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March 31, 2025

The Honorable Lisa Demuth
Speaker of the House of Representatives

The Honorable Bobby Joe Champion
President of the Senate

Re: Compensation Council Recommendations and Prescribed Salaries

Dear Madam Speaker and Mr. President:

In accordance with the duties assigned to it by Minn. Stat. § 15A.082 (2024), to make determinations and recommendations for the salaries of Minnesota's top governmental officials, the Compensation Council (Council) held four public hearings during which the Council received oral testimony and written submissions from interested parties and engaged in extended deliberations. The Council is required to determine constitutional officer and agency head salaries, the daily compensation rate for voting members and the Direct Care and Treatment executive board, and recommend judicial salaries. The Council requests that you strongly consider the recommendations for judicial salaries in the report and would welcome the opportunity to present the report before any legislative committees.

Given the extensive scope of compensation categories under the Council's purview and the limited time available to complete its work, with final appointments not being received until after March 1, the Compensation Council faced a substantial challenge. While the Council conducted a thorough and diligent review, additional time would allow for a more deliberative and collaborative process. This report provides additional background and offers further recommendations for consideration and potential legislative action. These statutory changes would change the timing of the Council's recommendations on judicial salaries to more closely align with the legislature's budgetary planning timeline. It also would allow the Council more time for deliberations.

Background

Historically, the Compensation Council, which is convened every odd-numbered year, recommended salaries for Minnesota's constitutional officers and all justices and judges in Minnesota's court system. The Council also recommended salary limits for the commissioners of state departments and the heads of certain metropolitan agencies appointed by the governor.

The 2023 Legislature passed significant legislation related to the work of the Compensation Council. Under these changes, the Council now determines the salaries for constitutional officers and agency heads and makes recommendations to the Legislature for judicial salaries. In 2024, the responsibility to determine the daily compensation rate for voting board members of the Direct Care and Treatment Executive Board was added to the Council's responsibilities.

By law, the Compensation Council is a bipartisan committee composed of members appointed by the governor, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, and legislative leadership. The Council has a long tradition of working collaboratively in focused deliberations.

The statute establishing the Compensation Council specifically provides that the Council consider "the amount of compensation paid in government service and the private sector to persons with similar qualifications, the amount of compensation needed to attract and retain experienced and competent persons, and the ability of the state to pay the recommended compensation." As demonstrated in this report, the Council carefully considered these elements in making the determinations and recommendations set forth below.

Constitutional officers, judges, and the agency heads lead Minnesota's state government. It is important that the individuals who serve in these roles be of the highest caliber. This Council, like others before it, believes that a fair and adequate compensation system is an important element in ensuring that highly qualified candidates seek to serve in these offices.

Analysis

Constitutional Officers

The 2023 Legislature adopted the recommendation of the 2023 Council to increase the salaries for Minnesota's governor and other constitutional officers. The Legislature approved the Council's recommendations to increase the salaries of all constitutional officers by 9% effective July 1, 2023, and by 7.5% effective July 1, 2024. The recommendation to increase the salary of the Secretary of State to be the same level as the State Auditor was also adopted.

The Council finds that increases are necessary to maintain Minnesota's ability to attract and retain experienced and competent candidates for political office.

Governor

The governor is responsible for managing the executive branch with approximately 45,000 employees and overseeing a biennial state budget of over \$66 billion from the General Fund. According to a 2023 survey by the Council of State Governments, the salary of Minnesota's governor was ranked 35th nationally. Even with a nearly 17% increase in the previous biennium, the governor's ranking is still below what other governors earn ranking 30th among U.S. states and territories.

While Minnesota does not compete nationally for governor candidates, Minnesota ranking below the middle of the pack indicates that other states have taken action to recognize that governors and other elected officials should be paid salaries commensurate with their responsibilities. In comparing Minnesota's governor's salary with those of surrounding states, Wisconsin, with a population similar in size to Minnesota, pays their governor \$165,568. North

Dakota, with a population only 15% of Minnesota's, pays their governor \$143,646. See Attachment 2.

The Council also explored comparisons of the salary of the governor to other positions within state government. Some members argued that as the governor, this salary should be higher than any other constitutional officer or employee in the executive branch of state government. Despite this, data provided by MMB reflects that there are hundreds of state agency employees who earn more than the governor.

The Council heard testimony from MMB indicating the average pay for city managers and county administrators was \$232,119 and \$253,130, respectively. While these are all critical positions in local governments, the scope of their local responsibilities is significantly narrower than the scope and breadth of the governor's statewide responsibilities.

The Council recognizes that there are certainly non-monetary considerations that motivate candidates to run for the highest executive offices in the state. The Council also recognizes that there are certain non-salary benefits that accompany the governor's office, including housing and transportation. However, the natural consequence of the increasing compensation gap, even considering these benefits, is that candidates who have greater personal financial constraints are less likely to run for office.

Attorney General

The attorney general is the state's chief legal officer and has several key duties, including: playing a key role in litigation defending challenges against the state and seeking to enforce the state's interests, providing legal advice affecting all parts of state and local government, handling criminal prosecutions across the state on behalf of counties, and is often involved in constitutional and other legal dealings with other states and the federal government. The attorney general oversees legal work for one hundred state agencies and boards and handles thousands of open legal files per year. The attorney general manages an operating budget of approximately \$65.8 million and an office of 436 employees. The attorney general serves on the State Executive Council.

