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**HOUSE BILL NO. 672**

Offered January 9, 2002

Prefiled January 9, 2002

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 16.1-267 of the Code of Virginia, relating to compensation of court appointed counsel in abuse and neglect cases.*

Patron—Watts

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 16.1-267 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 16.1-267. Compensation of appointed counsel.

A. When the court appoints counsel to represent a child pursuant to *subsection A of § 16.1-266* A and, after an investigation by the court services unit, finds that the parents are financially able to pay for the attorney and refuse to do so, the court shall assess costs against the parent for such legal services in the amount awarded the attorney by the court under the circumstances of the case, considering such factors as the ability of the parents to pay and the nature and extent of the counsel's duties in the case. Such amount shall not exceed \$100 if the action is in circuit court or the maximum amount specified in subdivision 1 of § 19.2-163 if the action is in district court.

When the court appoints counsel to represent a child pursuant to *subsection B of § 16.1-266* B and, after an investigation by the court services unit, finds that the parents are financially able to pay for the attorney in whole or in part and refuse to do so, the court shall assess costs in whole or in part against the parents for such legal services in the amount awarded the attorney by the court. Such amount shall not exceed \$100 if the action is in circuit court or the maximum amount specified in subdivision 1 of § 19.2-163 if the action is in district court. In determining the financial ability of the parents to pay for an attorney to represent the child, the court shall utilize the financial statement required by § 19.2-159.

In all other cases, except as provided in § 16.1-343, counsel appointed to represent a child shall be compensated for his services pursuant to § 19.2-163.

B. When the court appoints counsel to represent a parent, guardian or other adult pursuant to *subsection A of § 16.1-266*, such counsel shall be compensated for his services pursuant to ~~§ 19.2-163~~ in an amount awarded by the court, considering the circumstances of the case and the nature and extent of the counsel's duties in the case. Such amount shall not exceed \$100 if the action is in circuit court or the maximum amount specified in subdivision 1 of § 19.2-163 if the action is in district court.

In all other cases when the court appoints counsel to represent a parent, guardian or other adult pursuant to § 16.1-266, counsel appointed shall be compensated for his services pursuant to § 19.2-163.

INTRODUCED

HB672