

SURVEY OF Judicial Salaries

Nationwide Judicial Retirement Information Now Available

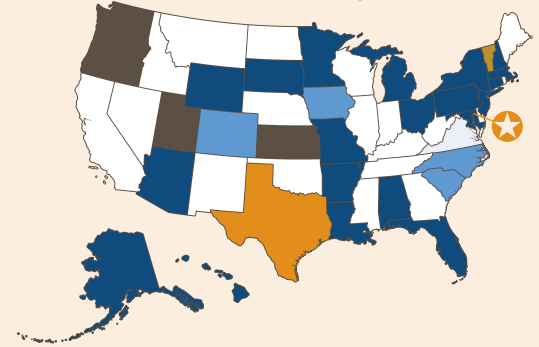
In 2015 the NCSC (with the help of now-retired New Hampshire Director of State Courts Don Goodnow), conducted a [15 question nationwide survey](#) on judicial retirement and benefits. Response rates were excellent and serve as an invaluable resource to state AOCs and judges seeking information on retirement benefit structure, contribution rates to judicial pensions by judges, mandatory retirement age, benefit formulas, and beneficiary entitlements.

Probably the most notable piece of information was contribution rates from judges towards defined benefit programs. Defined benefit programs are made available to almost all judicial officers, however, the range of contributions differ widely from state to state and can differ for judges in the same state depending on when they took the bench. Individual judges contribute nothing in Nevada and Utah, and as much as 11% and 12% respectively in Illinois and Rhode Island. Judges in California who took the bench on or after January 1, 2013 contribute the most nationally to their retirement plans. This table lists states with some of the highest contribution rates.

Contribution Rates to Judicial Defined Benefit Retirement Programs

	Salary	Rank	Judge's Contribution Rate
California	\$ 189,041	5	15.25%
Rhode Island	\$ 158,340	18	12.00%
Illinois	\$ 190,758	3	11.00%
New Mexico	\$ 118,384	51	10.50%
Idaho	\$ 124,000	47	10.20%
New Hampshire	\$ 146,236	27	10.00%
Pennsylvania	\$ 176,572	7	10.00%

Retirement Ages for General-Jurisdiction Trial Court Judges



70

Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
Connecticut
Florida
Hawaii
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Ohio
Pennsylvania
South Dakota
Wyoming

75

Kansas
Oregon
Utah
Washington

90

Vermont

No Age Specified

California
Delaware
Georgia
Idaho
Illinois*
Indiana
Kentucky
Maine
Mississippi
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Rhode Island
Tennessee
West Virginia
Wisconsin

72

Colorado
Iowa
North Carolina
South Carolina

73

Virginia

74

District of Columbia
Texas

* Illinois statute struck down as unconstitutional but never formally repealed.

Judicial Salaries at a Glance

The average annual percent change for the four judicial positions, and the state court administrators analyzed by the Survey, is 1.61% for increases from July 1, 2015 through January 1, 2016. As indicated in the table below, this increase remains below the pre-recession (2003-2007) average increase of 3.24%.

	Mean	Median	Range	Average Annual % Change			
				Pre-Recession 2003-2007	Recession 2008-2009	Recession 2010-2011	Recovery 2012-2015
Chief, Highest Court	\$ 172,036	\$ 167,210	\$ 133,174 to \$ 241,978	3.19%	1.58%	0.67%	2.19%
Associate Justice, COLR	\$ 166,351	\$ 166,159	\$ 129,626 to \$ 230,750	3.21%	1.88%	0.64%	2.18%
Judge, Intermediate Appellate Court	\$ 160,274	\$ 159,484	\$ 124,616 to \$ 216,330	3.20%	1.60%	0.36%	2.21%
Judge, General-Jurisdiction Trial Courts	\$ 149,850	\$ 146,803	\$ 118,384 to \$ 201,100	3.30%	1.91%	0.58%	2.24%
State Court Administrators	\$ 148,994	\$ 139,059	\$ 92,960 to \$ 245,640	3.30%	1.38%	0.89%	2.21%
Average				3.24%	1.67%	0.63%	2.20%

Salaries and Rankings for Appellate and General-Jurisdiction Judges - Listed Alphabetically by State 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 (actual salaries and cost-of-living-adjusted salaries as of January 1, 2016). Where possible, the salary figures are actual salaries. In jurisdictions where some judges receive supplements, the figures are the most representative available—either the base salary, the midpoint of a range between the lowest and highest supplemented salaries, or the median. Salaries are ranked from highest to lowest, with the highest salary for each position having a rank of “1.” The lowest salary has a rank of “51” except for intermediate appellate courts, which exist in only 40 states. The mean, median, and salary range for each of the positions are also shown.