The Office of the Attorney General has expanded considerably over the last decade, growing from 330 staff to 436 and from 16 legal divisions to 22. The Office's growth is at least partially due to mandates from the Legislature to pursue more cases in areas including wage theft, antitrust, civil rights, criminal prosecution, criminal appeals, and post-conviction justice. Going into 2025, there are 111 staff members within the Office, including 37 attorneys who earn salaries higher than the attorney general. The attorney general's salary is also below the county attorneys and assistant county attorneys from all seven counties in the metro and several other counties across Greater Minnesota, as well as judges at all levels. See the Judicial Branch section below for specific data. The consequence of this salary disparity is that qualified attorneys in both the public and private sector may choose not to seek this office.

State Auditor

The Office of the State Auditor oversees local government financial activity in Minnesota by performing audits of local government financial statements and by reviewing documents, data, reports, and complaints reported to the Office. The Office is responsible for overseeing the finances of approximately 3,300 local units of government. The state auditor manages an operating budget of approximately \$20.4 million and employs 84 staff.

The responsibilities of the Office include:

- Providing oversight of over \$40 billion in spending by local governments in Minnesota and \$20 billion in federal funds at the state level.
- Performing financial, compliance and petition audits; and reviewing and comparing of reporting forms to financial statements.
- Investigating allegations of misuse of public funds.
- Serving as a resource for local governments.
- Providing oversight of approximately 520 local public pension plans.

In addition, the state auditor serves on the State Executive Council, the State Board of Investment, Land Exchange Board, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, Public Employees Retirement Association, and the Rural Finance Authority Board.

Secretary of State

The secretary of state deals extensively with the administration of critical election laws and with business and corporate filing involving many important parts of the state's economy, relied on by citizens and businesses throughout the state. This Office has an operating budget of about \$ 22.4 million, and 114 staff. The secretary of state serves on the State Executive Council.

The scope of the Office of the Secretary of State is broad:

- The Business Office processes over 970,000 business filings each year.
- The Office is a net revenue generator, contributing \$13.5 million in revenue to the state's General Fund each year.
- The secretary manages the state elections system. In the last presidential election, over 3.2 million citizens voted, representing a nation-leading 76.4% turnout.
- The secretary and staff provide oversight of increasingly complex and serious security threats to the state's election systems.
- The Office implements the Safe at Home program, which permits Minnesotans who need to protect the location of their home to receive mail through the Office.

Lieutenant Governor

The lieutenant governor handles a variety of functions assigned by the governor and would become the state's chief executive should the Office of the Governor become vacant.

The lieutenant governor serves several capacities:

- Member of the State Executive Council
- Vice-chair of the State Capitol Preservation Commission
- Chair of the Capitol Area Architectural Planning Board

The lieutenant governor in many ways operates as chief deputies of state agencies do, convening meetings on behalf of the governor, assisting the governor with policy development and implementation, and representing the governor at meetings and events.

In addition to receiving witness testimony and information regarding the five positions described above, the Council also reviewed salaries paid to occupants of the same comparable constitutional offices in other states. See Attachment 2 for a comparison with these officials in neighboring states.

Judicial Branch

The 2023 Legislature increased the salaries of the judiciary by 8% in July 2023 and 4.0% in 2024, less than the respective 9% and 6% increases recommended by the 2023 Council.

Our Council reviewed extensive written material and heard testimony from the Supreme Court Administrator, the Minnesota Judicial Selection Commission, and the Minnesota District Judges Association (MDJA). Testifiers provided background on increased caseloads, increases in additional administrative responsibilities, loss of talented and experienced court support staff to the private sector, challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified judges, and increasing security concerns that include threats and harassment outside the courthouses. Testimony focused on compensation, pension, and other benefits. Data collected by the Council indicate:

- While Minnesota does not compete with other states for its judges, it is relevant to examine the ranking of the salaries paid to Minnesota's judiciary compared to other states. Salaries of district court judges are ranked 25th when compared nationally. In that same survey, justices on the Minnesota Supreme Court are ranked 25th, and judges on the Court of Appeals are ranked 21st. See Attachment 3.
- Substantial testimony focused on the need to attract qualified candidates from both the private and public sectors. While the Council does not expect or intend for the salary of judges, as public employees, to be equivalent to the private sector, there was ample testimony that the growing gulf between judicial pay and private sector attorney pay increases the difficulty to recruit attorneys from private practice for judicial openings.
- Numerous county and assistant attorneys earn higher salaries than the salary of district court judges (\$190,117):

County Attorneys¹

Carver	\$213,757	Beltrami	\$151,091
Chisago	\$160,358	Mower	\$187,563
Dakota	\$219,813	Olmsted	\$207,326
Hennepin	\$224,820	St. Louis	\$199,784
Ramsey	\$197,284	Stearns	\$223,996
Scott	\$212,737	Washington	\$226,855

Assistant County Attorneys

Carver	\$175,968	Beltrami	\$134,472
Chisago	\$156,163	Olmsted	\$190,897
Dakota	\$208,619	St. Louis	\$171,122
Hennepin	\$179,315	Stearns	\$203,171
Ramsey	\$183,309		
Scott	\$190,906		

- Private sector attorneys regularly earn more than judges (the 50th percentile reflects the median):

