
SENATE BILL No. 65

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 34-10-1-2.

Synopsis: Indigent parties in civil actions. Authorizes a court to appoint an attorney at no expense to an indigent person for the purpose of prosecuting or defending the indigent person's interests in a civil action only if the court determines that certain exceptional circumstances justify the appointment. Requires the court to pay the reasonable attorney's fees and litigation expenses incurred by the appointed attorney.

Effective: Upon passage.

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January 8, 2001, read first time and referred to Committee on Judiciary.

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First Regular Session 112th General Assembly (2001)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2000 General Assembly.

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SENATE BILL No. 65



A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning courts and court officers.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

- 1 SECTION 1. IC 34-10-1-2 IS AMENDED TO READ AS
- 2 FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE]January 8: Sec. 2. **(a)**
- 3 **Judiciary. This section shall not be construed to prohibit a court**
- 4 **from participating in a pro bono legal services program or other**
- 5 **program that provides legal services to litigants:**
- 6 **(1) without charge; or**
- 7 **(2) at a reduced fee.**
- 8 **(b)** If the court is satisfied that a person who makes an application
- 9 described in section 1 of this chapter does not have sufficient means to
- 10 prosecute or defend the action, the court: ~~shall:~~
- 11 (1) **shall** admit the applicant to prosecute or defend as an indigent
- 12 person; and
- 13 (2) **may, under exceptional circumstances,** assign an attorney
- 14 to defend or prosecute the cause.
- 15 **(c) The factors that a court may consider under subsection**
- 16 **(b)(2) include the following:**
- 17 **(1) The likelihood of the applicant prevailing on the merits of**



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the applicant's claim or defense.

(2) The applicant's ability to investigate and present the applicant's claims or defenses without an attorney given the type and complexity of the facts and legal issues in the action.

(d) The court shall deny an application made under section 1 of this chapter if the court determines any of the following:

(1) The applicant failed to make a diligent effort to obtain an attorney before filing the application.

(2) The applicant is unlikely to prevail on the applicant's claim or defense.

(e) All officers required to prosecute or defend the action shall do their duty in the case without taking any fee or reward from the indigent person.

(f) The reasonable attorney's fees and expenses of an attorney appointed to represent an applicant under section 1 of this chapter shall be paid from the money appropriated to the court:

(1) appointing the attorney, if the action was not transferred to another county; or

(2) from which the action was transferred, if the action was transferred to another county.

SECTION 2. An emergency is declared for this act.

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