



THE BAR ASSOCIATION OF
SAN FRANCISCO

WHY USE THE BASF ATTORNEY FEE DISPUTE PROGRAM?

The Bar Association of San Francisco's (BASF) Attorney/Client Fee Dispute Program Mediates and Arbitrates hundreds of fee disputes cases a year. Some of the advantages for clients to use this Program include:

- **HIGH SATISFACTION.** BASF has been successfully handling attorney/client fee disputes for over 20 years and significant feedback shows high client satisfaction rates.
- **NO COUNSEL REQUIRED.** The Program is designed so that clients may represent themselves in the matter without having to hire another lawyer. The forms and program Rules are user friendly. Of course, you may hire an attorney to represent you in the dispute if you wish, but it is neither expected nor required.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY.** The Program is confidential. Unlike a court case, the fee arbitration record is not a public proceeding. The arbitration file, hearing, and award are confidential. Only for very limited reasons may an award be reviewed by a judge.
- **EXPERIENCED, FRIENDLY, & HELPFUL STAFF.** Although BASF Staff cannot provide any legal advice, we are here to help you with any questions or concerns you may have about the [Program's Rules of Procedures](#).
- **CONVENIENCE.** You will be contacted months before a hearing so that you can provide your availability and have a date set that is most convenient for you, instead of being ordered by the court to attend on a specific date.
- **LESS FORMALITY AND STRESS.** The Program provides hearings that are less formal and stressful than court proceedings. We provide the information you need to help you [prepare for your hearing](#). The hearings are held at the office of the Mediator/Arbitrator or at BASF and both sides are given an equal opportunity to tell their side of the story to the Arbitrator or Mediator.
- **EXPEDIENCE.** The process of this Program is normally quicker than a court case, usually taking from 3 to 5 months from your filing of the Request for Resolution of a Fee Dispute until your mediation or arbitration. Court cases can last a year or two.
- **GOOD VALUE.** There is a one-time BASF fee to file with this Program which provides you with up to 4 hours of Mediation and/or up to 8 hours of Arbitration. The Arbitrators can also order the attorney to refund you the BASF fees paid. In addition, you will never be ordered to pay the other side's attorney's fees or costs, as opposed to Court where they may order the "losing" side to pay the other side's costs for the court action.
- **SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE.** In court, there is always a risk that the judge to whom your case is assigned will have limited expertise in deciding attorney fee disputes. Our arbitrators have been trained in the essentials of attorney fee dispute law and often have considerable past fee arbitration background as well as knowledge of the area of law of your original case. Also, we conduct a careful screening to make sure the arbitrator does not know anyone involved.
- **CLIENT PROTECTION.** The State Bar of California will help you, at no charge; enforce your Award if the arbitrator orders a refund of attorney's fees to you and if it is not paid within the required time frame.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

The Bar Association of San Francisco - Attorney/Client Fee Disputes Program
301 Battery Street, 3rd Floor, San Francisco, Ca 94111
Tel 415.982.1600 Fax: 415.989.0381 e-mail: FDP@sfbar.org Web site: www.sfbar.org