	Highest Court		Intermediate Appellate Court		General-Jurisdiction Court		General-Jurisdiction Court Adjusted for Cost-of-Living Index		
	Salary	Rank	Salary	Rank	Salary	Rank	Factor	Salary	Rank
Alabama	\$ 167,685	23	\$ 178,878	6	\$ 134,943	37	95.71	\$ 140,993	18
Alaska	\$ 205,176	5	\$ 193,386	4	\$ 189,720	4	135.65	\$ 139,863	21
Arizona	\$ 155,000	34	\$ 150,000	29	\$ 145,000	29	108.25	\$ 133,951	29
Arkansas	\$ 166,500	25	\$ 161,500	18	\$ 160,000	15	95.08	\$ 168,281	3
California	\$ 230,750	1	\$ 216,330	1	\$ 189,041	5	139.89	\$ 135,136	27
Colorado	\$ 173,024	17	\$ 166,170	14	\$ 159,320	17	109.40	\$ 145,625	14
Connecticut	\$ 185,610	10	\$ 174,323	11	\$ 167,634	10	136.08	\$ 123,186	40
Delaware	\$ 192,360	9			\$ 180,733	6	108.29	\$ 166,903	4
District of Columbia	\$ 213,300	4			\$ 201,100	1	146.11	\$ 137,637	24
Florida	\$ 162,200	32	\$ 154,140	25	\$ 146,080	28	105.83	\$ 138,036	23
Georgia	\$ 167,210	24	\$ 166,186	13	\$ 156,252	19	100.35	\$ 155,704	6
Hawaii	\$ 214,524	3	\$ 198,624	3	\$ 193,248	2	157.91	\$ 122,381	41
Idaho	\$ 135,000	48	\$ 130,000	39	\$ 124,000	47	96.96	\$ 127,888	35
Illinois	\$ 220,873	2	\$ 207,882	2	\$ 190,758	3	112.15	\$ 170,096	2
Indiana	\$ 165,078	27	\$ 160,468	20	\$ 137,062	35	97.32	\$ 140,840	19
Iowa	\$ 170,544	18	\$ 154,556	24	\$ 143,897	30	98.95	\$ 145,421	15
Kansas	\$ 135,905	45	\$ 131,518	37	\$ 120,037	50	100.27	\$ 119,711	45
Kentucky	\$ 135,504	47	\$ 130,044	38	\$ 124,620	45	93.87	\$ 132,760	30
Louisiana	\$ 164,590	30	\$ 154,059	26	\$ 148,108	25	99.56	\$ 148,767	10
Maine	\$ 129,626	51			\$ 121,472	49	122.49	\$ 99,172	51
Maryland	\$ 176,433	14	\$ 163,633	17	\$ 154,433	20	120.70	\$ 127,950	34
Massachusetts	\$ 175,984	15	\$ 165,087	15	\$ 159,694	16	133.26	\$ 119,838	44
Michigan	\$ 164,610	29	\$ 151,441	28	\$ 139,919	32	98.46	\$ 142,110	16
Minnesota	\$ 162,630	31	\$ 153,240	27	\$ 143,851	31	105.38	\$ 136,505	26
Mississippi	\$ 142,320	41	\$ 134,883	34	\$ 128,042	40	90.94	\$ 140,793	20
