

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY State of Illinois 2023 and 2024 SB2365

Introduced 2/10/2023, by Sen. John F. Curran

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

705 ILCS 105/27.1b

Amends the Clerks of Courts Act. Provides that no fee shall be charged to a person to remotely access on the Internet any case document or information that is identified as public under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 8.

LRB103 28375 LNS 54755 b

1 AN ACT concerning courts.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

- Section 5. The Clerks of Courts Act is amended by changing

 Section 27.1b as follows:
- 6 (705 ILCS 105/27.1b)
- 7 (Section scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2024)
- 8 Sec. 27.1b. Circuit court clerk fees. Notwithstanding any 9 other provision of law, all fees charged by the clerks of the circuit court for the services described in this Section shall 10 be established, collected, and disbursed in accordance with 11 this Section. Except as otherwise specified in this Section, 12 all fees under this Section shall be paid in advance and 13 14 disbursed by each clerk on a monthly basis. In a county with a population of over 3,000,000, units of local government and 15 16 school districts shall not be required to pay fees under this Section in advance and the clerk shall instead send an 17 itemized bill to the unit of local government or school 18 19 district, within 30 days of the fee being incurred, and the 20 unit of local government or school district shall be allowed 21 at least 30 days from the date of the itemized bill to pay; 22 these payments shall be disbursed by each clerk on a monthly basis. Unless otherwise specified in this Section, the amount 23

- of a fee shall be determined by ordinance or resolution of the county board and remitted to the county treasurer to be used for purposes related to the operation of the court system in the county. In a county with a population of over 3,000,000, any amount retained by the clerk of the circuit court or remitted to the county treasurer shall be subject to appropriation by the county board.
 - (a) Civil cases. The fee for filing a complaint, petition, or other pleading initiating a civil action shall be as set forth in the applicable schedule under this subsection in accordance with case categories established by the Supreme Court in schedules.
 - (1) SCHEDULE 1: not to exceed a total of \$366 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$316 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$190 through December 31, 2021 and \$184 on and after January 1, 2022. The fees collected under this schedule shall be disbursed as follows:
 - (A) The clerk shall retain a sum, in an amount not to exceed \$55 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$45 in any other county determined by the clerk with the approval of the Supreme Court, to be used for court automation, court document storage, and administrative

L	purposes.
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- (B) The clerk shall remit up to \$21 to the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall deposit the appropriate amounts, in accordance with the clerk's instructions, as follows:
 - (i) up to \$10, as specified by the Supreme Court in accordance with Part 10A of Article II of the Code of Civil Procedure, into the Mandatory Arbitration Fund:
 - (ii) \$2 into the Access to Justice Fund; and
 - (iii) \$9 into the Supreme Court Special Purposes Fund.
- (C) The clerk shall remit a sum to the County Treasurer, in an amount not to exceed \$290 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$250 in any other county, as specified by ordinance or resolution passed by the county board, for purposes related to the operation of the court system in the county.
- (2) SCHEDULE 2: not to exceed a total of \$357 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$266 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$190 through December 31, 2021 and \$184 on and after January 1, 2022. The fees collected under this

schedule	shall	he	disbursed	2 8	follows.
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- (A) The clerk shall retain a sum, in an amount not to exceed \$55 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$45 in any other county determined by the clerk with the approval of the Supreme Court, to be used for court automation, court document storage, and administrative purposes.
- (B) The clerk shall remit up to \$21 to the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall deposit the appropriate amounts, in accordance with the clerk's instructions, as follows:
 - (i) up to \$10, as specified by the Supreme Court in accordance with Part 10A of Article II of the Code of Civil Procedure, into the Mandatory Arbitration Fund;
 - (ii) \$2 into the Access to Justice Fund: and
 - (iii) \$9 into the Supreme Court Special Purposes Fund.
- (C) The clerk shall remit a sum to the County Treasurer, in an amount not to exceed \$281 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$200 in any other county, as specified by ordinance or resolution passed by the county board, for purposes related to the operation of the court system in the county.

