



Funding the Regulation of Lawyers

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PANELISTS:

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How Illinois Regulates & Funds the ARDC (not U.S.-wide)

The ARDC is an administrative agency of the Illinois Supreme Court.

ARDC staff: ~90

Illinois lawyers (2024): 96,821

Annual registration fee: \$385
(first year free)

Inactive fee: \$121

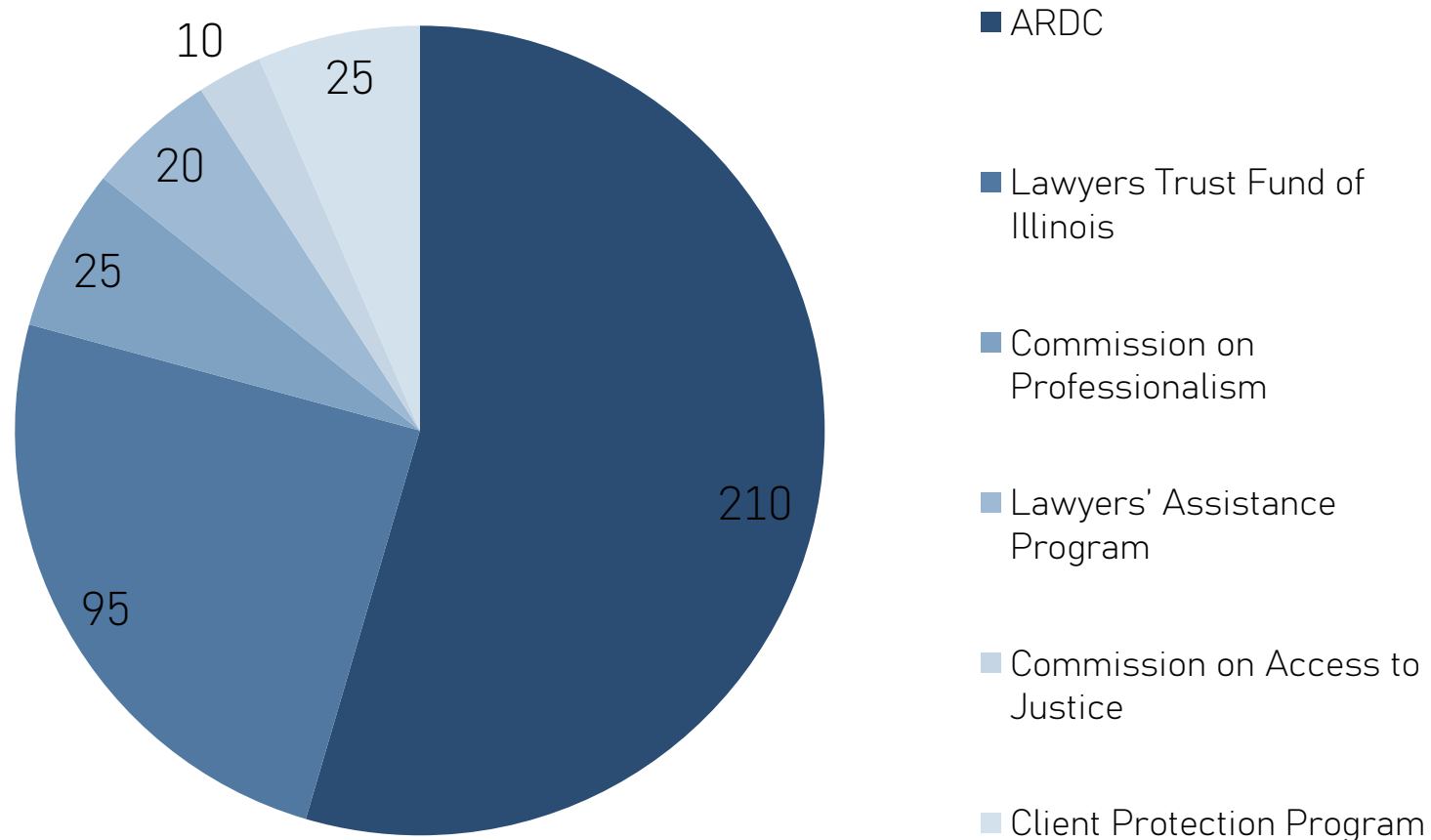
Retired: \$0

Malpractice insurance is not required in Illinois – the ARDC does not maintain a PI fund

Nearly 100% of ARDC funding derives from registration fees; fee allocated across Court entities.

How Illinois Regulates & Funds the ARDC (not U.S.-wide)

Allocation of \$385 Fee



How ARDC Uses Its Portion & Financial Stewardship

ARDC's portion \approx \$210 per active lawyer - annual budget \approx \$21,300,000

Major Expenditures

- Staff salaries and benefits (largest share (~70%))
- Information technology & cybersecurity (~8%)
- Office leases and administrative costs (~7%)

Programs Supported

- Registration & licensing
- Investigation & discipline
- Education, probation & deferral services
- IT & administrative support

Financial Stewardship

- Reserves \approx 2 \times annual budget (~\$42M)
- Spend down reserves strategically before fee increases (last increase 2015)
- Annual budget approved by the ARDC Commission; Supreme Court oversight
- Focus on sustainability, modernization, and accountability

Funding Model Risk

- Decrease in lawyer population - 28% age 60+