Missouri	\$ 170,292	19	\$ 155,709	23	\$ 146,803	26	98.77	\$ 148,637	11
Montana	\$ 136,177	43			\$ 126,131	43	104.11	\$ 121,156	42
Nebraska	\$ 166,159	26	\$ 157,851	22	\$ 153,697	21	100.21	\$ 153,369	8
Nevada	\$ 170,000	20	\$ 165,000	16	\$ 160,000	14	109.80	\$ 145,725	13
New Hampshire	\$ 155,907	33			\$ 146,236	27	126.50	\$ 115,598	47
New Jersey	\$ 185,482	11	\$ 175,534	10	\$ 165,000	12	125.68	\$ 131,289	32
New Mexico	\$ 131,174	50	\$ 124,616	40	\$ 118,384	51	104.88	\$ 112,876	48
New York	\$ 192,500	7	\$ 177,900	7	\$ 174,000	8	148.76	\$ 116,963	46
North Carolina	\$ 139,896	42	\$ 134,109	35	\$ 126,875	42	101.16	\$ 125,424	38
North Dakota	\$ 152,436	35			\$ 139,679	34	105.25	\$ 132,712	31
Ohio	\$ 148,700	36	\$ 138,600	32	\$ 127,450	41	97.97	\$ 130,086	33
Oklahoma	\$ 145,914	39	\$ 138,235	33	\$ 131,835	38	96.53	\$ 136,569	25
Oregon	\$ 135,688	46	\$ 132,820	36	\$ 124,468	46	114.29	\$ 108,901	50
Pennsylvania	\$ 203,409	6	\$ 191,926	5	\$ 176,572	7	112.89	\$ 156,404	5
Rhode Island	\$ 175,870	16			\$ 158,340	18	127.95	\$ 123,753	39
South Carolina	\$ 144,111	40	\$ 140,508	30	\$ 136,905	36	101.55	\$ 134,813	28
South Dakota	\$ 131,713	49			\$ 123,024	48	101.87	\$ 120,763	43
Tennessee	\$ 182,508	12	\$ 176,436	9	\$ 170,352	9	95.93	\$ 177,583	1
Texas	\$ 168,000	22	\$ 158,500	21	\$ 149,000	24	102.02	\$ 146,050	12
Utah	\$ 168,150	21	\$ 160,500	19	\$ 152,850	22	102.56	\$ 149,028	9
Vermont	\$ 147,095	38			\$ 139,837	33	124.51	\$ 112,312	49
Virginia	\$ 192,458	8	\$ 176,510	8	\$ 166,136	11	107.76	\$ 154,176	7
Washington	\$ 179,432	13	\$ 170,808	12	\$ 162,618	13	114.83	\$ 141,618	17
West Virginia	\$ 136,000	44			\$ 126,000	44	99.36	\$ 126,808	37
Wisconsin	\$ 147,403	37	\$ 139,059	31	\$ 131,187	39	103.07	\$ 127,286	36
Wyoming	\$ 165,000	28			\$ 150,000	23	107.58	\$ 139,434	22
Mean	\$ 166,351		\$ 160,274		\$ 149,850				
Median	\$ 166,159		\$ 159,484		\$ 146,803				
Range	\$ 129,626 to \$ 230,750		\$ 124,616 to \$ 216,330		\$ 118,384 to \$ 201,100				

