

# **Five Things a Court Reporter Should Know:**

## **1. JAC has created a secure website that contains information about a vendor's paid and unpaid bills.**

JAC has created a secure website through which a court reporter can obtain information regarding both unpaid and paid bills submitted to JAC. Through this website, a vendor can determine whether JAC has received a billing and whether JAC has approved the billing for payment. A vendor can also access letters and notices related to the billing such as audit deficiencies and letters of objection.

Instructions on how to setup access to the secure website is available at:

<https://www.justiceadmin.com/login/login/Quick%20Reference%20Guide-Vendor%20Login.pdf>

The JAC Help Desk can assist a court reporter in setting up secure access and in using the vendor website.

## **2. A court reporter may wish to verify that an attorney has obtained or is in the process of obtaining an order authorizing transcripts before preparing a transcript.**

Florida law requires that any deposition transcript be authorized by court order. A court must find that preparation of the transcript is necessary before transcription may be authorized. The order authorizing transcripts should indicate the deponent(s) and date of deposition(s). A generic order authorizing transcripts will generally not suffice for payment purposes.

Similarly, hearing and other transcripts also need to be authorized by the court. The order authorizing transcripts should indicate the hearing date(s) that are authorized to be transcribed. The only time an order is not required is for appellate transcripts. For appellate transcripts, the designation of the appellate record may be utilized in lieu of a court order authorizing transcripts.

An order authorizing transcripts only allows for payment at regular rates. If the transcripts are to be paid for at expedited rates, the order must explicitly authorize expedited rates and should set forth the basis for such rates.

Before preparing a transcript, a court reporter may wish to verify that the attorney has obtained an order authorizing transcripts or is in the process of obtaining such an order. A copy of the order (or designation of the record in appellate cases) must be included with the billing for the transcripts. Failure to include this order will often result in delays in payment.

### **3. A privately retained attorney representing a client declared indigent for costs can obtain a printout from JAC's secure website showing that JAC has received necessary documentation.**

In some instances, a privately retained attorney may have their client declared indigent for costs. When this occurs, the attorney needs to provide JAC with specific documentation related to this determination. The attorney must provide JAC with (1) the motion to declare the defendant indigent for costs; (2) the completed clerk's application for indigency; (3) an affidavit as to the estimated amount of attorney's fees; (4) the order declaring the defendant indigent for costs; (5) the charging document; and (6) a JAC Agreement signed by the attorney. Until JAC receives these documents, JAC cannot process any billing for payment related to that case.

Similar to the vendor secure website, a private attorney can access a secure website related to his or her cases. One of the items the attorney can access is a screen showing whether JAC has received the six documents listed above. The attorney can print this screen. Before commencing work on an indigent for costs case, a court reporter or other due process vendor may wish to ask the attorney for a copy of this screen to verify that the attorney has provided JAC with necessary documentation.

### **4. It is critical that a court reporter use the right JAC Invoice Voucher Cover.**

Any invoice submitted to JAC must use the correct voucher cover for that type of billing. The JAC Invoice Voucher Covers include information necessary for JAC to review a billing for compliance with statutory and contractual requirements. The failure to use the right voucher cover can result in essential information being omitted from the billing which can delay the processing of the billing.

### **5. JAC only accepts bills for direct payment in court-appointed and indigent for costs cases.**

JAC only accepts invoices for direct payment from court reporters and other due process providers in cases involving private court-appointed cases and in cases where the defendant was eligible for court appointed counsel but has been declared indigent for costs. Although JAC provides administrative assistance to the state attorneys, public defenders, and regional counsels, any invoices for court reporting services in those cases need to be submitted directly to the appropriate office rather than to JAC.