



# Presentation to the Commission on Judicial Compensation

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CHIEF JUSTICE RAHEEM L. MULLINS

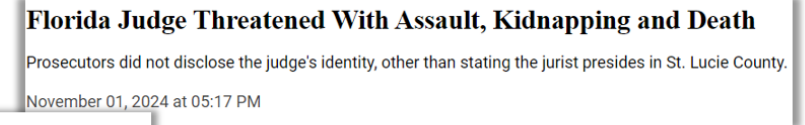
NOVEMBER 12, 2024

[VIDEO LINK](#)

# Your work is vital to our institution

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1. Retention of judges is becoming a significant issue
2. Recruitment, particularly of candidates from underrepresented communities, is a challenge
3. Declining morale



# Seven Statutory Factors

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# Factor #1: Levels of Compensation of other states and federal judges

State	General-Jurisdiction Court Adjusted for Cost-of-Living Index	Ranking	State	General-Jurisdiction Court Adjusted for Cost-of-Living Index	Ranking
Illinois	\$246,592	1	Wisconsin	\$174,338	27
Tennessee	\$230,704	2	Ohio	\$174,027	28
South Carolina	\$220,217	3	Iowa	\$169,692	29
Pennsylvania	\$215,621	4	Kentucky	\$169,259	30
Arkansas	\$213,170	5	New Jersey	\$168,455	31
New Mexico	\$208,870	6	Wyoming	\$162,738	32
Virginia	\$208,623	7	Alabama	\$162,709	33
New York	\$206,940	8	Rhode Island	\$162,145	34
Nebraska	\$206,524	9	Maryland	\$161,735	35
Utah	\$206,268	10	Texas	\$159,420	36
Georgia	\$200,851	11	Connecticut	\$159,289	37
Missouri	\$196,253	12	Alaska	\$158,693	38
Washington	\$194,707	13	North Dakota	\$158,585	39
Florida	\$194,180	14	Massachusetts	\$157,228	40
Indiana	\$191,959	15	Idaho	\$155,820	41
Michigan	\$188,951	16	District of Columbia	\$152,923	42
Delaware	\$187,420	17	New Hampshire	\$152,664	43
Minnesota	\$186,207	18	Kansas	\$151,642	44
South Dakota	\$181,972	19	Vermont	\$150,577	45
Louisiana	\$180,029	20	Oregon	\$146,803	46
Oklahoma	\$179,939	21	Hawaii	\$145,512	47
Colorado	\$178,775	22	West Virginia	\$145,435	48
Mississippi	\$178,330	23	Montana	\$143,146	49
North Carolina	\$177,652	24	Nevada	\$142,857	50
California	\$176,913	25	Maine	\$138,245	51
Arizona	\$175,781	26			

Year of Report	CT Ranking for the salaries of General Jurisdiction Judges adjusted for cost-of-living
2024	37
2023	36
2022	35
2021	34

Connecticut trial court judges have consistently earned some of the lowest salaries compared with judges in other states when adjusted for the cost-of-living.

# Factor #2: Rate of Inflation

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**Salaries of Superior Court judges *if* their  
salaries had been adjusted by  
the rate of inflation**

As of Dec. 31st	CPI Growth		As of July 1st	Salary of Superior Court Judges if Adjusted by CPI
2020	1.4%		2021	\$175,080
2021	7.0%		2022	\$187,336
2022	6.5%		2023	\$199,513
2023	3.4%		2024	\$206,296

# Factor #3: Compensation adjustments for state employees during the applicable fiscal years

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The salaries of Connecticut judges have not kept pace with those afforded to state employees.

Fiscal Year Beginning	State Employees' Rate of Increase	Judge's Rate of Increase
July 1, 2021 (FY 22)	4.5%	4.5%
July 1, 2022 (FY 23)	4.5%	5.0%
July 1, 2023 (FY 24)	4.5%	3.0%
July 1, 2024 (FY 25)	4.5%	3.0%

# Factor #4: Levels of compensation received by attorneys employed by government organizations

Agency	Job Class	Min. Salary	Max. Salary
State's Attorney	Chief State's Attorney	233,786*	233,786*
State's Attorney	Deputy Chief State's Attorney	219,800*	219,800*
State's Attorney	State's Attorney	214,686*	214,686*
Public Defenders	Chief Public Defender	240,799	240,799
Public Defenders	Deputy Chief Public Defender	226,393	226,393
Public Defenders	Public Defender	221,126	221,126
Attorney General	Attorney General	201,023	201,023
Attorney General	Deputy Attorney General	227,220	227,220
Univ. of Connecticut	General Counsel		353,627
Univ. of CT Health Center	Chief Counsel		271,625

## Public Sector Lawyers Salary Comparison

*\*These positions do not contribute towards or receive social security payments.*

# Factor #4 (continued): Levels of compensation received by attorneys employed by private organizations

## Median Base Salaries by Associate Year and Firm Size

(in \$/year unless otherwise noted, as of January 1, 2023)

