

**44-324. Proceedings; assignment of claims taken by secretary, when; fee; wage claims assignment fee fund.** (a) Any proceeding by one or more employees to assert any claim arising under or pursuant to this act may be brought in any court of competent jurisdiction.

(b) Whenever the secretary determines under K.S.A. 44-322a, and amendments thereto, that an employee has a valid claim for unpaid wages and determines that the amount of the claim is less than \$10,000, the secretary, upon the written request of the employee, shall take an assignment of the claim in trust for such employee and shall take action appropriate to enforce or defend such claim. Whenever the secretary determines under K.S.A. 44-322a, and amendments thereto, that an employee has a valid claim for unpaid wages and determines that the amount of the claim is equal to or greater than \$10,000, the secretary, upon the written request of the employee, may take an assignment of the claim in trust for such employee and if the assessment is taken, shall take action appropriate to enforce or defend such claim. With the written consent of the assignor, the secretary may settle or adjust any claim assigned pursuant to this subsection. Whenever the secretary takes an assignment of a claim in trust for an employee under this section, the secretary shall charge and collect a fee therefor which fee shall be fixed by rules and regulations adopted by the secretary. The fee fixed by rules and regulations shall be in an amount of not more than \$25 per claim assigned under this section.

(c) If the secretary prevails on behalf of the employee, the court shall award a judgment to the agency in an amount equal to the cost of reasonable attorney fees for such action.

(d) There is hereby created the wage claims assignment fee fund. The secretary shall remit all moneys received for assignment and attorney fees charged and collected under this section to the state treasurer in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4215, and amendments thereto. Upon receipt of each such remittance, the state treasurer shall deposit the entire amount in the state treasury. Ten percent of each such deposit shall be credited to the state general fund and the balance shall be credited to the wage claims assignment fee fund. All expenditures from the wage claims assignment fee fund shall be made in accordance with appropriation acts upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to vouchers approved by the secretary or by a person or persons designated by the secretary.

**History:** L. 1973, ch. 204, § 12; L. 1976, ch. 370, § 7; L. 1977, ch. 173, § 4; L. 1986, ch. 187, § 2; L. 1996, ch. 162, § 1; L. 2001, ch. 5, § 134; L. 2011, ch. 53, § 15; July 1.