

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2026 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 951

By Senator Oliverio

[Introduced February 16, 2026; referred
to the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL amend and reenact §48-9-604 and §52-1-17 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as
 2 amended, relating to closure of the Parent Education and Mediation Fund and redirection
 3 of remaining balance and certain jury costs; closing Parent Education and Mediation Fund
 4 as of certain date; transferring remaining balance to Family Court Fund; and specifying
 5 Family Court Fund to receive certain portion of jury costs.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

CHAPTER 48. DOMESTIC RELATIONS.

**ARTICLE 9. ALLOCATION OF CUSTODIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND DECISION-
 MAKING RESPONSIBILITY OF CHILDREN.**

§48-9-604. Parent education and mediation fund.

1 ~~There is hereby created in the state Treasury a special revenue account, designated the~~
 2 ~~"parent education and mediation fund." The moneys of the fund shall be expended by the~~
 3 ~~administrator of the Supreme Court of Appeals for parent education and mediation programs~~ On
 4 July 1, 2026, the Parent Education and Mediation Fund created by prior enactment of this section
 5 shall be closed, and any unexpended balances remaining in the fund shall be transferred to the
 6 Family Court Fund established in §51-2A-22.

CHAPTER 52. JURIES.

ARTICLE 1. PETIT JURIES.
§52-1-17. Reimbursement of jurors.

1 (a) A juror shall be paid mileage, at the rate set by the Secretary of the Department of
 2 Administration, for travel expenses to and from the juror's residence to the courthouse or other
 3 place where the court is convened and shall be reimbursed for other expenses incurred as a result
 4 of his or her required attendance at sessions of the court at a rate of not less than \$15 nor more
 5 than \$40, set at the discretion of the circuit court or the chief judge of the circuit court, for each day
 6 of required attendance. The reimbursement shall be based on vouchers submitted to the sheriff

7 and shall be paid out of the State Treasury.

8 (b) When a jury in any case is placed in the custody of the sheriff, he or she shall provide
9 the jury with meals and lodging while they are in the sheriff's custody at a reasonable cost to be
10 determined by an order of the court. The costs of the meals and lodging shall be paid out of the
11 State Treasury.

12 (c) Any time a panel of prospective jurors has been required to report to court for the
13 selection of a petit jury in any scheduled matter, the court shall, by specific provision in a court
14 order, assess a jury cost. In both magistrate and circuit court cases the jury cost shall be the actual
15 cost of the jurors' service: *Provided*, That the actual cost of a magistrate jury can only be assessed
16 where the jury request or demand occurs on or after July 1, 2007. For any magistrate court case in
17 which the jury request or demand occurred prior to July 1, 2007, the jury cost assessed shall be
18 \$200. The jury costs shall be assessed against the parties as follows:

19 (1) In every criminal case, against the defendant upon conviction, whether by plea, by
20 bench trial or by jury verdict;

21 (2) In every civil case, against either party or prorated against both parties, at the court's
22 discretion, if the parties settle the case or elect for a bench trial; and

23 (3) In the discretion of the court, and only when fairness and justice so require, a circuit
24 court or magistrate court may forego assessment of the jury fee, but shall set out the reasons for
25 waiving the fee in a written order: *Provided*, That a waiver of the assessment of a jury fee in a case
26 tried before a jury in magistrate court may only be permitted after the circuit court, or the chief
27 judge of the circuit court, has reviewed the reasons set forth in the order by the magistrate and has
28 approved the waiver.

29 (d)(1) The circuit or magistrate court clerk shall by the tenth day of the month following the
30 month of collection remit to the State Treasurer for deposit as described in subdivision (2) of this
31 subsection all jury costs collected and the clerk and the clerk's surety are liable for the collection
32 on the clerk's official bond as for other money coming into the clerk's hands by virtue of the clerk's

33 office. When the amount of the jury costs collected in a magistrate court case exceeds \$200, the
34 magistrate court clerk shall separately delineate the portion of the collected jury costs which
35 exceeds \$200.

36 (2) The jury costs described in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall upon receipt by the
37 State Treasurer be deposited as follows:

38 (A) All jury costs collected in a magistrate court case which exceed \$200 shall be deposited
39 in the State's General Revenue Fund; and

40 (B) The remaining balance of the collected jury costs shall be deposited as follows:

41 (i) One-half shall be deposited into the ~~Parent Education and Mediation Fund created in~~
42 ~~section six hundred four, article nine, chapter forty-eight of this code~~ Family Court Fund created in
43 §51-2A-22; and

44 (iii) One-half shall be deposited into the Domestic Violence Legal Services Fund created in
45 §48-26-3 of this code.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to close the Parent Education and Mediation Fund and redirect its funds to the Family Court Fund.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.