



Judicial Council of California

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February 20, 2026.

Subject Text

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File #: 21-153, Version: 1

Title

Equal Access Fund | Distribution of Funds for Partnership Grants and IOLTA-Formula Grants (Action Required)

Summary

The Budget Act of 2021 (Stats. 2021, ch. 21) includes over \$65 million in the Equal Access Fund for general distribution to legal services providers and support centers. The funds are to be distributed primarily in two parts: IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers' Trust Accounts)-formula grants and partnership grants (with a small amount also distributed for administration). The Legal Services Trust Fund Commission of the State Bar recommends approving distribution of \$58,147,302 in IOLTA-formula grants for fiscal year (FY) 2021-22, according to the statutory formula in the state Budget Act, and \$6,460,811 in partnership grants. The commission further requests approval of its findings that the proposed budget for each individual grant complies with statutory and other relevant guidelines.

Recommendation

The Legal Services Trust Fund Commission recommends that the Judicial Council, effective October 1, 2021, approve:

1. The distribution of \$58,147,302 in IOLTA-formula grants for FY 2021-22 according to the terms of the state Budget Act;
2. The commission's determination that the proposed budget of each individual grant complies with statutory and other guidelines;
3. The distribution of \$2,580,574 in Equal Access Fund partnership grants commencing January 1, 2022, to legal services agencies for programs conducted jointly with courts to provide legal assistance to self-represented litigants as set forth on pages 11-13 of Attachment A; and
4. The distribution of an additional \$3,880,237 for partnership grants to be awarded based on the application process set forth on pages 14-16 of Attachment A.