

## Getting Reimbursed by Clients for Expenses

Hi folks,

I'm just wondering what forms of payment you require for expenses that you incur on behalf of clients. For upfront retainers, I take cash, check, or credit or debit card. However, for expenses (filing fees, service of process, discovery, etc.) I require cash or check because I don't want to take the merchant fees hit on the expenses I outlaid. So I'm wondering if any of you are willing to take that hit and get reimbursed for expenses via credit or debit card. Many young people these days are used to paying for many things with credit or debit cards and are not used to writing checks.

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I build those fees into overhead to keep payment smooth and easy for clients.

Flann Lippincott, New Jersey

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To my view, you should review estimated costs and recover it as part of your general overhead in your fees, whether hourly or fixed.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

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I require my clients to pay costs upfront. If I don't get them, I don't file suit. I have made exceptions for some really good hourly commercial clients.

Barry Kaufman, Florida

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1. I usually request a deposit.
  2. But whether or not I get it, at some time during the case the deposit may not be there to pay costs.
  3. So, I will take payment by check or by LAWPAY credit card. I do lose the 2% or whatever it is as my overhead loss to obtain payment by credit card and not have to wait, chase them down for it, etc. The 2% or so loss on credit card payment is a cost of doing business, like paying for phones, postage, parking at courthouse parking lot that I can't charge the client for, etc.

Roger Rosen, California

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Fees are just a necessary cost of doing business. I eat them and not worry about it.

Robert "Robby" W. Hughes, Jr., Georgia

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I thought that except for indigent cases and contingency cases Rule 1.8 didn't permit lawyers to pay fees for clients without getting the money back, as that was considered "financial assistance." I'm not a litigator though--am I misreading that rule?

Kevin W. Grierson, Virginia

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I'm pretty sure the "fees" he was referring to are credit card payment fees (the percentage you have to pay when receiving money from a client via credit card), not filing fees.

Michael Koenecke, Texas

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