


**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO**



To: Members, Criminal Justice Act ("CJA") Panel Committee
District of Puerto Rico

CC Francisco J. Adams, Esq.
CJA District Representative

From: 
Hon. Aida M. Delgado-Colón
U.S. District Court Judge
Chairperson, CJA Committee

Date: May 13, 2025

Subject: Application of Section XVI of the 2025 CJA Plan to Appointments Made
Before January 1, 2025

As you are aware, the Plan for Implementation and Administration of the Criminal Justice Act ("2025 CJA Plan") became effective on January 1, 2025. Section XVI of the Plan establishes that while the new provisions govern appointments made on or after January 1, 2025, counsel appointed under the prior Plan will continue to operate under the prior Plan's terms for the completion of their representation. This includes compensation and reimbursement for services and expenses.

Accordingly, the Court would like to clarify that vouchers submitted for cases in which counsel was appointed before January 1, 2025, will not be subject to the Independent Review Committee ("IRC") review procedures outlined in Section VIII(B)(6) of the 2025 CJA Plan. Instead, such vouchers will be reviewed and processed under the terms of the prior Plan.

For vouchers submitted under the new Plan—applicable to appointments made on or after January 1, 2025—counsel should be aware of the tools available in Section VIII(B)(6) to ensure fairness in the voucher review process. These tools allow for informal discussions with the court regarding any contemplated reductions, as well as the option to refer a voucher to the IRC for independent review.

The IRC process provides an additional safeguard for panel attorneys in cases where the presiding judge intends to reduce a voucher for reasons other than mathematical or technical corrections. If a judge refers a voucher to the IRC, the committee—composed of the Clerk of Court or designee, a CJA Panel Committee member, and an experienced criminal defense attorney who is not a current CJA panel member—reviews the voucher and the reasons for the proposed reduction. Counsel is given the opportunity to submit additional information or clarification in support of the claimed compensation. After its review, the IRC issues a recommendation to the presiding judge, who retains the authority to accept or reject the recommendation before issuing a final determination. Consequently, engaging the IRC process may extend the time required to review and process the voucher.

As an alternative to the IRC process, Section VIII(B)(6)(1) allows the presiding judge to meet and discuss with counsel the reasons or grounds for the intended reduction in an attempt to reach a resolution and agreement. This option is a separate and discretionary alternative to the IRC process, providing an opportunity for direct engagement between counsel and the judge to address proposed reductions to the voucher.

The Clerk's Office continues to work diligently to review and process vouchers efficiently within the resources available. To facilitate this process, counsel should ensure that all compensable work is adequately described and properly categorized in eVoucher. This allows for a more efficient review and audit process.

Should you have any questions regarding the application of Section XVI or the use of Section VIII(B)(6) for vouchers under the new Plan, please contact the CJA Section of the Clerk's Office at PRDdb_CJA@prd.uscourts.gov.

Thank you for your continued service and dedication to the fair administration of justice.

cc. Rachel Brill
Federal Public Defender,
District of Puerto Rico

Ada I. García-Rivera, Esq., CPA
Clerk of Court