- (3) SCHEDULE 3: not to exceed a total of \$265 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$89 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$190 through December 31, 2021 and \$184 on and after January 1, 2022. The fees collected under this schedule shall be disbursed as follows:
 - (A) The clerk shall retain a sum, in an amount not to exceed \$55 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$22 in any other county determined by the clerk with the approval of the Supreme Court, to be used for court automation, court document storage, and administrative purposes.
 - (B) The clerk shall remit \$11 to the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall deposit the appropriate amounts in accordance with the clerk's instructions, as follows:
 - (i) \$2 into the Access to Justice Fund; and
 - (ii) \$9 into the Supreme Court Special Purposes Fund.
 - (C) The clerk shall remit a sum to the County Treasurer, in an amount not to exceed \$199 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$56 in any other county, as specified by

ordinance or resolution passed by the county board,
for purposes related to the operation of the court
system in the county.

- (4) SCHEDULE 4: \$0.
- (b) Appearance. The fee for filing an appearance in a civil action, including a cannabis civil law action under the Cannabis Control Act, shall be as set forth in the applicable schedule under this subsection in accordance with case categories established by the Supreme Court in schedules.
 - (1) SCHEDULE 1: not to exceed a total of \$230 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$191 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$75. The fees collected under this schedule shall be disbursed as follows:
 - (A) The clerk shall retain a sum, in an amount not to exceed \$50 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$45 in any other county determined by the clerk with the approval of the Supreme Court, to be used for court automation, court document storage, and administrative purposes.
 - (B) The clerk shall remit up to \$21 to the State Treasurer. The State Treasurer shall deposit the appropriate amounts, in accordance with the clerk's

instructions, as follows:

- (i) up to \$10, as specified by the Supreme Court in accordance with Part 10A of Article II of the Code of Civil Procedure, into the Mandatory Arbitration Fund:
 - (ii) \$2 into the Access to Justice Fund; and
- (iii) \$9 into the Supreme Court Special Purposes Fund.
- (C) The clerk shall remit a sum to the County Treasurer, in an amount not to exceed \$159 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$125 in any other county, as specified by ordinance or resolution passed by the county board, for purposes related to the operation of the court system in the county.
- (2) SCHEDULE 2: not to exceed a total of \$130 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$109 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$75. The fees collected under this schedule shall be disbursed as follows:
 - (A) The clerk shall retain a sum, in an amount not to exceed \$50 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$10 in any other county determined by the clerk with the

approval of the Supreme Court, to be used for court automation, court document storage, and administrative purposes.

- (B) The clerk shall remit \$9 to the State Treasurer, which the State Treasurer shall deposit into the Supreme Court Special Purposes Fund.
- (C) The clerk shall remit a sum to the County Treasurer, in an amount not to exceed \$71 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and in an amount not to exceed \$90 in any other county, as specified by ordinance or resolution passed by the county board, for purposes related to the operation of the court system in the county.

(3) SCHEDULE 3: \$0.

- (b-5) Kane County and Will County. In Kane County and Will County civil cases, there is an additional fee of up to \$30 as set by the county board under Section 5-1101.3 of the Counties Code to be paid by each party at the time of filing the first pleading, paper, or other appearance; provided that no additional fee shall be required if more than one party is represented in a single pleading, paper, or other appearance. Distribution of fees collected under this subsection (b-5) shall be as provided in Section 5-1101.3 of the Counties Code.
- (c) Counterclaim or third party complaint. When any defendant files a counterclaim or third party complaint, as part of the defendant's answer or otherwise, the defendant

- shall pay a filing fee for each counterclaim or third party complaint in an amount equal to the filing fee the defendant would have had to pay had the defendant brought a separate action for the relief sought in the counterclaim or third party complaint, less the amount of the appearance fee, if any, that the defendant has already paid in the action in which the counterclaim or third party complaint is filed.
 - (d) Alias summons. The clerk shall collect a fee not to exceed \$6 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$5 in any other county for each alias summons or citation issued by the clerk, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$5 for each alias summons or citation issued by the clerk.
 - (e) Jury services. The clerk shall collect, in addition to other fees allowed by law, a sum not to exceed \$212.50, as a fee for the services of a jury in every civil action not quasi-criminal in its nature and not a proceeding for the exercise of the right of eminent domain and in every other action wherein the right of trial by jury is or may be given by law. The jury fee shall be paid by the party demanding a jury at the time of filing the jury demand. If the fee is not paid by either party, no jury shall be called in the action or proceeding, and the action or proceeding shall be tried by the court without a jury.
 - (f) Change of venue. In connection with a change of venue:

