



To the Honorable Governor Spencer J. Cox, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Executive Appropriations Committee:

As required by Utah law (Utah Code Ann. §67-8-5), the Elected Official and Judicial Compensation Commission (EJCC) is pleased to submit its 2025 Report.

The purpose of this report is to inform both the Executive and Legislative branches on the actions of the EJCC during calendar year 2025, and to provide recommendations regarding compensation for the elected officials and the judiciary for fiscal year 2027.

The report contains the following:

- The Commission's current members and the expiration dates of their terms;
- A brief description of the Commission's purpose and a report on all action taken during calendar year 2025;
- A discussion on the Commission's recommendation for FY27 compensation of elected officials;
- A discussion on the Commission's recommendation for FY27 compensation of the judiciary; and
- Appendices A, B, and C

The Commission's recommendations are summarized as follows:

Recommendation One: The Commission recommends that the Legislature appropriate a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to the salaries of the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, state auditor, and state treasurer equal to that appropriated for all other State of Utah employees within the Executive Branch.

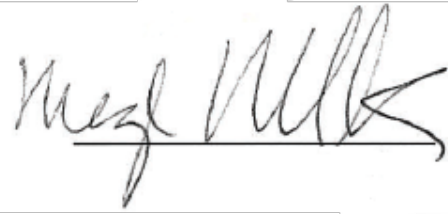
Recommendation Two: The Commission recommends that the Legislature appropriate a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), equal to that appropriated for all other State of Utah employees, for district court judges, and that the salaries of other judicial officers be then calculated pursuant to U.C.A. Section 67-8-2.

Our conclusions and recommendations are made with a unanimous vote and are, in our view, in the best interests of the State of Utah and its citizens.

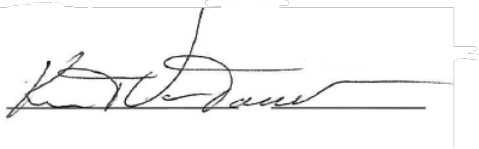
Respectfully submitted in Salt Lake City, Utah, Tuesday, November 18, 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Clark", written over a horizontal line.

David Clark, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meghan Holbrook", written over a horizontal line.

Meghan Holbrook, Vice Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Van Tassell", written over a horizontal line.

Kevin Van Tassell

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Herring", written over a horizontal line.

Jeff Herring

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ann Hanniball", written over a horizontal line.

Ann Hanniball

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David M. Connors", written over a horizontal line.

David M. Connors

Elected Official and Judicial Compensation Commission
Current Members

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Term Expires</u> |
|---|----------------------------|
| David Clark - R (Chair) <i>Appointed by the Utah House of Representatives</i> | 6/1/2027 |
| Meghan Holbrook - D (Vice Chair) <i>Appointed by the EJCC</i> | 6/1/2026 |
| Kevin Van Tassell - R <i>Appointed by the Utah Senate</i> | 6/1/2027 |
| Jeff Herring - R <i>Appointed by Governor Spencer J. Cox</i> | 6/1/2026 |
| Ann Hanniball - Unaffiliated <i>Appointed by the EJCC</i> | 6/1/2026 |
| David M. Connors - Unaffiliated <i>Appointed by the Utah State Bar Association</i> | 6/1/2027 |

Part One – Introduction and Commission Action

Introduction

The Elected Official and Judicial Compensation Commission (EJCC, hereafter referred to as the Commission) is required by Utah statute (UCA §67-8-5) to submit an annual report to the Executive Appropriations Committee (EAC), the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Governor. The Commission is also required to study the educational requirements, experience, responsibility, accountability for funds and staff, comparisons of wages paid in other comparable public and private employment within this state, other states similarly situated, and the consumer price index. Additionally, statute requires that the Commission consult with the Department of Human Resource Management and the Judicial Council. The Commission has reviewed all information required by statute and met with each of these entities prior to preparing this report.

The Commission’s recommendations are made in relation to current salaries (Table 1). The Commission considered fringe benefits as well as salary, but because it makes no recommendations on those benefits, the recommendations for adjustment pertain only to salary. However, this report provides benefit and retirement material for informational purposes (Appendix A).

