

# Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP

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October 27, 2011

The Honorable Dan A. Gattis  
Williamson County Judge  
Williamson County Courthouse  
710 Main Street, Suite 101  
Georgetown, Texas 78626

RE: Legal Services

Dear Judge Gattis:

We appreciate Williamson County selecting us to represent the interests of County Court at Law Judges Suzanne Brooks, Tim Wright and Doug Arnold. We appreciate your confidence in us and will do our best to continue to merit it.

The purpose of this letter, together with the enclosed "Standard Terms of Engagement," is to set out our understanding with respect to the specific terms of our relationship. Please review the Standard Terms of Engagement carefully and contact us promptly if you have any questions regarding our relationship. This letter, together with the Standard Terms of Engagement, constitutes our agreement with you (this "Agreement") under which our services will be provided.

## Identity of Client

We will be representing the interests of Williamson County Court at Law Judges Suzanne Brooks, Tim Wright and Doug Arnold.

## Nature and Scope of Representation

We understand that while in the future we may from time to time be employed on other matters, our present relationship is limited to representing Judge Brooks, Judge Wright and Judge Arnold in the litigation styled *Kerry Heckman, Monica Maisenbacher, Sylvia Peterson, Tammy Newberry, and Jessica Stempko, On Behalf of Themselves and All Other Persons Similarly Situated v. Williamson County, Honorable Dan A. Gattis, Honorable Suzanne Brooks, Honorable Tim Wright, Honorable Doug Arnold, and Honorable William Thomas Eastes*.

Honorable Dan A. Gattis  
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### **Supervision and Delegation**

I will be the partner who will coordinate and supervise the services we perform on your behalf. I anticipate that I will perform most of the work on this matter. We routinely delegate selected responsibilities to other persons in our Firm when, because of special expertise, time availability or other reasons, they are in a better position to carry them out. In addition, we will try, where feasible and appropriate, to delegate tasks to persons who can properly perform them at the least cost to you.

### **Financial Arrangements**

The enclosed Standard Terms of Engagement, together with this letter, outlines the financial terms of our engagement. My rate will be \$350.00 per hour. The hourly rates of the other members of the Firm will be \$350.00 to \$200.00. If anything in this letter or the Standard Terms of Engagement is unclear or presents a problem to you, please advise me promptly so we may discuss it and reach a full understanding.

### **Acceptance of Terms**

If this arrangement is acceptable to you, please sign the enclosed duplicate original of this letter and return it to us at your earliest convenience.

We truly appreciate the opportunity to be of service to you and look forward to working with you in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Sincerely,

C. Robert Heath

### **AGREED TO AND ACCEPTED:**

WILLIAMSON COUNTY

By: 

Printed Name: Lisa L. Birtman

Title: Presiding Commissioner

Date: 11-1-11

cc: Billing Department

## **STANDARD TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT**

This statement sets forth the standard terms of our engagement as your attorneys. Unless modified in writing by mutual agreement, these terms will be an integral part of our agreement with you. Therefore, we ask that you review this statement carefully and contact us promptly if you have any questions. We suggest that you retain this statement in your file.

### **1. The Scope of Our Work**

You should have a clear understanding of the legal services we will provide. Any questions that you have should be dealt with promptly. We will provide services related only to matters as to which we have been specifically engaged.

We will at all times act on your behalf to the best of our ability. Any expressions on our part concerning the outcome of your legal matters are expressions of our best professional judgment, but are not guarantees. Such opinions are necessarily limited by our knowledge of the facts and are based on the state of the law at the time they are expressed. We cannot guarantee the success of any given matter, but we will strive to represent your interests professionally and efficiently.

### **2. Fees For Legal Services**

Our charges for professional services are customarily based on the time devoted to the matter, the novelty and difficulty of the questions presented, the requisite experience, reputation and skill requested to deal with those questions, time limitations imposed by the circumstances, and the amount involved and the results obtained. Unless otherwise indicated in writing, our fees for legal services are determined on the basis of the hourly rates of the respective lawyers and paralegals who perform the services. These rates vary depending on the expertise and experience of the individual. We adjust these rates annually, increasing them to reflect experience, expertise, and current economic conditions. We will notify you in writing if this fee structure is modified. At the present time the standard billing rates for partners in this firm are between \$525 and \$200 per hour; the billing rates for associates and staff attorneys are between \$350 and \$130 per hour; the billing rates for paralegals and specialists are between \$180 and \$125 per hour, the billing rate for law clerks is \$60 per hour, and the billing rate for case clerks is \$50 per hour (all fees quoted are in U.S. Dollars).