- (1) The clerk of the jurisdiction from which the case is transferred may charge a fee, not to exceed \$40, for the preparation and certification of the record; and
 - (2) The clerk of the jurisdiction to which the case is transferred may charge the same filing fee as if it were the commencement of a new suit.
 - (g) Petition to vacate or modify.
 - (1) In a proceeding involving a petition to vacate or modify any final judgment or order filed within 30 days after the judgment or order was entered, except for an eviction case, small claims case, petition to reopen an estate, petition to modify, terminate, or enforce a judgment or order for child or spousal support, or petition to modify, suspend, or terminate an order for withholding, the fee shall not exceed \$60 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and shall not exceed \$50 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$50.
 - (2) In a proceeding involving a petition to vacate or modify any final judgment or order filed more than 30 days after the judgment or order was entered, except for a petition to modify, terminate, or enforce a judgment or order for child or spousal support, or petition to modify, suspend, or terminate an order for withholding, the fee shall not exceed \$75.

- 1 (3) In a proceeding involving a motion to vacate or
 2 amend a final order, motion to vacate an ex parte
 3 judgment, judgment of forfeiture, or "failure to appear"
 4 or "failure to comply" notices sent to the Secretary of
 5 State, the fee shall equal \$40.
 - (h) Appeals preparation. The fee for preparation of a record on appeal shall be based on the number of pages, as follows:
 - (1) if the record contains no more than 100 pages, the fee shall not exceed \$70 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and shall not exceed \$50 in any other county;
 - (2) if the record contains between 100 and 200 pages, the fee shall not exceed \$100; and
 - (3) if the record contains 200 or more pages, the clerk may collect an additional fee not to exceed 25 cents per page.
 - (i) Remands. In any cases remanded to the circuit court from the Supreme Court or the appellate court for a new trial, the clerk shall reinstate the case with either its original number or a new number. The clerk shall not charge any new or additional fee for the reinstatement. Upon reinstatement, the clerk shall advise the parties of the reinstatement. Parties shall have the same right to a jury trial on remand and reinstatement that they had before the appeal, and no additional or new fee or charge shall be made for a jury trial

1 after remand.

- (j) Garnishment, wage deduction, and citation. In garnishment affidavit, wage deduction affidavit, and citation petition proceedings:
 - (1) if the amount in controversy in the proceeding is not more than \$1,000, the fee may not exceed \$35 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and may not exceed \$15 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$15;
 - (2) if the amount in controversy in the proceeding is greater than \$1,000 and not more than \$5,000, the fee may not exceed \$45 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and may not exceed \$30 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$30; and
 - (3) if the amount in controversy in the proceeding is greater than \$5,000, the fee may not exceed \$65 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and may not exceed \$50 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$50.
 - (j-5) Debt collection. In any proceeding to collect a debt

- subject to the exception in item (ii) of subparagraph (A-5) of paragraph (1) of subsection (z) of this Section, the circuit court shall order and the clerk shall collect from each judgment debtor a fee of:
- 5 (1) \$35 if the amount in controversy in the proceeding 6 is not more than \$1,000;
 - (2) \$45 if the amount in controversy in the proceeding is greater than \$1,000 and not more than \$5,000; and
 - (3) \$65 if the amount in controversy in the proceeding is greater than \$5,000.
 - (k) Collections.
 - (1) For all collections made of others, except the State and county and except in maintenance or child support cases, the clerk may collect a fee of up to 2.5% of the amount collected and turned over.
 - (2) In child support and maintenance cases, the clerk may collect an annual fee of up to \$36 from the person making payment for maintaining child support records and the processing of support orders to the State of Illinois KIDS system and the recording of payments issued by the State Disbursement Unit for the official record of the Court. This fee is in addition to and separate from amounts ordered to be paid as maintenance or child support and shall be deposited into a Separate Maintenance and Child Support Collection Fund, of which the clerk shall be the custodian, ex officio, to be used by the clerk to

maintain child support orders and record all payments issued by the State Disbursement Unit for the official record of the Court. The clerk may recover from the person making the maintenance or child support payment any additional cost incurred in the collection of this annual fee.

