



The Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection of the State of New York

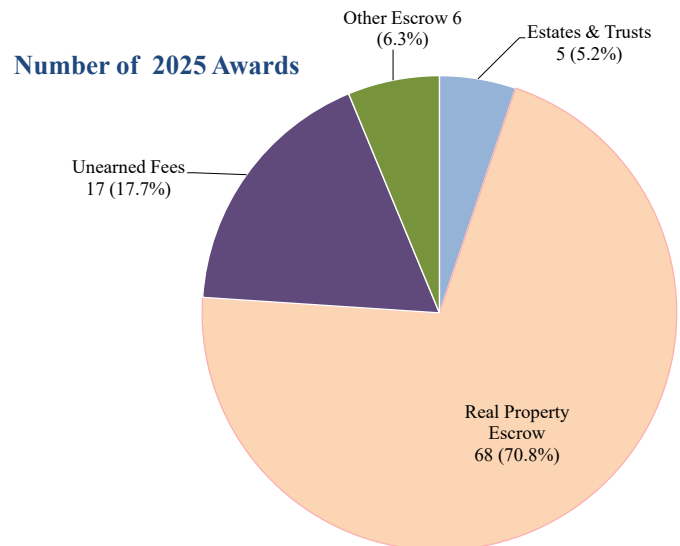
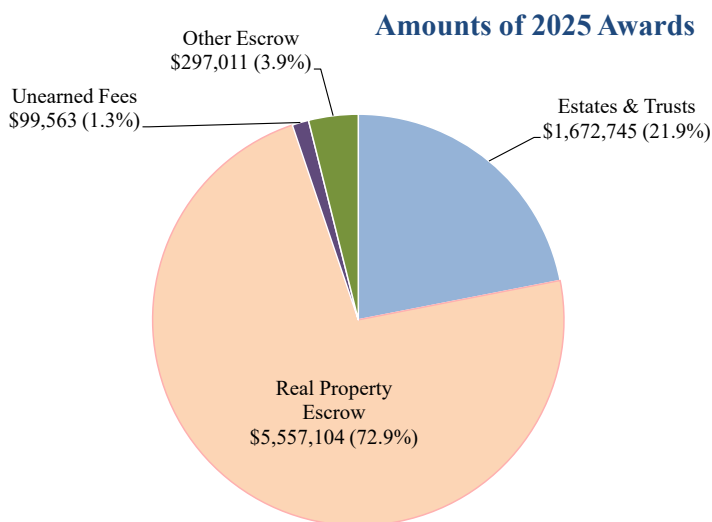
Highlights from the 2025 Annual Report

The Annual Report of the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection recaps the Fund's activities in calendar year 2025, its 43rd year of operations. The complete 2025 Annual Report is available on the Fund's website, www.nylawfund.org.

The Lawyers' Fund's mission is to protect law clients from dishonest conduct in the practice of law, maintain the integrity and protect the good name of the legal profession, and promote public confidence in the administration of justice in New York State. The Fund's primary focus is the reimbursement of client losses caused by dishonest conduct in the practice of law. In 2025, the Trustees approved 96 awards providing \$7.6 million in total reimbursement.

There are over 360,000 registered lawyers in New York State. Over the 43 years of the Fund's existence, a small number of former lawyers each year have been responsible for the dishonest conduct resulting in awards. The Trustees' awards in 2025 were attributable to dishonest conduct by 21 now suspended, disbarred or deceased lawyers.

2025 Awards: 96 in total, \$7.6 Million in Reimbursement



With a maximum award limit of \$400,000 per client loss, in 2025, all but four claimants received full reimbursement of their eligible losses. Effective April 1, 2026, the maximum award limit has been increased to \$450,000 per client loss.

By practice category, awards in 2025 reimbursing real property escrow losses comprised the largest number of awards (68 awards or 70.8%). The second largest practice category of awards by number were unearned fees (17 awards, or 17.7%). By dollar amount, real property escrow thefts were the largest practice category of awards (\$5.6 million or 72.9%) of the Fund's total payout. Trust and estate losses were second with \$1.6 million in awards (21.9%).

Revenue of the Lawyers' Fund

The biennial attorney registration fee, required of every practicing attorney, is the Fund's primary source of revenue. Section 468-a of the Judiciary Law allocates \$60 of each \$375 biennial registration fee to the Lawyers' Fund. Of the more than \$277 million the Fund has reimbursed to victimized clients, the majority has been financed through this modest fee.

Additional revenue sources include restitution, interest, sanctions, and contributions. Since 1982, the Fund has received \$263.3 million from attorney registration fees; \$24.9 million in restitution; \$7.7 million in interest income; \$4.2 million in judicial sanctions; and \$320,000 in contributions from lawyers and the public. Revenues also include unclaimed escrow deposits of missing clients and deceased attorneys held for more than five years under court rules. All revenues are annually appropriated to the Board of Trustees by the State Legislature as part of the Judiciary Budget.

The Lawyers' Fund does *not* receive any tax dollars.

Also, the Fund does *not* receive any revenue from the Interest on Lawyer Account (IOLA) Program.

The Board of Trustees and Staff

The Lawyers' Fund is administered by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Court of Appeals. Since 1981, the Board has included five attorneys and two business or community leaders. The Board of Trustees consists of Patricia L. Gatling, Chairman; Stuart M. Cohen, Vice-Chairman; Peter A. Bellacosa, Treasurer; Anthony J. Baynes; Gary S. Greenberg; Lisa L. Hutchinson; and Eric A. Seiff, former Chairman through December 2025. Full biographies of present and past Trustees are available on the Fund's website.

The Trustees are supported by a five-member staff: Michael J. Knight, former Executive Director and Counsel (retired June 2025); Gabriel Huertas, Executive Director and Counsel (since July 2025) and former Deputy Counsel; Denise L. Peffer, Assistant Counsel; Keri Remington, Investigator; Jahnel Kaczor, Administrative Secretary; and Ashley Fitzgerald, Secretary. The Fund's office is located in Albany.

How to Reach Us

The Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection
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518-434-1935 or 1-800-442-FUND
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www.nylawfund.org

Our website contains answers to frequently asked questions; the text of the Fund's enabling statutes, including New York State Finance Law § 97-t and Judiciary Law § 468-b; the Trustees' regulations; reimbursement claim forms; annual reports; updates on Fund operations; consumer publications; and press releases.