## Article - Family Law

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§8–214.

(a) In this section, "reasonable and necessary expense" includes:

(1) suit money;

(2) counsel fees; and

(3) costs.

(b) At any point in a proceeding under this subtitle, the court may order either party to pay to the other party an amount for the reasonable and necessary expense of prosecuting or defending the proceeding.

(c) Before ordering the payment, the court shall consider:

(1) the financial resources and financial needs of both parties; and

(2) whether there was substantial justification for prosecuting or defending the proceeding.

(d) Upon a finding by the court that there was an absence of substantial justification of a party for prosecuting or defending the proceeding, and absent a finding by the court of good cause to the contrary, the court shall award to the other party the reasonable and necessary expense of prosecuting or defending the proceeding.

(e) The court may award reimbursement for any reasonable and necessary expense that has previously been paid.

(f) As to any amount awarded for counsel fees, the court may:

(1) order that the amount awarded be paid directly to the lawyer; and

(2) enter judgment in favor of the lawyer.

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