- (3) The clerk may collect a fee of \$5 for certifications made to the Secretary of State as provided in Section 7-703 of the Illinois Vehicle Code, and this fee shall be deposited into the Separate Maintenance and Child Support Collection Fund.
- (4) In proceedings to foreclose the lien of delinquent real estate taxes, State's Attorneys shall receive a fee of 10% of the total amount realized from the sale of real estate sold in the proceedings. The clerk shall collect the fee from the total amount realized from the sale of the real estate sold in the proceedings and remit to the County Treasurer to be credited to the earnings of the Office of the State's Attorney.
- 20 (1) Mailing. The fee for the clerk mailing documents shall not exceed \$10 plus the cost of postage.
 - (m) Certified copies. The fee for each certified copy of a judgment, after the first copy, shall not exceed \$10.
 - (n) Certification, authentication, and reproduction.
 - (1) The fee for each certification or authentication for taking the acknowledgment of a deed or other

1	instrument	in	writing	with	the	seal	of	office	shall	not
2	exceed \$6.									

- (2) The fee for reproduction of any document contained in the clerk's files shall not exceed:
 - (A) \$2 for the first page;
 - (B) 50 cents per page for the next 19 pages; and
- 7 (C) 25 cents per page for all additional pages.
 - (o) Record search. For each record search, within a division or municipal district, the clerk may collect a search fee not to exceed \$6 for each year searched.
 - (p) Hard copy. For each page of hard copy print output, when case records are maintained on an automated medium, the clerk may collect a fee not to exceed \$10 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and not to exceed \$6 in any other county, except as applied to units of local government and school districts in counties with more than 3,000,000 inhabitants an amount not to exceed \$6.
 - (p-5) Remote access. No fee shall be charged to a person to remotely access on the Internet any case document or information that is identified as public under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 8.
 - (q) Index inquiry and other records. No fee shall be charged for a single plaintiff and defendant index inquiry or single case record inquiry when this request is made in person and the records are maintained in a current automated medium, and when no hard copy print output is requested. The fees to be

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- 1 charged for management records, multiple case records, and
- 2 multiple journal records may be specified by the Chief Judge
- 3 pursuant to the guidelines for access and dissemination of
- 4 information approved by the Supreme Court.
- 5 (r) Performing a marriage. There shall be a \$10 fee for
- 6 performing a marriage in court.
 - (s) Voluntary assignment. For filing each deed of voluntary assignment, the clerk shall collect a fee not to exceed \$20. For recording a deed of voluntary assignment, the clerk shall collect a fee not to exceed 50 cents for each 100 words. Exceptions filed to claims presented to an assignee of a debtor who has made a voluntary assignment for the benefit of creditors shall be considered and treated, for the purpose of taxing costs therein, as actions in which the party or parties filing the exceptions shall be considered as party or parties plaintiff, and the claimant or claimants as party or parties defendant, and those parties respectively shall pay to the clerk the same fees as provided by this Section to be paid in other actions.
 - (t) Expungement petition. The clerk may collect a fee not to exceed \$60 for each expungement petition filed and an additional fee not to exceed \$4 for each certified copy of an order to expunge arrest records.
- 24 (u) Transcripts of judgment. For the filing of a 25 transcript of judgment, the clerk may collect the same fee as 26 if it were the commencement of a new suit.

- (v) Probate filings.
 - (1) For each account (other than one final account) filed in the estate of a decedent, or ward, the fee shall not exceed \$25.
 - (2) For filing a claim in an estate when the amount claimed is greater than \$150 and not more than \$500, the fee shall not exceed \$40 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and shall not exceed \$25 in any other county; when the amount claimed is greater than \$500 and not more than \$10,000, the fee shall not exceed \$55 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and shall not exceed \$40 in any other county; and when the amount claimed is more than \$10,000, the fee shall not exceed \$75 in a county with a population of 3,000,000 or more and shall not exceed \$60 in any other county; except the court in allowing a claim may add to the amount allowed the filing fee paid by the claimant.
 - (3) For filing in an estate a claim, petition, or supplemental proceeding based upon an action seeking equitable relief including the construction or contest of a will, enforcement of a contract to make a will, and proceedings involving testamentary trusts or the appointment of testamentary trustees, the fee shall not exceed \$60.
 - (4) There shall be no fee for filing in an estate: (i) the appearance of any person for the purpose of consent;