Using 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, with nearly 400 reporting jurisdictions across America. The cost-of-living indices used in this report were developed by C2ER using a robust, multivariable model, which incorporates the costs of goods and services within a reporting jurisdiction along with seven additional variables to greatly improve predicted, statewide average C2ER factors. The seven variables are community population, population density, income, growth rate, utility rates, efficiency of the government sector, and location of the region. More detailed information can be found at www.c2er.org.

Salaries and Rankings for Appellate and General-Jurisdiction Judges - Listed in Order of State Rank

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 (actual salaries and cost-of-living-adjusted salaries as of January 1, 2016). Where possible, the salary figures are actual salaries. In jurisdictions where some judges receive supplements, the figures are the most representative available—either the base salary, the midpoint of a range between the lowest and highest supplemented salaries, or the median. Salaries are ranked from highest to lowest, with the highest salary for each position having a rank of “1.” The lowest salary has a rank of “51” except for intermediate appellate courts, which exist in only 40 states. The mean, median, and salary range for each of the positions are also shown.


	Highest Court	Intermediate Appellate Court	General-Jurisdiction Court	General-Jurisdiction Court Adjusted for Cost-of-Living Index
1	California \$ 230,750	California \$ 216,330	District of Columbia \$ 201,100	Tennessee \$ 177,583
2	Illinois \$ 220,873	Illinois \$ 207,882	Hawaii \$ 193,248	Illinois \$ 170,096
3	Hawaii \$ 214,524	Hawaii \$ 198,624	Illinois \$ 190,758	Arkansas \$ 168,281
4	District of Columbia \$ 213,300	Alaska \$ 193,386	Alaska \$ 189,720	Delaware \$ 166,903
5	Alaska \$ 205,176	Pennsylvania \$ 191,926	California \$ 189,041	Pennsylvania \$ 156,404
6	Pennsylvania \$ 203,409	Alabama \$ 178,878	Delaware \$ 180,733	Georgia \$ 155,704
7	New York \$ 192,500	New York \$ 177,900	Pennsylvania \$ 176,572	Virginia \$ 154,176
8	Virginia \$ 192,458	Virginia \$ 176,510	New York \$ 174,000	Nebraska \$ 153,369
9	Delaware \$ 192,360	Tennessee \$ 176,436	Tennessee \$ 170,352	Utah \$ 149,028
10	Connecticut \$ 185,610	New Jersey \$ 175,534	Connecticut \$ 167,634	Louisiana \$ 148,767
11	New Jersey \$ 185,482	Connecticut \$ 174,323	Virginia \$ 166,136	Missouri \$ 148,637
12	Tennessee \$ 182,508	Washington \$ 170,808	New Jersey \$ 165,000	Texas \$ 146,050
13	Washington \$ 179,432	Georgia \$ 166,186	Washington \$ 162,618	Nevada \$ 145,725
14	Maryland \$ 176,433	Colorado \$ 166,170	Arkansas \$ 160,000	Colorado \$ 145,625
15	Massachusetts \$ 175,984	Massachusetts \$ 165,087	Nevada \$ 160,000	Iowa \$ 145,421
16	Rhode Island \$ 175,870	Nevada \$ 165,000	Massachusetts \$ 159,694	Michigan \$ 142,110
17	Colorado \$ 173,024	Maryland \$ 163,633	Colorado \$ 159,320	Washington \$ 141,618