### **3. Other Charges**

All out-of-pocket expenses (such as copying charges, travel expenses, messenger expenses and the like) incurred by us in connection with our representation of you will be billed to you as a separate item on your monthly statement. We have enclosed a description of the most common expenses.



4. Billing Procedures and Terms of Payment

Our billing period begins on the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month and ends on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month. We will render periodic statements to you for legal services and expenses. We usually mail these periodic statements toward the end of the month following the latest date covered in the statement. You agree to pay each statement in full in U.S. Dollars within the time for payment established by Texas Government Code Section 2251.021 (or any successor statute). Should you fail to pay any sum within such payment period, you promise to pay interest on all sums overdue in accordance with the rate and provisions specified in Texas Government Code Section 2251.025 (or any successor statute). For your convenience, we have attached to this letter copies of Sections 2251.021 and 2251.025 of the Texas Government Code.

If you have any question or disagreement about any statement that we submit to you for payment, please contact me at your earliest convenience so that we can resolve any problems without delay. Typically, such questions or disagreements can be resolved to the satisfaction of both sides with little inconvenience or formality.

5. Termination of Services

You have the right at any time to terminate our employment upon written notice to us, and if you do we will immediately cease to render additional services. We reserve the right to discontinue work on pending matters or terminate our attorney-client relationship with you at any time that payment of your account becomes delinquent. Additionally, in the event that you fail to follow our advice and counsel, or otherwise fail to cooperate reasonably with us, we reserve the right to withdraw from representing you upon short notice, regardless of the then status of your matter. No termination shall relieve you of the obligation to pay fees and expenses incurred prior to such termination.

6. Retention of Documents

Although historically we have attempted to retain for a reasonable time copies of most documents generated by this Firm, we are not obligated to do so, and we hereby expressly disclaim any responsibility or liability for failure to do so. You must ultimately retain all originals and copies you desire among your own files for future reference.

7. Fee Estimates

We are often requested to estimate the amount of fees and costs likely to be incurred in connection with a particular matter. Our attorneys do their best to estimate fees and expenses for particular matters when asked to do so. However, an estimate is just that, and the fees and expenses required are ultimately a function of many conditions over which we have little or no control, especially in litigation or negotiation situations where the extent of necessary legal services may depend to a significant degree upon the tactics of the opposition. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with respect to a specific matter, all estimates made by us shall be subject to your agreement and understanding that such estimates do not constitute maximum or fixed fee quotations and that the ultimate cost is frequently more or less than the amount estimated.

8. Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas, United States of America. Venue of any case or controversy arising under or pursuant to this Agreement shall be in Travis County, Texas, United States of America.

9. Questions

If you have any questions from time to time about any aspect of our arrangements, please feel entirely free to raise those questions. We want to proceed in our work for you with a clear and satisfactory understanding about every aspect of our billing and payment policies; and we encourage an open and frank discussion of any or all of the matters mentioned in this memorandum.

## Client Costs Advanced

### Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP

The firm incurs expenses on behalf of clients only when required by the legal needs of the clients. Some cases or matters require extensive use of copy facilities, and other cases may not be so paper intensive. Standard services such as secretarial and word processing time, file setup, and file storage are not charged; however, other expenses such as copies, delivery fees, and fax charges are billed to the client needing those services. An explanation of the billing structure is as follows:

Delivery Services: Outside delivery services are used for pick-up and delivery of documents to the client as well as to courts, agencies, and opposing parties. Outside delivery fees are charged to the client at the rate charged to the firm. Overnight delivery services are also charged at the rate charged to the firm. Firm Office Services Department personnel may provide delivery service in urgent situations and charges for such in-house service will not exceed the charge that would be made by an outside service in a similar situation.

Postage: Our postal equipment calculates exact U.S. postage for all sizes and weights of posted material. The rate charged for postage is the same as the amount affixed to the material that is mailed. We will not charge clients for postage on routine correspondence; however, the cost of large-volume mail, certified mail, or other additional mail services will be charged to the client.

Copies: Our standard rate for black and white copies made by firm personnel is \$0.15 per copy. Color copies are charged at a standard rate of \$0.55 per copy. These charges cover paper, equipment costs, and other supplies. If savings can be realized within the required time frame by sending copy jobs to subcontractors, the firm uses only qualified legal services copiers and the cost charged to the client is the same as the amount billed to the firm.

