

CHAPTER 2024-93

House Bill No. 353

An act relating to alternative headquarters for district court judges; amending s. 35.051, F.S.; authorizing a district court judge to have an appropriate facility in an adjacent county to his or her county of residence as the judge's official headquarters; authorizing subsistence and travel reimbursement for such locations; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Subsection (1) of section 35.051, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

35.051 Subsistence and travel reimbursement for judges with alternate headquarters.—

(1)(a) A district court of appeal judge is eligible for the designation of a county courthouse or another appropriate facility in his or her county of residence, or an adjacent county within the district, as his or her official headquarters for purposes of s. 112.061 if the judge permanently resides more than 50 miles from:

1. The appellate district's headquarters as prescribed under s. 35.05(1), if the judge is assigned to such headquarters; or
2. The appellate district's branch headquarters established under s. 35.05(2), if the judge is assigned to such branch headquarters.

The official headquarters may serve only as the judge's private chambers.

(b)1. A district court of appeal judge for whom an official headquarters is designated under paragraph (a) in his or her county of residence under this subsection is eligible for subsistence at a rate to be established by the Chief Justice for each day or partial day that the judge is at the headquarters or branch headquarters of his or her appellate district to conduct court business, as authorized by the chief judge of that district court of appeal. The Chief Justice may authorize a judge to choose between subsistence based on lodging at a single-occupancy rate and meal reimbursement as provided in s. 112.061 and subsistence at a fixed rate prescribed by the Chief Justice.

2. In addition to subsistence, a district court of appeal judge is eligible for reimbursement for travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061(7) and (8) for travel between the judge's official headquarters and the headquarters or branch headquarters of the appellate district to conduct court business. If the judge's official headquarters designated under paragraph (a) is located in a county adjacent to the judge's county of residence, such reimbursement is limited to the lesser of:

a. The amount for travel between the judge’s official headquarters and the headquarters or branch headquarters of the appellate district; or

b. The amount that would be authorized for travel between an official headquarters maintained in the judge’s county of residence and the headquarters or branch headquarters of the appellate district.

(c) Payment of subsistence and reimbursement for travel expenses between the judge’s official headquarters and the headquarters or branch headquarters of his or her appellate district shall be made to the extent that appropriated funds are available, as determined by the Chief Justice.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.

Approved by the Governor April 15, 2024.

Filed in Office Secretary of State April 15, 2024.