18	Iowa \$ 170,544	Arkansas \$ 161,500	Rhode Island \$ 158,340	Alabama \$ 140,993
19	Missouri \$ 170,292	Utah \$ 160,500	Georgia \$ 156,252	Indiana \$ 140,840
20	Nevada \$ 170,000	Indiana \$ 160,468	Maryland \$ 154,433	Mississippi \$ 140,793
21	Utah \$ 168,150	Texas \$ 158,500	Nebraska \$ 153,697	Alaska \$ 139,863
22	Texas \$ 168,000	Nebraska \$ 157,851	Utah \$ 152,850	Wyoming \$ 139,434
23	Alabama \$ 167,685	Missouri \$ 155,709	Wyoming \$ 150,000	Florida \$ 138,036
24	Georgia \$ 167,210	Iowa \$ 154,556	Texas \$ 149,000	District of Columbia \$ 137,637
25	Arkansas \$ 166,500	Florida \$ 154,140	Louisiana \$ 148,108	Oklahoma \$ 136,569
26	Nebraska \$ 166,159	Louisiana \$ 154,059	Missouri \$ 146,803	Minnesota \$ 136,505
27	Indiana \$ 165,078	Minnesota \$ 153,240	New Hampshire \$ 146,236	California \$ 135,136
28	Wyoming \$ 165,000	Michigan \$ 151,441	Florida \$ 146,080	South Carolina \$ 134,813
29	Michigan \$ 164,610	Arizona \$ 150,000	Arizona \$ 145,000	Arizona \$ 133,951
30	Louisiana \$ 164,590	South Carolina \$ 140,508	Iowa \$ 143,897	Kentucky \$ 132,760
31	Minnesota \$ 162,630	Wisconsin \$ 139,059	Minnesota \$ 143,851	North Dakota \$ 132,712
32	Florida \$ 162,200	Ohio \$ 138,600	Michigan \$ 139,919	New Jersey \$ 131,289
33	New Hampshire \$ 155,907	Oklahoma \$ 138,235	Vermont \$ 139,837	Ohio \$ 130,086
34	Arizona \$ 155,000	Mississippi \$ 134,883	North Dakota \$ 139,679	Maryland \$ 127,950
35	North Dakota \$ 152,436	North Carolina \$ 134,109	Indiana \$ 137,062	Idaho \$ 127,888
36	Ohio \$ 148,700	Oregon \$ 132,820	South Carolina \$ 136,905	Wisconsin \$ 127,286
37	Wisconsin \$ 147,403	Kansas \$ 131,518	Alabama \$ 134,943	West Virginia \$ 126,808
38	Vermont \$ 147,095	Kentucky \$ 130,044	Oklahoma \$ 131,835	North Carolina \$ 125,424
39	Oklahoma \$ 145,914	Idaho \$ 130,000	Wisconsin \$ 131,187	Rhode Island \$ 123,753
40	South Carolina \$ 144,111	New Mexico \$ 124,616	Mississippi \$ 128,042	Connecticut \$ 123,186
41	Mississippi \$ 142,320	Delaware	Ohio \$ 127,450	Hawaii \$ 122,381
42	North Carolina \$ 139,896	District of Columbia	North Carolina \$ 126,875	Montana \$ 121,156
43	Montana \$ 136,177	Maine	Montana \$ 126,131	South Dakota \$ 120,763
44	West Virginia \$ 136,000	Montana	West Virginia \$ 126,000	Massachusetts \$ 119,838
45	Kansas \$ 135,905	New Hampshire	Kentucky \$ 124,620	Kansas \$ 119,711
46	Oregon \$ 135,688	North Dakota	Oregon \$ 124,468	New York \$ 116,963
47	Kentucky \$ 135,504	Rhode Island	Idaho \$ 124,000	New Hampshire \$ 115,598
48	Idaho \$ 135,000	South Dakota	South Dakota \$ 123,024	New Mexico \$ 112,876
49	South Dakota \$ 131,713	Vermont	Maine \$ 121,472	Vermont \$ 112,312
50	New Mexico \$ 131,174	West Virginia	Kansas \$ 120,037	Oregon \$ 108,901
51	Maine \$ 129,626	Wyoming	New Mexico \$ 118,384	Maine \$ 99,172
	Mean \$ 166,351	Mean \$ 160,274	Mean \$ 149,850	
	Median \$ 166,159	Median \$ 159,484	Median \$ 146,803	
	Range \$ 129,626 to \$ 230,750	Range \$ 124,616 to \$ 216,330	Range \$ 118,384 to \$ 201,100	