Associate Year	FIRM SIZE – Number of Lawyers													
	100 or Fewer		101-250		251-500		501-700		701-1,000		1,001+		All Sizes	
	Median	# Rept	Median	# Rept	Median	# Rept	Median	# Rept	Median	# Rept	Median	# Rept	Median	# Rept
First	\$155,000	29	\$160,000	78	\$190,000	64	\$200,000	83	\$200,000	160	\$215,000	108	\$200,000	522
Second	165,000	27	170,000	74	195,000	67	209,000	87	209,000	162	225,000	94	209,000	511
Third	180,000	27	180,000	71	207,500	66	220,000	86	220,000	168	250,000	92	220,000	510
Fourth	181,250	24	195,000	69	239,025	64	255,000	85	255,000	164	285,000	99	245,000	505
Fifth	192,500	22	200,000	73	243,325	66	280,000	86	280,000	161	315,000	94	265,000	502
Sixth	193,450	24	210,000	73	245,000	64	290,000	86	290,000	162	355,000	93	280,000	502
Seventh	210,000	24	225,000	68	286,250	64	303,750	95	303,750	160	387,500	90	295,000	501
Eighth	213,950	20	217,775	68	235,000	49	310,000	76	310,000	149	395,000	88	307,500	450

*Note: All figures are based on average salaries reported. The “# Rept.” column indicates the number of offices reporting. For the purposes of this summary report, medians have been rounded to the nearest \$25.*



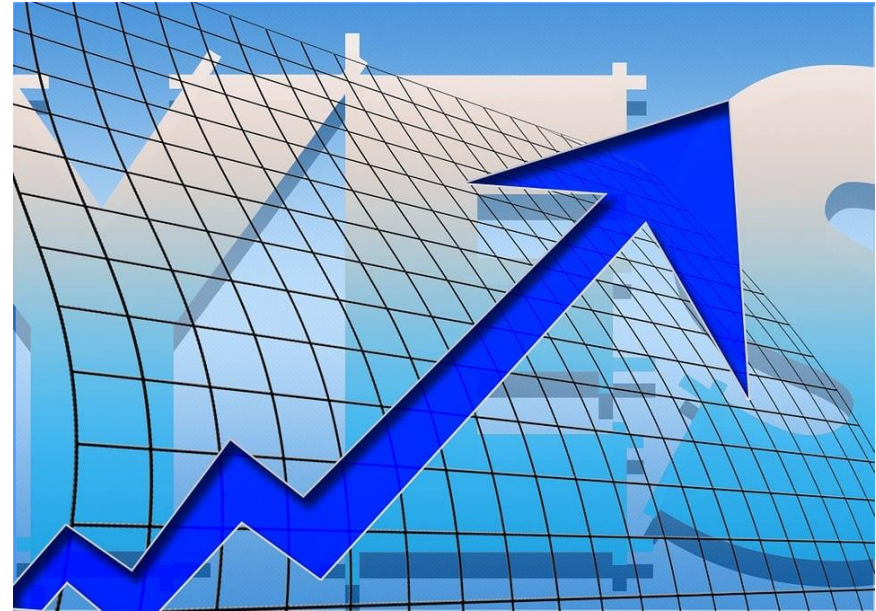
# Factor #5: Overall economic climate in the state

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## General Economic Indicators

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2024, Connecticut has seen an increase over the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2024 in two key economic indicators:

- 2.8% increase in the annual rate of GDP
- 4.1% increase in the annual rate of personal income



## Factor #6: Connecticut's interest in attracting highly qualified and experienced attorneys

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*Connecticut's residents deserve to have an effective and robust judicial system comprised of diverse judges with the knowledge and expertise to issue high quality judicial decisions.*

# Factor #7: The state's ability to fund increases in compensation

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# Additional Factor: New salary structure for constitutional officers

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*The General Assembly recognized that careers in public service demand sacrifice, but that inadequate pay impacts the type of people who can afford to serve in elected positions.*

# Summary of Conclusions

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# By every objective measure, the current compensation for Connecticut judges is well below what would be considered fair

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1. The salaries of Connecticut judges rank 37 out of 51 compared with trial judges across the country and the District of Columbia.
2. Connecticut judicial salaries have not kept pace with the rate of inflation.
3. Connecticut judicial salaries have not kept pace with the rate of increase for other state employees.
4. Many attorneys working in state government earn more than the judges to whom they appear before.

# Recommendations

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## **Fiscal Year 2026**

The salary for a Superior Court judge should increase to \$221,839, which would bring a Connecticut Superior Court judge's salary near the median salary received by all trial court judges from across the nation.

## **Fiscal Years 2027, 2028, and 2029**

Judicial salaries should increase consistent with the CPI-U plus 2%. The 2% mirrors that which state employees have received as an annual step increase for many years.

## **Moving Forward**

The General Assembly should adopt a statute that would provide for these increases beginning on July 1, 2026, and continue onward.