that the fund's moneys not be placed at risk in the marketplace through investments in derivatives, reverse purchase agreements, or any method of leveraging.



The fund's investments are primarily in federal money market accounts avoiding high bank insurance charges. The fund continues to seek more optimal investment options, as permitted by statute.

VII. Conclusion

The Attorney Services Fund allows the Supreme Court to maintain an effective and efficient system for licensing attorneys and regulating post-admission aspects of the practice of law, consistent with its responsibility under the Ohio Constitution. The fund also provides important financial resources to organizations that aid in the provision of legal services to the poor and assist lawyers who are suffering from alcoholism, substance abuse, or mental illness. All activities supported by the fund are invaluable in ensuring the public's continued trust and confidence in our legal system.

The fund is in a solid financial position. It is expected that it will maintain that position throughout Fiscal Year 2026.

VIII. Comments and Inquiries

Any comments and inquiries regarding this report or the fund may be directed to:

Robert W. Horner, III
Administrative Director, or

Michel Jendretzky
Director, Office of Attorney Services

The Supreme Court of Ohio
65 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3431



Schedule 1

Fund Expenditures FY 2025 and Allocations FY 2026

Office, Board, Commission	FY 2024 Expenditures	FY 2025 Allocations	FY 2025 Expenditures	% of FY 2025 Allocations Expended	FY 2026 Allocations	% of FY 2026 Allocations Expended
Office of Disciplinary Counsel						
Operations Budget	\$3,886,540	\$4,529,573	\$4,155,473	91.7%	\$4,649,882	44.30%
Board of Professional Conduct						
Operations Budget	\$740,964	\$929,120	\$641,663	69.1%	\$961,237	9.16%
Reimbursement of Expenses	\$2,009,772	\$2,000,000	\$1,942,896	97.1%	\$2,000,000	19.05%
Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection						
Operations Budget	\$569,745	\$657,669	\$630,662	95.9%	\$701,786	6.69%
Trust Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.00%
Office of Attorney Services						
Operations Budget	\$996,911	\$558,987	\$406,998	72.8%	\$505,832	4.82%
Office of Bar Admissions						
Operations Budget	\$1,319,347	\$784,800	\$653,149	83.2%	\$713,500	6.80%
Board on the Unauthorized Practice of Law						
Operations Budget	\$272	\$9,000	\$505	5.6%	\$5,250	0.05%
Reimbursement of Local Bar Associations	\$50,816	\$90,000	\$65,829	73.1%	\$90,000	0.86%
Commission on Professionalism						
Operations Budget	\$60,428	\$54,250	\$1,473	2.7%	\$54,250	0.52%
Commission on Certification of Attorneys as Specialists						
Operations Budget	\$0	\$2,750	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.00%
Ohio Access Justice Foundation						
Grant	\$425,000	\$0	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.00%
Ohio Lawyers Assistance Program						
Grant	\$765,000	\$815,000	\$815,000	100.0%	\$815,000	7.76%
TOTAL	\$10,824,796	\$10,431,149	\$9,313,648	89.3%	\$10,496,737	100.00%





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THE SUPREME COURT *of* OHIO