

Don't let legal costs disputes cloud your better judgment

July 23, 2021

Key points

- Maintaining objectivity and Independence in legal costs disputes.
- Avoid being a fool for a client.
- Engaging the right professional to advise in and conduct legal costs disputes and hearings.

There is an adage that: “the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for a client”: 1744 “The Rule of Life” (before gender neutral language).

That adage remains valid in likely nearly all circumstances, it is also significant that most lawyers would advise their clients to not do their own legal work. However, lawyers do not always follow their own advice, particularly in costs disputes in circumstances where they do not have “costs expertise” that can operate objectively within their legal practice.

Lawyers representing themselves involve many issues – of most significance are questions surrounding objectivity and fierce independence – the hallmarks of a good lawyer. It would also raise the risk of damage to the self-represented lawyers’ reputation.

A self-represented lawyer’s apparent subjectivity is also likely, by emotional response, to cloud good legal and commercial judgment.

The consequences reach beyond ethical and financial consequences and could include potential costly and stressful disciplinary action.

Almost inevitably, legal costs disputes carry with them all of the above issues, in addition to the risk that legal fees might not be recoverable in part, or at all from clients. This emphasises the importance for lawyers to engage an independent lawyer experienced and knowledgeable in legal costs and the resolution of legal costs disputes.

Dentons has the knowledge, skill and unrivalled capacity to provide advice about legal costs and to conduct “costs hearings”. We can provide the necessary objectivity in legal costs enquiries and disputes and are available to assist you. Please contact us.

Your Key Contacts



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