Information in this Survey is collected from designated representatives in each state. The National Center for State Courts has protocols in place to help ensure the accuracy of the data that are collected, analyzed, and ultimately reported.

Methodology

The *Survey of Judicial Salaries*, published for nearly 30 years by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) with the support of state court administrative offices across the United States, serves as the primary record of compensation for state judicial officers and state court administrators.

This issue of the *Survey of Judicial Salaries* reports salary data as of January 1, 2016. This cutoff date is important because states implement salary changes at various points during the year. However, a standard and unchanging cutoff date must be established to publish salary data in a timely and predictable fashion. Due to recent changes in data-collection protocols and analytics, the NCSC is now able to report changes in state salaries more quickly. This will give policymakers who are considering changes in judicial compensation the most up-to-date salary information at the national level.

This *Survey* was prepared by the Knowledge and Information Services (KIS) Office of the National Center for State Courts, with assistance from  Visual Research
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Judicial Salary Tracker

Interactive online app that presents judicial salary and compensation data in clear visual displays.

How does your state's retirement package compare to similar states?

Which states designate a specific age for retirement?



JUDICIAL SALARY TRACKER

HOME SPECIAL REPORTS ARCHIVE SUBMIT STATE DATA DONATE TO NCSC


HOME > SPECIAL REPORTS >> JUDICIAL RETIREMENTS MAP

Judicial Retirements

In 2015, with the help of New Hampshire Director of State Courts Don Goodnow, the NCSC collected information from all but 2 states on judicial retirements. A survey of 16 questions was answered and states representatives were extremely helpful in providing their data. In most cases all 15 questions were answered but in a handful of instances, responses were more limited. Regardless, the data is extremely valuable and covers issues surrounding mandatory retirement age, requirements for retirement with benefits, contribution rates to judicial pensions by judges, retirement benefit formula, beneficiary entitlements, etc. The survey questions which were used can be seen here.

Detailed Survey Results for Each State

More Control Over Customizing, Saving, and Printing



HOME > SPECIAL REPORTS >> COLORADO

Colorado

Type of Retirement Plan
Defined Benefit

Judge's Contribution
A judge contributes 9% of his or her salary to the judicial retirement plan.

State Contributions
The employer contribution for judges is 17.30%, where 15.60% goes toward the employee account.

Judicial Retirement Plan Calculation
The retirement benefit calculation for judges is based on the highest average salary (HAS), which is 1/2 the highest annual salary over the past twelve months.

Requirements for Pension Payment Levels
Payment levels are based on age at retirement, length of service and HAS. A judge's payment level table is determined by their five data.

Maximum Amount in Annual Pension Payments
The maximum is 100% but is dependent on years of service and age at retirement.

Benefit Payments for Disabled Judges
If a judge is disabled from employment or ordered by the Colorado Supreme Court to retire pursuant to the Colorado Constitution, they will earn service credit for the remainder of their term. Additionally, a judge receives a projected service credit to age 60 or for 20 years, whichever is first.

Benefit Payments for Surviving Spouses
Death While in Service - If the judge is not eligible for retirement, the order of eligibility for qualified survivors is: children under age 18 or under age 23 if in school, spouse, disabled adult children, dependent parents or named beneficiaries.
The provisions for the spouse are: If the spouse is not related their spouse may receive a lifetime monthly benefit based on the member's age, service credit and the age and life expectancy of the survivor at the member's time of death.
- 10 years of service credit: At age 60, surviving spouse is eligible to receive a monthly benefit equal to 25% of HAS. If spouse is disabled, they may receive immediately.
- 10 or more years of service credit: The surviving spouse may receive a lifetime monthly benefit based on the member's age, service credit and age and life expectancy of survivor at the member's time of death.
If the judge is eligible for retirement, the order of eligibility for qualified survivors is: co-beneficiary, spouse, children under 18 or under 23 if in school, disabled adult children, dependent parents or named beneficiaries.
The provisions for the spouse are: The surviving spouse may receive a lifetime monthly benefit based on the member's age, service credit and age and life expectancy of survivor at the member's time of death.
Death After Retirement: At the time of application for retirement, a member must choose one of three options in the event of their death after retirement.
Lump Sum: A single payment of any remaining balance in the account at the time of the member's death plus a 100% match on the balance is given to the named beneficiary.
Lifetime Monthly Benefit: The designated co-beneficiary will receive a lifetime benefit equal to half of the member's benefit at the time of death. The monthly benefit is determined by the remaining balance in the member's account at their time of death plus a 100% match and then reduced to pay for continuing monthly benefits.
Lifetime Annuity: The designated beneficiary receives a lifetime monthly benefit equal to what the member was receiving at the time of death. The monthly benefit is determined by the remaining balance in the member's account at their time of death plus a 100% match and then reduced to pay for continuing monthly benefits.

Life Insurance in the Retirement Plan
Employees may convert or port coverage existing employee life insurance at termination.

Source of Funding
Plans are funded through a pension trust fund with employee and/or employer contributions.

Judges Who Leave the Bench Before Retirement
A judge may receive up to a 60% match of the contribution (if refunding account at termination and before retirement) if they have five or more years of service. If the judge has less than five years of service credit, they may receive a 60% match on their contributions and interest received by PSMA or before 1/31/2015. There is no match on contributions and interest received by PERA after 1/31/2015.

Mandatory Retirement Age
The mandatory retirement age in Colorado is 72 years old.

Change From a Defined Benefit to a Defined Contribution Plan
It is unknown at this time whether Colorado is considering changing plans.