



Legislative Fiscal Office  
83<sup>rd</sup> Oregon Legislative Assembly  
2025 Regular Session

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**Bill Title:** Relating to the Judicial Department; declaring an emergency.

**Government Unit(s) Affected:** Judicial Department, Commission on Judicial Fitness and Disability

**Summary of Fiscal Impact**

| 2025-27 Biennium           | General Fund         | Lottery Funds | Other Funds | Federal Funds | Total Funds          | Positions | FTE         |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Oregon Judicial Department | \$ 13,238,085        | \$ -          | \$ -        | \$ -          | \$ 13,238,085        | 6         | 5.13        |
| <b>Total Fiscal Impact</b> | <b>\$ 13,238,085</b> | <b>\$ -</b>   | <b>\$ -</b> | <b>\$ -</b>   | <b>\$ 13,238,085</b> | <b>6</b>  | <b>5.13</b> |

| 2027-29 Biennium           | General Fund         | Lottery Funds | Other Funds | Federal Funds | Total Funds          | Positions | FTE         |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Oregon Judicial Department | \$ 14,670,345        | \$ -          | \$ -        | \$ -          | \$ 14,670,345        | 6         | 6.00        |
| <b>Total Fiscal Impact</b> | <b>\$ 14,670,345</b> | <b>\$ -</b>   | <b>\$ -</b> | <b>\$ -</b>   | <b>\$ 14,670,345</b> | <b>6</b>  | <b>6.00</b> |

**Measure Description**

The measure allows the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to exercise the existing authority to promote judicial accountability and fair and accessible justice services. This includes the ability to establish judicial education requirements, establish an ombudsman's office within the office of the State Court Administrator to receive and respond to comments and concerns regarding court experiences and determine the confidentiality of information obtained or generated the ombudsman's office, and set rules and standards governing concerns raised regarding judicial performance.

In addition, the measure increases the annual salary of statutory judgeships in the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Tax Courts, and circuit courts. The measure modifies judicial salaries, which are set by statute, beginning July 1, 2025, with a 110% increase beginning July 1, 2027. The total changes are reflected below:

| HB 2712-A5 Amendment*                      | Number of Statutorily Authorized Judgeships (May 2025) | Annual Statutory Salary | Current Annual Salary (July 2025)** | Annual Salary Effective July 1, 2025 | Annual Salary Effective July 1, 2027*** |
|--|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court  | 1  | \$ 157,076              | \$ 204,348                          | \$ 224,784                           | \$ 247,260                              |
| Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court        | 6  | \$ 154,040              | \$ 200,544                          | \$ 220,596                           | \$ 242,652                              |
| Chief Judge of the Oregon Court of Appeals | 1  | \$ 154,040              | \$ 200,544                          | \$ 220,596                           | \$ 242,652                              |
| Justice of the Court of Appeals            | 12   | \$ 150,980              | \$ 196,668                          | \$ 216,336                           | \$ 237,972                              |
| Oregon Tax Court Judge                     | 1  | \$ 151,048              | \$ 190,488                          | \$ 209,532                           | \$ 230,484                              |
| Circuit Court Judge                        | 182  | \$ 147,136              | \$ 185,508                          | \$ 204,060                           | \$ 224,472                              |

\*Salary amounts exclude Other Payroll Expenses (Public Employees Retirement, Social Security Tax, Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance, and Mass Transit tax)

\*\*State judges receive an increase based upon any cost-of-living allowance (COLA) adopted for management service employees in the Executive Branch (ORS 292.428). The judicial salary amounts shown for the 2027-29 biennium exclude any management service COLA granted during the 2025-27 biennium.

\*\*\*Does not reflect 2025-27 management service COLA adjustments, which are to-be-determined, as of the date of this recommendation.

**Fiscal Analysis**

The fiscal impact is estimated to be \$13.2 million General Fund and six positions (5.13 FTE) in the 2025-27 biennium and \$14.7 million General Fund and six positions (6.00 FTE) in the 2027-29 biennium.

Oregon Judicial Department

The estimated cost of increasing the salary of the 203 statutory judgeships would be \$11.3 million General fund in the 2025-27 biennium and \$12.5 million General Fund for 24 months of the 2027-29 biennium.

Under current law, there are 182 circuit court judges, 13 Court of Appeals judges, seven Supreme Court Judges, and one Tax Court judge for a total of 203 statutory judgeships that would receive increases in salary under this measure. While Oregon judges receive cost-of-living adjustments under statute, the statutory salary limits have not been changed since 2019. The measure does not apply to the costs related to non-statutorily established judgeships (such as temporary or pro-tem judges, 50 senior or “Plan B” retired judges, and judicial referees), which are funded separately in OJD’s budget.

Additionally, the fiscal impact includes the associated increases to Other Payroll Expenses (Public Employees Retirement System, Social Security Tax, Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance, and Mass Transit tax). The fiscal impact of this measure would increase with the establishment of new statutory judgeships (e.g., SB 95, 2025).

The other provisions of the measure relating to the Chief Justice’s discretion “...to establish...” both an ombudsman office within the Office of the State Court Administrator as well as a training curriculum to strengthen the skills and resilience for members of the Judicial Conference are estimated to cost \$3.7 million in the 2025-27 biennium and \$2.2 million in the 2027-29 biennium. For the ombudsman office, OJD estimates the need for six positions (5.13 FTE in 2025-27 and 6.00 FTE in 2027-29) and plan to phase-in them according to the following:

- **Program Implementation:** Hire one permanent full-time Ombudsman position (0.88 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) to develop, manage, and implement the program, one permanent full-time Analyst 4 position (0.88 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) to draft rules, policies and procedures, and provide data analysis, one permanent full-time Management Assistant 2 position (0.88 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) to manage communications, one permanent full-time Senior Staff Counsel position (0.88 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) to oversee program implementation. The estimated costs of these positions, including standard position-related services and supplies costs, is \$1.5 million General Fund in the 2025-27 biennium and \$1.7 million General Fund in the 2027-29 biennium.
- **Post-Implementation:** Hire one permanent full-time Investigator 3 position (0.63 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) to review and investigate complaints, and one permanent full-time Training and Development Specialist 2 position (0.75 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) to assess training and education needs based on investigation results. The estimated costs of these positions, including standard position-related services and supplies costs, is \$458,542 General Fund in the 2025-27 biennium and \$750,527 million General Fund in the 2027-29 biennium.

The Chief Justice could establish the requirements and training curriculum to strengthen the skills and resilience for members of the Judicial Conference.

For the training program, apart from this measure, and the measure’s budgetary impact, the office of the State Court Administrator is planning to reorganize existing judicial and staff training and education resources in further support of the measure.

Commission on Judicial Fitness and Disability

The fiscal impact for CJFD is indeterminate. The measure may lessen the number of complaints that go to the Commission.

**Relevant Dates**

The measure declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.