- or (ii) the appearance of an executor, administrator, administrator to collect, guardian, guardian ad litem, or special administrator.
 - (5) For each jury demand, the fee shall not exceed \$137.50.
 - (6) For each certified copy of letters of office, of court order, or other certification, the fee shall not exceed \$2 per page.
 - (7) For each exemplification, the fee shall not exceed \$2, plus the fee for certification.
 - (8) The executor, administrator, guardian, petitioner, or other interested person or his or her attorney shall pay the cost of publication by the clerk directly to the newspaper.
 - (9) The person on whose behalf a charge is incurred for witness, court reporter, appraiser, or other miscellaneous fees shall pay the same directly to the person entitled thereto.
 - (10) The executor, administrator, guardian, petitioner, or other interested person or his or her attorney shall pay to the clerk all postage charges incurred by the clerk in mailing petitions, orders, notices, or other documents pursuant to the provisions of the Probate Act of 1975.
- 25 (w) Corrections of numbers. For correction of the case 26 number, case title, or attorney computer identification

- 1 number, if required by rule of court, on any document filed in
- 2 the clerk's office, to be charged against the party that filed
- 3 the document, the fee shall not exceed \$25.
 - (x) Miscellaneous.
 - (1) Interest earned on any fees collected by the clerk shall be turned over to the county general fund as an earning of the office.
 - (2) For any check, draft, or other bank instrument returned to the clerk for non-sufficient funds, account closed, or payment stopped, the clerk shall collect a fee of \$25.
 - (y) Other fees. Any fees not covered in this Section shall be set by rule or administrative order of the circuit court with the approval of the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts. The clerk of the circuit court may provide services in connection with the operation of the clerk's office, other than those services mentioned in this Section, as may be requested by the public and agreed to by the clerk and approved by the Chief Judge. Any charges for additional services shall be as agreed to between the clerk and the party making the request and approved by the Chief Judge. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require any clerk to provide any service not otherwise required by law.
 - (y-5) Unpaid fees. Unless a court ordered payment schedule is implemented or the fee requirements of this Section are waived under a court order, the clerk of the circuit court may

add to any unpaid fees and costs under this Section a delinquency amount equal to 5% of the unpaid fees that remain unpaid after 30 days, 10% of the unpaid fees that remain unpaid after 60 days, and 15% of the unpaid fees that remain unpaid after 90 days. Notice to those parties may be made by signage posting or publication. The additional delinquency amounts collected under this Section shall be deposited into the Circuit Court Clerk Operations and Administration Fund and used to defray additional administrative costs incurred by the clerk of the circuit court in collecting unpaid fees and costs.

- (z) Exceptions.
 - (1) No fee authorized by this Section shall apply to:
 - (A) police departments or other law enforcement agencies. In this Section, "law enforcement agency" means: an agency of the State or agency of a unit of local government which is vested by law or ordinance with the duty to maintain public order and to enforce criminal laws or ordinances; the Attorney General; or any State's Attorney;
 - (A-5) any unit of local government or school district, except in counties having a population of 500,000 or more the county board may by resolution set fees for units of local government or school districts no greater than the minimum fees applicable in counties with a population less than 3,000,000;

provided however, no fee may be charged to any unit of local government or school district in connection with any action which, in whole or in part, is: (i) to enforce an ordinance; (ii) to collect a debt; or (iii) under the Administrative Review Law:

- (B) any action instituted by the corporate authority of a municipality with more than 1,000,000 inhabitants under Section 11-31-1 of the Illinois Municipal Code and any action instituted under subsection (b) of Section 11-31-1 of the Illinois Municipal Code by a private owner or tenant of real property within 1,200 feet of a dangerous or unsafe building seeking an order compelling the owner or owners of the building to take any of the actions authorized under that subsection;
- (C) any commitment petition or petition for an order authorizing the administration of psychotropic medication or electroconvulsive therapy under the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code;
- (D) a petitioner in any order of protection proceeding, including, but not limited to, fees for filing, modifying, withdrawing, certifying, or photocopying petitions for orders of protection, issuing alias summons, any related filing service, or certifying, modifying, vacating, or photocopying any orders of protection; or

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1	(E)	proceedings	for	the a	appointmer	nt (of	а
2	confident	ial intermedia	ary un	der the	Adoption	Act.		

- (2) No fee other than the filing fee contained in the applicable schedule in subsection (a) shall be charged to any person in connection with an adoption proceeding.
- (3) Upon good cause shown, the court may waive any fees associated with a special needs adoption. The term "special needs adoption" has the meaning provided by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.
- 10 (aa) This Section is repealed on January 1, 2024.
- 11 (Source: P.A. 101-645, eff. 6-26-20; 102-145, eff. 7-23-21;
- 12 102-278, eff. 8-6-21; 102-558, eff. 8-20-21; 102-813, eff.
- 13 5-13-22.)