Private sector Attorneys

	25 th percentile	50 th percentile	75 th percentile
Lawyer, 10+ years' experience	\$146,909	\$178,295	\$206,253
Lawyer, 4-9 years' experience	\$113,413	\$144,535	\$179,614
Lawyer, 2-3 years' experience	\$101,808	\$127,391	\$157,986
First year Lawyer	\$83,609	\$102,599	\$133,458

Ms. Erin Sindberg Porter, Chair of the Judicial Selection Commission, reported that there is an average of 17 judicial vacancies each year, with metro area openings receiving an average of 20 applications and Greater Minnesota openings receiving an average of 11 applications. In addition to a relative shortage of applications in Greater Minnesota, she indicated an on-going concern that there is a lack of applicants from the private sector. She recommended that district court judges' salaries should be \$200,000, Court of Appeals judges should be \$225,000, Supreme Court justices \$250,000, and the chief justice \$277,000.

In their testimony on behalf of MDJA, Judge Mary Mahler and MDJA consultant, Dr. King Banaian, expressed a concern that if judicial salaries continue to stagnate, it will be difficult to

¹ 2024 Minnesota County Attorneys Association Survey. If the survey provided a range for a position, the high end of the range is shown. Some salaries, requested directly from counties, are more current.

attract a diverse and high-quality pool of candidates from both the public and private sectors. They further noted that in certain judicial districts the number of well-qualified candidates for judicial openings has been very limited. MDJA presented information that salaries are one of the significant reasons for the limited number of applicants. Judge Mahler noted that as the judges' salaries continued to lag nationally, it will be increasingly difficult for Minnesota to maintain its current rank of 8th in the country in judicial administration.

Testimony by the judges indicated that more candidates come from the public sector, with declining numbers from the private sector, likely due to the limited compensation opportunities for judges. The 2025 MDJA consultants' report indicated that while median salaries for ten-year private sector attorneys are comparable, private sector attorneys have more opportunity for income growth: the 75% percentile for attorneys is \$206,253.

The MDJA consultant report also includes data on salaries paid to other public sector members of the judicial process. As noted earlier, there are a number of county attorneys and assistant county attorneys who are paid more than the district court judges in whose courts they appear. In addition, according to the consultant report, the state public defender is paid \$226,460 and the maximum salary range for the Hennepin County public defender is \$221,955.

The Compensation Council shares the view that the judiciary should reflect a broad range of experience and perspectives, and that a small pool of candidates drawn largely from only part of the legal community could be a serious concern for the future of the state's judiciary.

The Council also heard testimony from Jeff Shorba, State Court Administrator, who explained the Judicial Council's work in developing the judicial branch's biennial budget proposal. The Judicial Council is chaired by the Chief Justice consisting of 19 judges and six administrators from throughout the court system in the metro and Greater Minnesota. Thirteen of the judges are district court judges from all around the state. The Judicial Council proposed all members of the judiciary receive salary increases of 6% in both FY 26 and 27, and staff receive a 6% compensation pool in both FY 26 and 27.

Agency Heads

The 2023 Council made no recommendations regarding agency head salaries. The 2023 Legislature implemented a "rebasement" of agency heads salaries, providing commissioners with increases equivalent to across-the-board increases received by represented employees in collective bargaining agreements since agency heads last received an increase in 2015. As a result, commissioners received an approximate 20.7% increase on July 1, 2023.

The 2023 Legislature adopted significant changes to the statute governing agency head salaries, and the responsibilities of the Compensation Council in setting those salaries. In Minn. Stat. § 15A.0815, subd. 2, all agency heads were placed into a single group, with no salary limits. Several agencies were added:

- Office of Cannabis Management
- Department of Children, Youth, and Families
- Direct Care and Treatment
- Office of Emergency Medical Services

Ms. Dori Leland, MMB Enterprise Director of Employee Classification and Compensation provided testimony regarding the salaries of agency heads. She reported that:

- Since the increases provided to agency heads in 2023, state agency employees had received across the board increases of 5.5% in July 2023 and 4.5% in July 2024.
- Deputy and assistant commissioners received these same increases, such that numerous deputy and assistant commissioner earn more than their commissioners.
- The State of Minnesota uses a standards rating system to objectively measure the relative value of each position in state government. A study of agency heads has not been conducted since 2015, and the rating system has not been applied to a small number of the more recently established positions, but that data remains relatively relevant. Those ratings indicate that about half of agency heads are significantly underpaid.
- Agency heads are paid significantly less than city managers (average regional pay of \$232,119) and county administrators (average regional pay of \$253,130).

MMB recommended that agency heads be rebased by 10% across-the-board. This would match the 5.5% in FY 2024 and 4.5% in FY 2025 bargained by executive branch employee unions. The Department also recommended the Council consider a mechanism to then annually adjust agency head salaries to track with future negotiated across-the-board increases. The Council considered and did not move forward with a 10% raise that split the increase over both years (5.5% in FY 2026 and 4.5% in 2027). The Council thus did not move forward with discussion of any automatic mechanisms for raising salaries by bargained amounts.

Direct Care and Treatment Board

Under Minn. Stat. § 15A.082, subd. 3(3) (2024), the Council must determine daily compensation for voting members of the Direct Care and Treatment Executive Board.

Dale Klitzke, General Counsel for the Board, reported that the Board has seven voting and two non-voting members. The Board provides oversight of the Direct Care and Treatment agency, which has over 5,500 employees.

