

85-00433
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JUL 9 1985

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Honorable Ferrill D. McRae
Circuit Judge
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit
Mobile, Alabama 36602

Courts - Libraries - Funds -
Court Administration Fund

Funds of the Court Administration
Fund of the Thirteenth Judicial
Circuit may be used to pay charge
made to judges for use of Westlaw
computer.

Dear Judge McRae:

Reference is made to your request for an opinion from the
Attorney General regarding the use of the Court Administration
Fund of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. You specifically
asked:

"We ask your opinion as to whether it
would be permissible for me to pay the
Mobile County Law Library out of the
Judicial Administration Fund the charge
for the Circuit Judges using the Westlaw
computer which is being installed in the
library. These charges would include an
instruction charge of \$70.00, a nominal
amount for an access card and a per minute
charge for use of the computer. This would
greatly facilitate research by the Judge
or his law clerk.

In this connection I would like to
know if it would be permissible for the
Judge's law clerk to use the facility on
behalf of his Judge and pay for the same
from the Judicial Administration Fund."

Honorable Ferrill D. McRae
Circuit Judge
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The Court Administration Fund of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit is now governed by Act No. 79-406, Acts of Alabama 1979, p. 628. Section 3 of Act No. 79-406 provides for the expenditure of such funds. It states:

The Presiding Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit is hereby authorized to requisition expenditures from the Court Administration Fund for the more effective administration of justice, including but not limited to paying the costs of securing the advice and attendance of witnesses; registration fees and other actual expenses incurred in attending seminars, institutes, conferences and other meetings in connection with continuing legal and judicial education; membership fees or dues in legal and judicial organizations; and such other actual and necessary expenses incurred by the Judges of said Court in maintaining and promoting legal and judicial competency and proficiency.

It is the opinion of the Attorney General that the use of the funds of the Court Administration Fund to pay the charge made by the Mobile County Law Library to the Circuit Judges and their clerks for the use of the Westlaw computer is a valid expenditure under Act No. 79-406. Such expenditure would promote a more effective administration of justice and would promote judicial competency and proficiency.

I hope that your question has been adequately answered.

If our office can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

CHARLES A. GRADDICK
Attorney General
By:


LYNDA K. OSWALD
Assistant Attorney General

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