



Legislative Fiscal Office
83rd Oregon Legislative Assembly
2025 Regular Session

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Reviewed by: John Borden
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Bill Title: Relating to the Judicial Department; prescribing an effective date.

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	\$ 16,651,925	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,651,925		
Total Fiscal Impact	\$ 16,651,925	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,651,925	-	-

2027-29 Biennium	General Fund	Lottery Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	Positions	FTE
Oregon Judicial Department	\$ 33,303,851	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 33,303,851		
Total Fiscal Impact	\$ 33,303,851	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 33,303,851	-	-

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, 2026. The total change is reflected below:

- The annual salary of the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals increases from \$154,040 to \$259,500.
- The annual salary of a judge of the Court of Appeals increases from \$150,980 to \$254,484.
- The annual salary of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court increases from \$157,076 to \$264,432.
- The annual salary of a judge of the Supreme Court increases from \$154,040 to \$259,500.
- The annual salary of a judge of the circuit court increases from \$142,136 to \$240,048.
- The annual salary of a judge of the Oregon Tax Court increases from \$146,048 to \$246,492.

While the base statutory amounts are increased by the measure, the current salary amounts, including the most recent cost of living adjustment, are as follows:

- The annual salary of the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals is \$200,544.
- The annual salary of a judge of the Court of Appeals is \$196,668.
- The annual salary of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is \$204,348.

- The annual salary of a judge of the Supreme Court is \$200,544
- The annual salary of a judge of the circuit court is \$185,508.
- The annual salary of a judge of the Oregon Tax Court is \$190,488.

Fiscal Analysis

The fiscal impact is estimated to be \$16.7 million General Fund in the 2025-27 biennium and \$33.3 million General Fund in the 2027-29 biennium.

Oregon Judicial Department

The fiscal impact on the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) is related to the judicial compensation. The estimated cost of increasing the salary of the 203 statutory judgeships would be \$16.7 million General fund in the 2025-27 biennium and \$33.3 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 are indeterminate, as they are dependent on 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, resilience, for members of the Judicial Conference. For the ombudsman office, OJD estimates the need for six positions (4.50 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 (0.38 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, resilience, for members of the Judicial Conference.

For the training program, if directed by the Chief Justice, the fiscal impact is indeterminate and dependent upon how many hours are required to be completed and frequently the trainings needed to meet the requirements. OJD estimates needing two staff positions (1.75 FTE in 2025-27 and 2.00 FTE in 2027-29) to help develop and implement the training requirements for 203 judicial positions in the 2025-27 biennium. The staff positions include one permanent full-time Analyst 4 (0.88 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) and one permanent full-time Management Assistant 2 (0.88 FTE in 2025-27 and 1.00 FTE in 2027-29) with an estimated cost, including standard position-related services and supplies costs, of \$776,844 General Fund for the 2025-27 biennium and \$840,143 General Fund in the 2027-29 biennium. These costs may be less if these trainings are provided in a virtual format.

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.