Currently, Board members receive per diem of \$55. Mr. Klitzke reported that other public hospital boards provide annual compensation ranging from \$87,000-\$112,000, while private hospitals provide annual compensation of \$10,000-\$200,000. Mr. Klitzke also reported that per diem rates that the Minnesota Hospital Association researched range from \$387 to \$1,538 for similarly sized health care organizations. The Board recommended daily compensation be set at \$500 per day.

Budget Considerations

MMB's February Forecast estimates a surplus of \$456 million for the 2026-2027 biennium. That forecast also estimates a projected deficit of almost \$6 billion for the 2028-2029 biennium. The Council considered several elements regarding the forecast during its deliberations:

- The forecast has been amended to include the impact of inflation on the cost of state-provided services.
- MMB has indicated that several variables, such as policy uncertainty at the federal level, make the economic future harder to forecast.

Recommendations

In accordance with Minn. Stat. § 15A.082, subd. 3(a) (2024), the Compensation Council makes the following recommendations:

Judicial Salaries

The Council recommends that salaries of all judges and justices be increased by:

- 6% in FY 2026 and 6% in FY 2027.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council notes that:

- The 2023 Council recommended increases of 9% in FY 2024 and 6% in FY 2025, but the Legislature instead increased judicial pay by 8% and 4%, respectively.
- The Council heard testimony of increased caseloads, increased administrative responsibilities, loss of talented and experienced court support staff to the private sector, and increasing personal threats and harassment of judges.
- The Council also reviewed information showing that many county attorneys earn more than district court judges before whom they regularly appear. There are now numerous assistant county attorneys around the state whose pay is higher than district court judges.
- The Council received information and testimony from many individuals and organizations describing how judicial pay has increased the difficulty of attracting good candidates and more recently of retaining judges. Although judges choose to serve because they seek to serve the public, the salaries have made it more difficult for qualified individuals to forego established careers in the public sector and in private practice to make the commitment to serve on a long-term basis in the state courts.

Determinations

In accordance with Minn. Stat. § 15A.082, subd. 3(b) (2024), the Compensation Council makes the following determinations:

Constitutional Officer Salaries

The Council prescribes the salaries of constitutional officers as follows:

- Governor:
 - \$174,775 effective July 1, 2025, and \$200,000 effective July 1, 2026.
 - Gubernatorial appointees did not vote on this decision per Minn. Stat. § 15A.082, subd. 2 (2024).

- Attorney General:
 - \$166,036 effective July 1, 2025, and \$190,000 effective July 1, 2026.
- State Auditor:
 - \$132,238 effective July 1, 2025, and \$137,358 effective July 1, 2026.
- Secretary of State:
 - \$136,059 effective July 1, 2025, and \$145,000 effective July 1, 2026.
- Lieutenant Governor:
 - \$101,123 effective July 1, 2025, and \$105,038 effective July 1, 2026.

In making these determinations, the Council notes that:

- The salaries of certain constitutional officers have lagged nationally, particularly the governor who ranks 30th and the attorney general who ranks 28th, even after the previous Council’s increase.
- While there are certainly non-monetary considerations that motivate candidates to run for the highest executive offices in the state, the natural consequence of this increasing compensation gap is that candidates who have greater personal financial constraints will not run for office.
- The duties of the Offices of the Secretary of State and Attorney General have grown considerably in recent years.

Agency Head Salaries

The Council prescribes the salaries of agency heads, as listed in Minn. Stat. § 15A.0815, subd. 2 (2024), as follows:

- All agency heads *except* for the Chief Executive Officer of Direct Care and Treatment and the Executive Director of the Office of Cannabis Management:
 - 3.9% increase effective July 1, 2025, and 4% increase effective July 1, 2026.
- Chief Executive Officer of Direct Care and Treatment:
 - \$261, 542 effective July 1, 2025, as recommended by MMB.
 - The Council initially set the salary as \$194, 294 effective July 1, 2025, and \$202,066 effective July 1, 2026. This was intended to match this salary with the salaries of the commissioners of the Department of the Children, Youth, and Families and the Department of Human Services. However, on March 27, Laws of Minn. 2024, ch. 125, art. 5, sec. 41, subd. 21 was brought to the Council’s attention which requires the Council to establish the salary “at an amount equal to or greater than the amount paid to the chief executive officer of the direct care and treatment division of the Department of Human Services as of the date of initial appointment.” This salary is intended to comply with this law.
- Executive Director of the Office of Cannabis Management:
 - \$188,047 effective July 1, 2025, and \$195,568 effective July 1, 2026.
 - This is intended to match this salary with the salaries of the commissioners of the Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Department of Health, which is the level the Legislature determined to be appropriate when the position was created. See Laws of Minn. 2023, ch. 63, art. 1, sec. 2, subd. 6.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council notes that:

- Minnesota Management and Budget forecasts a structural deficit in the state’s budget in the 2028-2029 biennium.
- Minnesota Management and Budget forecasts inflation rates of 2.9% in 2025 and 3% in 2026.
- The Council sought to provide a 1% increase above projected inflation each year.

Direct Care and Treatment Executive Board Daily Compensation

The Council prescribes the daily compensation of voting members of the Direct Care and Treatment Executive Board, as listed in Minn. Stat. § 15A.082, subd. 3(c) (2024), as follows:

- \$500 per day effective July 1, 2025.

