



Western Australia

Legal Profession Act 2008

**Legal Profession (Family Court of Western
Australia) Determination 2020**

Legal Profession (Family Court of Western Australia) Determination 2020

Contents

1.	Citation	1
2.	Commencement	1
3.	Application	1
4.	No minimum charge	1
5.	Restricted Practitioner category	1
6.	Hourly rates	1
7.	Counsel fees	4
8.	Disbursements	4
9.	Travel	5
10.	Costs	6

Notes

Compilation table	7
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Defined terms

Legal Profession (Family Court of Western Australia) Determination 2020

1. Citation

This Determination may be cited as the *Legal Profession (Family Court of Western Australia) Determination 2020*.

2. Commencement

This Determination comes into operation on 1 July 2020.

3. Application

This Determination applies to the remuneration of legal practitioners, clerks and paralegals in respect of advice given by legal practitioners in or for the purposes of proceedings or potential proceedings before the Family Court of Western Australia (**Family Court**).

4. No minimum charge

In no respect is this Determination to be seen as providing a minimum charge for any work.

5. Restricted Practitioner category

The amendments brought in by the *Legal Profession (Family Court of Western Australia) Determination 2016* remain in effect, other than clause 5(e) of that Determination.

6. Hourly rates

- (a) The hourly and daily rates set out in Table A are the maximum hourly and daily rates, inclusive of GST, which the Legal Costs

cl. 6

Committee determines shall be used to calculate the dollar amounts chargeable by a legal practitioner, clerk or paralegal in providing advice and services to their own clients in respect of proceedings and potential proceedings in the Family Court.

- (b) The daily rates set out in Table A are intended to cover all work done on a hearing or trial day, whether in or out of court, including preparation of written submissions and are not intended to be supplemented in any way by additional hourly charges given that the maximum number of hours allowed for the daily rate is 10 hours per day.

Table A

Fee Earner	Maximum allowable hourly and daily rates
Senior Practitioner (permitted to practise on his or her own account for 5 years or more) (SP) ^o	
hourly rate	\$495
Junior Practitioner (permitted to practise on his or her own account for less than 5 years) (JP) ^o	
hourly rate	\$352
Restricted Practitioner (RP) ^{o, #}	
hourly rate	\$297
Clerk/Paralegal (C/PL) ^{##}	
hourly rate	\$231

Fee Earner	Maximum allowable hourly and daily rates
Counsel fees charged as a disbursement to practitioners or charged by in-house Counsel:	
Counsel (C)*	
hourly rate	\$451
daily rate	\$4,510
Senior Counsel (SC)**	
hourly rate	\$682
daily rate	\$6,820

- ° The reference to Restricted Practitioner, Junior Practitioner or Senior Practitioner in this Determination includes all legal practitioners even if the services were rendered in another State or Territory. Where a local practitioner has held an interstate practising certificate, the length of unrestricted legal practice in that other jurisdiction is to be counted in assessing that practitioner's years of practice for the purposes of this Determination.
- # The reference to Restricted Practitioner in this Determination includes practitioners undertaking restricted legal practice for the purposes of obtaining the required experience set out in section 50 of the Act and does not include a reference to an Australian legal practitioner who has a condition placed on their practising certificate by the Legal Practice Board, State Administrative Tribunal or otherwise, requiring them to practise under supervision for disciplinary, medical or other reasons.
- ## The reference to Clerk/Paralegal in this Determination includes a law graduate prior to their admission to practise as an Australian lawyer.

cl. 7

- * The reference to Counsel in this Determination means a practitioner acting as a barrister other than a Senior Counsel and includes a practitioner appearing in court who does not practise in accordance with Supreme Court Practice Direction 10.5.
- ** The reference to Senior Counsel in this Determination means a person within the meaning of item 11 or item 12 of Regulation 5(2) of the *Legal Profession Regulations 2009* (WA).

7. Counsel fees

- (a) All appearances in court are intended to be charged at the applicable counsel rate, and not at any higher rate that may be applicable to the actual practitioner by reason of the person undertaking the appearance otherwise being entitled to charge as a Senior Practitioner.
- (b) Fees charged by practitioners who practise solely as barristers in accordance with Supreme Court Practice Direction 10.5 are only to be charged at the rates provided for counsel of their seniority in Table A and are not to be charged at rates applicable to a Senior Practitioner.
- (c) The increase in Counsel rates, and no increase in Senior Counsel or Senior Practitioner rates in Table A, is designed to narrow the gap between those levels of seniority of legal practitioner and more accurately reflect the market for legal services.
- (d) Recovery of daily fees for counsel on the taxation or assessment of a Bill of Costs is intended to apply only when a full day has been worked, either in Court or in Court and in preparation for a subsequent hearing day.

8. Disbursements

In addition to the fees and charges allowed under this Determination as between a law practice and client, a law practice may charge and be allowed disbursements necessarily or reasonably incurred.

9. Travel

- (a) For the purposes of this Determination, minor travel means incidental travel associated with attendance at court for a hearing where that travel is of a minor duration. Examples of minor travel include, but are not limited to—
- (1) a practitioner walking from their usual place of business to a court;
 - (2) a practitioner walking from a carpark to a court; or
 - (3) a practitioner walking or taking public transport from one centrally located court to another centrally located court.
- (b) As between a law practice and its own client, time spent travelling by a law practice, other than minor travel, is to be charged at no more than one half of the rates set out in Table A, with a maximum of 8 hours in any one day.
- (c) In making its decision in this Determination, the Committee has taken note of the Law Society of Western Australia's Standard Costs Agreement, which contains a provision that a law practice will charge travel at 50% of the agreed hourly rates.
- (d) The Legal Costs Committee has also considered an informal policy of the Legal Profession Complaints Committee that travel should not ordinarily be charged at a rate of more than 50% of a law practice's normal hourly charge-out rate.
- (e) Whilst the Legal Costs Committee recognises that during a travel period a law practice may not necessarily utilise legal skill and knowledge, there is a recognition of a loss of opportunity for the time spent travelling.
- (f) The Legal Costs Committee notes that, having regard to the above—
- (1) it is the responsibility of a law practice to allocate the cost of time spent on travel fairly and reasonably where

cl. 10

the travel is necessary to service more than one client on the day of travel; and

- (2) whilst nothing contained in this Determination prevents a law practice from charging time spent on a client matter or client matters in the course of travel (air travel by way of example), the law practice is not entitled to charge a client or clients for both time spent on a client matter (regardless of whether that time relates to the client for whom the travel is being undertaken) and the amount allowed for travel under this determination.

10. Costs

Unless a practitioner has made a written agreement as to costs with a client under the provisions of section 282 of the Act, the costs of or in relation to a party to an action or other proceeding (inclusive of GST and Counsel fees but exclusive of other disbursements) in the Family Court are payable by a party to that party's own legal practitioner, but shall not exceed an amount calculated at the hourly rates in this Determination.

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Notes

This is a compilation of the *Legal Profession (Family Court of Western Australia) Determination 2020*. For provisions that have come into operation see the compilation table.

Compilation table

Citation	Published	Commencement
<i>Legal Profession (Family Court of Western Australia) Determination 2020</i>	18 Jun 2020 p. 1732-4	1 Jul 2020 (see cl. 2)

Defined terms

Defined terms

[This is a list of terms defined and the provisions where they are defined.

The list is not part of the law.]

Defined term	Provision(s)
Family Court	3