

APB Roster Program – Info Sheet re Disbursement Coverage (as of January 2026)

All pro bono cases administered through the Roster Program involving poverty law issues qualify for disbursement coverage. Roster Program volunteer lawyers who provide pro bono litigation services to low-income individuals may bill Access Pro Bono (“APB”) for incurred disbursements up to \$2,500 (while annual funds last). APB’s disbursement coverage is made possible by a grant from the Law Foundation of British Columbia.

Coverage Amounts

After entering into an APB Service Agreement (or equivalent retainer agreement to provide particular pro bono litigation services to an individual client), a Roster Program volunteer lawyer may request up to \$300 to cover initial disbursements necessary to commence or advance the client’s case. If the case is settled, abandoned, or otherwise closed prior to filing court documents, APB may request an itemized description of the disbursements from the Roster Program volunteer lawyer and recover the unused portion of the \$300 advanced disbursement payment.

Otherwise, to request disbursement coverage up to \$2,500 (less any initial disbursement amounts), Roster Program volunteer lawyers need to submit a **Disbursement Billing Form** to APB.

Please make sure to:

- Itemize disbursements individually on the Disbursement Billing Form and attach a copy of the receipt of invoice for any external disbursement costs (e.g., courier costs, transcript costs, search fees).
- Include the number of photocopies and the rate charged, as well as the total.

Also, please note the following:

- APB is unable to reimburse Roster Program volunteer lawyers for any in-house printing, copying, Westlaw, LexisNexis searches or faxing.
- APB is unable to reimburse Roster Program volunteer lawyers for any internal administration fees charged by their law firm.
- GST is not payable on internal firm expense amounts.

APB maintains the discretion to provide disbursement coverage in excess of \$2,500 to single cases showing exceptional merit or substantial impact on social justice issues, where annual funds permit. Please inquire with APB *before* exceeding the maximum disbursement allowance.

APB may seek to recover disbursement amounts paid to a Roster Program volunteer lawyer where costs are awarded to the pro bono client.

Criteria for Authorization

APB authorizes and covers those disbursements it considers necessary and reasonable.

A disbursement is considered necessary if it is likely to significantly advance the client’s case or if, without it, the client’s case would be significantly disadvantaged. Reasonable refers to the amount of the disbursement. What is considered to be a reasonable disbursement may depend on the circumstances of a particular case. Additional considerations include:

- What is the likelihood that the expenditure will result in a tangible benefit to the client?

- Is the cost of the disbursement reconcilable with the order or quantum sought by litigation?
- Would a client of limited means incur the disbursement?
- Is the disbursement consistent with others allowed by APB?
- Does the cost of the disbursement reflect market rates?

Covered Disbursements

APB will typically cover the following disbursements (where necessary and reasonable):

- courier services
- court or tribunal transcripts
- custody and access reports
- filing/hearing fees
- hospital records
- medical records and reports
- long-distance telephone charges
- third-party photocopying, printing, and faxing
- postage
- service of court documents
- title searches for property and assets.

APB may authorize the following disbursements in exceptional circumstances:

- interpretation and translation for language
- psychologist or psychiatrist assessments
- travel costs for lawyers
- travel costs or videoconferencing for witnesses.

Please direct any questions about disbursement coverage or suggestions for disbursements additional to those listed above to:

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