In reaching this conclusion, the Council notes that:

- The current \$55 per day was insufficient.
- The General Counsel shared that \$500 per day for Direct Care and Treatment board members was included in the initial recommendation when establishing the Board.
- Board members will likely only meet and receive daily compensation monthly or every other month.
- The data the Council received shows this compensation is far below that of board members of private hospitals and at the very lowest range of per diems for similarly sized health care organizations.

Determinations for the salaries of the constitutional officers and recommendations for the salaries of judges are shown in Attachment 4. Determinations for salaries of agency heads and the daily compensation rate for the Direct Care and Treatment Board are shown in Attachment 5.

Legislative Recommendations

The Council urges the Legislature to enact reforms that align with the Minnesota Judicial Council’s support for a two-year Compensation Council process. The current April 1 odd-year deadline structure does not provide for adequate deliberations in setting salaries for 37 individual state agency classifications and four constitutional offices, as well as recommend salaries for the six classes of justices and judges within the state Judicial Branch. A late-summer even year final deadline for the next biennium would properly fit seamlessly into the statewide preliminary biennial budget submission deadline in mid-October of the even year. The Council supports a statutory change strictly limiting its authority to set and recommend salaries to no more than the two successive biennia, accordingly.

The Council also supports the Minnesota Judicial Council formal proposal to eliminate or clarify the statutory ex parte communications restriction.

Conclusion

The Compensation Council adopted these recommendations and determinations at its public meetings on March 21 and March 26, 2025. Minutes and audio/video recordings of these public meetings are available on the Council's website.

A list of the members of the Council is included as Attachment 1. The members worked diligently and thoughtfully to prescribe the salaries for agency heads and constitutional officers and develop recommendations for judicial salaries for consideration by the Legislature. Council members are committed to answering any questions you may have. The Council extend a thank you to the staff of the Legislative Coordinating Commission for their work during a limited timeframe. The Council believes appropriate compensation for government officials is vital to the state's future and that these prescribed salaries and recommendations should be implemented.

Respectfully submitted,



Patrick McCormack
Chair, Compensation Council



David Asp
Vice Chair, Compensation Council

cc:

Governor Tim Walz
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan
Attorney General Keith Ellison
State Auditor Julie Blaha
Secretary of State Steve Simon
Chief Justice Natalie Hudson

Senator Erin Murphy, Majority Leader
Senator Mark Johnson, Minority Leader
Representative Melissa Hortman, Speaker
Emerita, DFL Leader
Representative Harry Niska, GOP Floor
Leader
Representative Jamie Long, DFL Floor
Leader

Attachment 1

Compensation Council Members

The Compensation Council consists of 24 members: eight nonjudges appointed by the chief justice of the Supreme Court, of whom no more than four may belong to the same political party; and one member from each congressional district appointed by the governor, of whom no more than four may belong to the same political party. The speaker and minority leader of the house of representatives must each appoint two members. The majority leader and minority leader of the senate must each appoint two members. Appointments must be made after the first Monday in January and before January 15th.

Member	Appointing Authority
Patrick McCormack, Chair	House
David Asp, Vice Chair	Supreme Court
Charles Anderson	Supreme Court
Patrick Baustian	Supreme Court
Gary Borgendale	Supreme Court
Thomas Boyd	Governor
Janice Brandt	Governor
Tim Brinkman	Senate
Kelli Commers	Senate
Nancy Conley	House
Devin Driscoll	Supreme Court
Benjamin Gerber	Governor
Susan Holden	Supreme Court
Roger Josephson	Governor
Amanda Matchett	Governor
Amanda Mills	Senate
Nicholas Morgan	Supreme Court
Gloria Myre	House
Amber Naqvi	Governor
Jason Resseman	Governor
James Robins	Supreme Court
Kristi Schmidt	Governor
Davis Senseman	Senate
Tim Stout	House

**Salary comparisons
Compensation Council
1/5/2025**

State of Minnesota % change	7/1/2017	7/1/2018	7/1/2019	7/1/2020	7/1/2021	7/1/2022	7/1/2023	7/1/2024
Constitutional officers	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9% ⁴	7.50%
Minnesota judges	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	0.00%	8.00%	4.00%
Agency heads	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.07% ⁵	0.00%
State employees ¹	2.00%	2.25%	2.25%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	5.50%	4.50%
Minnesota state legislators	44.50%	0.00%	3.30%	0.00%	3.80%	0.00%	7.25%	0.00%

Constitutional Officers	Population: 2020	Governor	Lt. Governor	Attorney General	Secretary of State	State Auditor
Minnesota (2024)	5,706,494	\$ 149,550	\$ 97,207	\$ 142,072	\$ 127,117	\$ 127,117
North Dakota (2023)	779,094	\$ 143,646	\$ 111,727	\$ 169,162	\$ 114,486	\$ 114,486
South Dakota (2023)	886,667	\$ 139,100	\$ 120,787	\$ 133,750	\$ 120,910	\$ 120,910
Iowa (2023)	3,190,369	\$ 130,000	\$ 103,312	\$ 123,669	\$ 103,212	\$ 103,212
Wisconsin (2023)	5,893,718	\$ 165,568	\$ 87,423	\$ 160,680	\$ 78,583	NA

