

THE RECORD IS IN OUR HANDS



KYCRA

Post Office Box 11966
Lexington, Kentucky 40579-1966
Kycra.org

July 30, 2018

Commissioner Robert Swisher
Department of Workers' Claims
657 Chamberlin Avenue
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Re: Cost of living increase for our Kentucky Court Reporters

Dear Commissioner Swisher:

The members of the Kentucky Court Reporters Association appreciate our long-standing working relationship with the Department of Workers' Claims (DWC). It has been an honor to serve the public in our roles as court reporters at your many hearing sites across the state.

You may not be aware that the current compensation for hearing transcripts has been in place for at least 15 years. At the time it was set, the rate did not take into account any sort of cost of living increase or adjustment for inflation. With the rising costs of equipment, software, and support labor required to complete a transcript, court reporters are working for far less than they have historically. Other factors that have negatively impacted compensation for reporters include a decrease in transcript orders from the parties to the action and shorter dockets caused by case settlements.

The Kentucky Court Reporters Association would respectfully request the DWC consider a rate adjustment for original hearing transcripts. By implementing a rate increase, the DWC will position itself to stay competitive with freelance market rates and ensure it is attracting and retaining qualified reporters. These rate increases will ensure that reporters will continue to deliver accurate and timely transcripts and that lost work will be minimized due to less experienced court reporters having equipment malfunction, which results in dockets having to be retaken.

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Our association suggests the following:

- 1) Increase the daily appearance fee to \$60.00.
- 2) Increase the page rate for original transcripts by 20% for the next two years (\$2.64 per page as of January 1, 2019; \$3.17 as of January 1, 2020), with an automatic cost of living increase of 3% annually thereafter, effective January 1st of each year.

Thank you for your attention and consideration in this matter. We appreciate any help you can give us in addressing this important concern.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clarice H. Howard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Clarice H. Howard, President
Kentucky Court Reporters
Association