Computerized Research: If a case requires the use of computerized legal research, trained and skilled legal researchers are used to minimize on-line data charges. The per-minute fees for on-line connect time are charged to the client at the rate charged to the firm, plus applicable taxes and surcharges imposed by governmental entities.

Fax: Fax copies will be charged at the rate of \$.25 per page.

Travel: Attorney and paralegal time spent traveling on behalf of a client is billed to the client. Hotel, meal, local transportation, and similar expenses are charged based on receipts and travel expense forms submitted by the attorney. Documentation is available to the client if requested.

Other Expenses: Expenses incurred to outside providers in connection with the client's legal services should be paid by the client directly to the outside provider unless specifically arranged in advance. If the firm agrees to pay outside providers, the cost charged to the client is the same as the amount billed to the firm. Examples of such charges include: court reporter fees, filing fees, newspaper charges for publication notices, expert witness fees, consultants and other similar expenses. Such expenses will be incurred only in conjunction with client-approved activities.

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V.T.C.A., Government Code § 2251.021

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**Effective: June 15, 2001**

VERNON'S TEXAS STATUTES AND CODES ANNOTATED  
GOVERNMENT CODE

**TITLE 10. GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**SUBTITLE F. STATE AND LOCAL CONTRACTS AND FUND MANAGEMENT**

**CHAPTER 2251. PAYMENT FOR GOODS AND SERVICES**

**SUBCHAPTER B. PAYMENTS AND INTEREST**

**→§ 2251.021. Time for Payment by Governmental Entity**

(a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a payment by a governmental entity under a contract executed on or after September 1, 1987, is overdue on the 31st day after the later of:

- (1) the date the governmental entity receives the goods under the contract;
- (2) the date the performance of the service under the contract is completed; or
- (3) the date the governmental entity receives an invoice for the goods or service.

(b) A payment under a contract executed on or after September 1, 1993, owed by a political subdivision whose governing body meets only once a month or less frequently is overdue on the 46th day after the later event described by Subsections (a)(1) through (3).

(c) For a contract executed on or after July 1, 1986, and before September 1, 1987, a payment by a governmental entity under that contract is overdue on the 46th day after the later event described by Subsections (a)(1) through (3).

(d) For purposes of this section, the renewal, amendment, or extension of a contract executed on or before September 1, 1993, is considered to be the execution of a new contract.

Current through the end of the 2005 2nd Called Session of the 79th Legislature

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END OF DOCUMENT

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V.T.C.A., Government Code § 2251.025

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**Effective: July 01, 2004**

VERNON'S TEXAS STATUTES AND CODES ANNOTATED  
GOVERNMENT CODE

**TITLE 10. GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**SUBTITLE F. STATE AND LOCAL CONTRACTS AND FUND MANAGEMENT**

**CHAPTER 2251. PAYMENT FOR GOODS AND SERVICES**

**SUBCHAPTER B. PAYMENTS AND INTEREST**

**→ § 2251.025. Interest on Overdue Payment**

- (a) A payment begins to accrue interest on the date the payment becomes overdue.
- (b) The rate of interest that accrues on an overdue payment is the rate in effect on September 1 of the fiscal year in which the payment becomes overdue. The rate in effect on September 1 is equal to the sum of:
- (1) one percent; and
  - (2) the prime rate as published in the Wall Street Journal on the first day of July of the preceding fiscal year that does not fall on a Saturday or Sunday.
- (c) Interest on an overdue payment stops accruing on the date the governmental entity or vendor mails or electronically transmits the payment. In this subsection, "governmental entity" does not include a state agency.
- (d) This subsection applies only if the comptroller is not responsible for issuing a warrant or initiating an electronic funds transfer to pay the principal amount owed by a state agency to a vendor. The accrual of interest on an overdue payment to the vendor:
- (1) stops on the date the agency mails or electronically transmits the payment; and
  - (2) is not suspended during any period that a payment law prohibits the agency from paying the vendor.
- (e) This subsection applies only if the comptroller is responsible for issuing a warrant or initiating an electronic funds transfer to pay the principal amount owed by a state agency to a vendor. Interest on an overdue payment to the vendor:
- (1) stops accruing on its distribution date; and
  - (2) does not stop accruing during any period that a payment law prohibits the comptroller from issuing the warrant or initiating the transfer.

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