Judicial Salaries: 2025	Population: 2020	Supreme Ct Judge	Appeals Ct Judge	District Ct Judge
Minnesota	5,706,494	\$ 214,935	\$ 202,528	\$ 190,117
North Dakota	779,094	\$ 186,484	-	\$ 171,113
South Dakota	886,667	\$ 194,241	-	\$ 181,246
Iowa	3,190,369	\$ 196,102	\$ 178,253	\$ 165,959
Wisconsin	5,893,718	\$ 196,102	\$ 184,995	\$ 174,512

Inflation	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), 1967 base ²	751.814	769.821	785.966	795.05	833.537	895.644	919.88	942.295
Inflation(CPI-U)	-	2.40%	2.10%	1.16%	4.84%	7.45%	2.71%	2.44%
	12/1/17	12/1/18	12/1/19	12/1/20	12/1/21	12/1/22	12/1/23	12/1/24
Social Security rate increase	2.00%	2.80%	1.60%	1.30%	5.90%	8.70%	3.20%	2.50%
Private sector ³	2.80%	3.10%	3.00%	2.60%	4.40%	5.10%	4.10%	-

Notes

- 1 State employees received across the board increases that average these amounts. In addition, employees not at the top of their salary ranges are eligible for merit increases. These annual increases generally vary from 2.75% to 3.5%, depending on the contract. About 50% of state employees are eligible for these increases.
- 2 BLS: CPI table: <https://data.bls.gov/toppicks?survey=r5>
- 3 Bureau of Labor Statistics: Economic News Release: Employment Cost Index Sum. US. Private industry, Table 1
https://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/employmentcostindex_minneapolis.htm#:~:text=The%20annual%20increase%20in%20compensation,metropolitan%20areas%20in%20the%20Midwest.
- 4 Effective July 1, 2023 the salary of the Secretary of State is increased to the same level as the State Auditor
- 5 Effective July 1, 2023 the salaries of agency heads were rebased, based on the average salary increases received by state employees. See 2023 Session Law, chapter 62, Article 2, section 125



SURVEY OF Judicial Salaries

ncsc.org/salarytracker

These graphics depict the rankings of judicial salaries, with the highest salary for each position having a rank of "1."

Data is reported by each jurisdiction to NCSC.

Less than \$100,00 \$100,000 to \$149,999 \$150,000 to \$199,999 \$200,000 to \$249,999 More than \$250,000

General Jurisdiction Judges

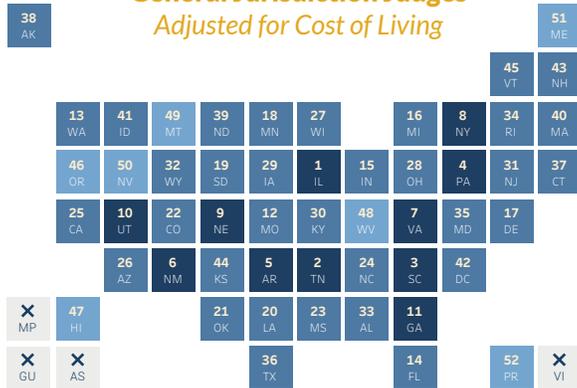


Intermediate Appellate Court Judges



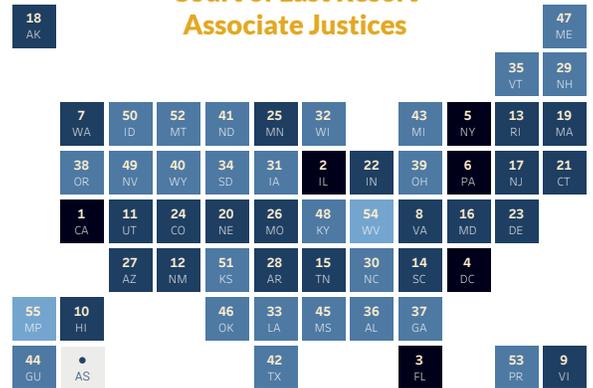
— States without an intermediate appellate court

General Jurisdiction Judges Adjusted for Cost of Living



X C2ER does not provide cost of living index for U.S. Territories (except for San Juan, Puerto Rico)

Court of Last Resort Associate Justices



• No Response

Judicial Salaries at a Glance

	Mean	Median	Range
Chief, Highest Court	\$214,896	\$214,830	\$130,000 to \$305,259
Associate Justice, Court of Last Resort	\$207,249	\$203,625	\$126,000 to \$291,094
Judge, Intermediate Appellate Court	\$200,011	\$200,062	\$139,563 to \$272,902
Judge, General Jurisdiction Trial Court	\$184,366	\$183,006	\$68,675 to \$246,099



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Salaries and Rankings - Listed Alphabetically by Jurisdiction Name

The table below lists the salaries and rankings for associate justices of the courts of last resort, associate judges of intermediate appellate courts and judges of general jurisdiction trial courts. Salaries are ranked from highest to lowest, with the highest salary for each position having a rank of "1." The adjustment factor for general jurisdiction courts is available for 52 of the jurisdictions. Salaries are as of July 1, 2024.

	Court of Last Resort		Intermediate Appellate Court		General Jurisdiction Court		General Jurisdiction Court <i>Adjusted for Cost-of-Living Index</i>		
	Salary	Rank	Salary	Rank	Salary	Rank	Factor	Salary	Rank
Alabama	\$189,353	36	\$188,271	25	\$151,482	50	93.1	\$162,709	33
Alaska	\$226,200	18	\$213,701	17	\$209,157	14	131.8	\$158,693	38
American Samoa	No Response		Not Applicable		\$68,675	56	Not Available		
Arizona	\$205,000	27	\$190,000	23	\$180,000	31	102.4	\$175,781	26
Arkansas	\$203,625	28	\$197,596	22	\$192,919	24	90.5	\$213,170	5
California	\$291,094	1	\$272,902	1	\$238,479	3	134.8	\$176,913	25
Colorado	\$215,904	24	\$207,351	20	\$198,798	22	111.2	\$178,775	22
Connecticut	\$222,545	21	\$209,046	19	\$201,023	21	126.2	\$159,289	37
Delaware	\$218,684	23	Not Applicable		\$205,600	18	109.7	\$187,420	17
District of Columbia	\$257,900	4	Not Applicable		\$243,300	2	159.1	\$152,923	42
Florida	\$258,957	3	\$218,939	12	\$196,898	23	101.4	\$194,180	14
Georgia	\$189,112	37	\$187,990	27	\$187,796	26	93.5	\$200,851	11
Guam	\$177,000	44	Not Applicable		\$165,114	42	Not Available		
Hawaii	\$239,688	10	\$222,804	9	\$217,104	8	149.2	\$145,512	47
Idaho	\$169,508	50	\$161,508	40	\$155,508	48	99.8	\$155,820	41
Illinois	\$284,948	2	\$268,190	2	\$246,099	1	99.8	\$246,592	1
Indiana	\$221,024	22	\$214,852	14	\$183,513	28	95.6	\$191,959	15
Iowa	\$196,692	31	\$178,253	33	\$165,959	41	97.8	\$169,692	29
Kansas	\$168,598	51	\$163,156	39	\$148,912	51	98.2	\$151,642	44
Kentucky	\$170,050	48	\$163,292	38	\$156,565	47	92.5	\$169,259	30
Louisiana	\$194,427	33	\$182,007	31	\$174,988	33	97.2	\$180,029	20
Maine	\$172,266	47	Not Applicable		\$161,470	43	116.8	\$138,245	51
Maryland	\$226,433	16	\$213,633	18	\$204,433	19	126.4	\$161,735	35
Massachusetts	\$226,187	19	\$213,924	15	\$207,855	16	132.2	\$157,228	40
Michigan	\$181,483	43	\$186,310	28	\$172,135	36	91.1	\$188,951	16
Minnesota	\$214,935	25	\$202,528	21	\$190,117	25	102.1	\$186,207	18
Mississippi	\$173,800	45	\$168,467	35	\$158,000	46	88.6	\$178,330	23
Missouri	\$205,965	26	\$188,267	26	\$177,609	32	90.5	\$196,253	12
Montana	\$162,503	52	Not Applicable		\$148,872	52	104.0	\$143,146	49
Nebraska	\$225,055	20	\$213,803	16	\$208,176	15	100.8	\$206,524	9
Nevada	\$170,000	49	\$165,000	36	\$160,000	45	112.0	\$142,857	50
New Hampshire	\$197,945	29	Not Applicable		\$185,640	27	121.6	\$152,664	43
New Jersey	\$226,292	17	\$215,546	13	\$204,167	20	121.2	\$168,455	31
New Mexico	\$232,606	12	\$220,979	10	\$209,914	13	100.5	\$208,870	6
New York	\$257,500	5	\$245,100	3	\$232,600	4	112.4	\$206,940	8
North Carolina	\$197,802	30	\$189,621	24	\$169,125	39	95.2	\$177,652	24
North Dakota	\$186,484	41	Not Applicable		\$171,113	38	107.9	\$158,585	39
Northern Mariana Islands	\$126,000	55	Not Applicable		\$120,000	55	Not Available		
Ohio	\$187,805	39	\$175,045	34	\$160,975	44	92.5	\$174,027	28
Oklahoma	\$173,469	46	\$164,339	37	\$167,703	40	93.2	\$179,939	21
Oregon	\$188,208	38	\$184,584	30	\$174,108	35	118.6	\$146,803	46
Pennsylvania	\$253,361	6	\$239,059	4	\$219,933	6	102.0	\$215,621	4
Puerto Rico	\$153,519	53	\$139,563	42	\$126,875	54	102.6	\$123,660	52
Rhode Island	\$230,343	13	Not Applicable		\$207,384	17	127.9	\$162,145	34
South Carolina	\$229,026	14	\$223,300	8	\$217,574	7	98.8	\$220,217	3
South Dakota	\$194,241	34	Not Applicable		\$181,426	30	99.7	\$181,972	19
Tennessee	\$228,132	15	\$220,548	11	\$212,940	12	92.3	\$230,704	2
Texas	\$184,800	42	\$178,400	32	\$154,000	49	96.6	\$159,420	36
Utah	\$235,300	11	\$224,600	7	\$213,900	10	103.7	\$206,268	10
Vermont	\$191,963	35	Not Applicable		\$182,499	29	121.2	\$150,577	45
Virgin Islands	\$241,091	9	Not Applicable		\$213,992	9	Not Available		
Virginia	\$243,842	8	\$225,325	6	\$213,839	11	102.5	\$208,623	7
Washington	\$247,064	7	\$235,188	5	\$223,913	5	115.0	\$194,707	13
West Virginia	\$149,600	54	\$142,500	41	\$138,600	53	95.3	\$145,435	48
Wisconsin	\$196,102	32	\$184,995	29	\$174,512	34	100.1	\$174,338	27
Wyoming	\$187,250	40	Not Applicable		\$171,200	37	105.2	\$162,738	32

Mean	\$207,249		\$200,011		\$184,366				
Median	\$203,625		\$200,062		\$183,006				
Range	\$126,000 to \$291,094		\$139,563 to \$272,902		\$68,675 to \$246,099				

*The figures presented use the C2ER Cost-of-Living Index. The Council for Community and Economic Research-C2ER is the most widely accepted U.S. source for cost-of-living indices. C2ER does not provide cost of living index for U.S. Territories (except for San Juan, Puerto Rico). Due to the rounding of C2ER factors to the nearest hundredth for publication purposes, user calculations of our adjusted salary figures may not equate to the published totals. More detailed information can be found at www.c2er.org.

Attachment 4
 Compensation Council
 Salaries of Minnesota Officials
 Determinations and Recommendations
 3/27/2025

	Current salaries		Salary determinations	
	2023	2024	2025	2026
	July 1	July 1	July 1	July 1
Constitutional Officers				
Governor	\$ 139,116	\$ 149,550	\$ 174,775	\$ 200,000
Attorney General	\$ 132,160	\$ 142,072	\$ 166,036	\$ 190,000
Auditor	\$ 118,249	\$ 127,117	\$ 132,238	\$ 137,358
Sec. of State	\$ 118,249	\$ 127,117	\$ 136,059	\$ 145,000
Lt. Governor	\$ 90,425	\$ 97,207	\$ 101,123	\$ 105,038

		Current salaries		Salary recommendations	
		2023	2024	2025	2026
Judges					
	% change from last increase	8.0%	4.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Supreme Ct. Chief Justice		\$ 227,336	\$ 236,429	\$ 250,615	\$ 265,652
Supreme Ct. Assoc. Justice		\$ 206,668	\$ 214,935	\$ 227,831	\$ 241,501
Ct. of Appeals Chief Judge		\$ 204,471	\$ 212,650	\$ 225,409	\$ 238,934
Ct. of Appeals Judge		\$ 194,738	\$ 202,528	\$ 214,680	\$ 227,560
District Court Chief Judge		\$ 191,944	\$ 199,622	\$ 211,599	\$ 224,295
District Court Judge		\$ 182,805	\$ 190,117	\$ 201,524	\$ 213,616

Attachment 5
 Compensation Council
 Agency Head Salary Determinations
 3/28/2025

Agency Heads	Current Salaries	Approved Increases	
		Across the Board 7/1/2025	Across the Board 7/1/2026
		3.9%	4.0%
Commissioner of administration	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner of agriculture	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner of children, youth, and families	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of commerce	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner of corrections	\$ 180,988	\$ 188,047	\$ 195,568
Chief Executive Officer, Direct Care and Treatment (2)	\$ 261,542	\$ 261,542	\$ 261,542
Commissioner of education	\$ 180,988	\$ 188,047	\$ 195,568
Commissioner of employment and economic development	\$ 180,988	\$ 188,047	\$ 195,568
Executive director of the Gambling Control Board	\$ 144,782	\$ 150,428	\$ 156,446
Commissioner of health	\$ 180,988	\$ 188,047	\$ 195,568
Commissioner of human rights	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner of human services	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation	\$ 168,919	\$ 175,507	\$ 182,527
Commissioner of labor and industry	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner of management and budget	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of natural resources	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of public safety	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of revenue	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of transportation	\$ 187,001	\$ 194,294	\$ 202,066
Commissioner of veterans affairs	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner, Bureau of Mediation Services	\$ 168,898	\$ 175,485	\$ 182,504
Commissioner, Housing Finance Agency	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Chair, Metropolitan Airports Commission	\$ 39,304	\$ 40,837	\$ 42,470
Chair, Metropolitan Council	\$ 169,901	\$ 176,527	\$ 183,588
Commissioner, Minnesota IT Services	\$ 187,314	\$ 194,619	\$ 202,404
Executive director of the Minnesota State Lottery	\$ 146,285	\$ 151,990	\$ 158,070
Commissioner, Minnesota Office of Higher Education	\$ 174,933	\$ 181,755	\$ 189,026
Commissioner, Pollution Control Agency	\$ 180,988	\$ 188,047	\$ 195,568
Commissioner, Public Utilities Commission	\$ 168,919	\$ 175,507	\$ 182,527
Executive director of the Office of Cannabis Management (1)	\$ 190,008	\$ 188,047	\$ 195,568
Director of the Office of Emergency Medical Services	\$ 139,917	\$ 145,374	\$ 151,189
Executive director of pari-mutuel racing (Racing Commission)	\$ 139,938	\$ 145,396	\$ 151,211
Ombudsperson for corrections	\$ 126,637	\$ 131,576	\$ 136,839
Ombudsman for mental health and developmental disabilities	\$ 144,782	\$ 150,428	\$ 156,446
School trust lands director	\$ 150,837	\$ 156,720	\$ 162,988
Direct Care and Treatment Daily Compensation	\$ 55	\$ 500	\$ 500

(1) This salary is intended to match the commissioners of education and employment and economic development.

(2) This salary is mandated by Laws of Minn. 2024, ch. 125, art. 5, sec. 41, subd. 21.