| Elected Officials FY26 | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Officer | 2025 Salaries | Rules |
| Governor | \$ 193,100.00 | Set in Appropriations Act (H.B. 0008 Item 190 Intent Language) |
| Lieutenant Governor | \$ 173,800.00 | 90% of Governor's Salary (UCA §67-22-1) |
| Attorney General | \$ 183,450.00 | 95% of Governor's Salary (UCA §67-22-1) |
| State Auditor | \$ 173,800.00 | 90% of Governor's Salary (UCA §67-22-1) |
| State Treasurer | \$ 173,800.00 | 90% of Governor's Salary (UCA §67-22-1) |
| Judicial Salaries FY26 | | |
| Judges | 2025 Salaries | Rules |
| District Court Judge | \$ 219,250.00 | Set in Appropriations Act (H.B. 0008 Item 142 Intent Language) |
| Juvenile Court Judge | \$ 219,250.00 | 100% of District Court Judge Salary (UCA §67-8-2) |
| Court of Appeals Judge | \$ 230,250.00 | 105% of District Court Judge Salary (UCA §67-8-2) |
| Justices of the Supreme Court | \$ 241,200.00 | 110% of District Court Judge Salary (UCA §67-8-2) |

Table 1 – FY26 Utah Elected Official and Judicial Salaries

Commission Action

This year, the Commission held four public meetings, reviewed relevant statute and rules, and considered various sources of quantitative and qualitative data and information described below, all of which informed the Commission's analysis and recommendations herein.

The Commission's first meeting of 2025 was held on June 4. David Clark was unanimously re-elected Chair of the Commission, and Meghan Holbrook was unanimously re-elected Vice Chair. The Commissioners reviewed the 2024 recommendations and results, reviewed their statutory responsibilities, and determined the scope of work for 2025.

The Commission's second 2025 meeting was held on August 12. During this meeting, the Commissioners reviewed FY2025 salary information for judges. The Commission was addressed by the Honorable Matthew B. Durrant, Chief Justice of the Utah Supreme Court, and Michael Drechsel, Utah Assistant State Court Administrator. Chief Justice Durrant provided valuable information related to applicant pool trends, judicial officer needs, judicial assistant and support staff needs, and an explanation of the impact created by the automatic expungement workload. Administrator Drechsel and Chief Justice Durrant also responded to Commissioner questions.

The Commission's third 2025 meeting was held on September 8. There were three presentations given to the Commission at this meeting: an economic forecast, presented by Dr. Andrea Wilko; a follow-up presentation on the Judiciary by Administrator Michael Drechsel; and a presentation on elected officials compensation by Jean Mills-Barber, Deputy Director of Utah's Department of Human Resources Management (DHRM). Dr. Wilko provided the Commissioners with consumer updates, a labor market update, GDP and inflation data, and a housing market update and their potential effects on total compensation for Utah's elected officials and state court judges. She also answered general questions regarding Utah's current economic state. Administrator Drechsel then provided a response to questions posed in the August 12th meeting regarding judicial application rates in neighboring states and other metrics that may be used when determining the right number of judges that the state of Utah needs. He shared that there is a distinct lack of trends among application rates of neighboring states and that population increases are not an accurate metric for determining how many additional judges a state may need. Lastly, Deputy Director Mills-Barber presented data comparing the compensation of Utah's elected officials to officials holding the same elected offices in neighboring states as well as to various other comparable public and private sector positions. Deputy Director Mills-Barber answered questions from Commissioners related to wage differences in similar jobs across state, county, and municipality organizations.

The Commission's fourth meeting of 2025 was held on October 21. The Commission members reviewed information presented by DHRM, the Courts, and Legislative Staff Economists during the previous 2025 meetings. They also discussed current economic hardships faced by the state of Utah and the Commission opted for a measured approach to their formal recommendations. The Commissioners unanimously voted for a COLA increase for executive branch elected officials, and district court judges, with the salaries of other judicial officers calculated pursuant to U.C.A. Section 67-8-2.

Part Two – Elected Officials

The Commission’s Recommendation for Elected Official FY27 compensation increase

The Commission considered the current salaries of Utah’s five constitutional officer positions in comparison with median wage data supplied by DHRM for equivalent jobs in 15 neighboring western states, in other U.S. states with populations similar to Utah’s, to those in all U.S. states, and to similar positions in Utah’s counties and municipalities and in private companies (Appendix A). Apart from those amongst private sector organizations and a small number of similar public sector positions, Utah’s constitutional officers are each currently compensated at higher rates than these comparables, which the Commission considers appropriate given the exceptionally high quality of work being performed by the people in these jobs.

Additionally, the Commission studied the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (Appendix B) information published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics while considering its recommendation. While U.S. inflation recently hit extremely high levels and remains above the Federal Reserve’s 2% target rate, the rate of increase has stabilized somewhat and is expected to remain steady during the immediate future. Still, interest rates are stubbornly high, and housing affordability is challenging for many amid record high prices and constrained supply. In consideration of the totality of these factors, the Commission is satisfied that the compensation for Utah’s elected officials is appropriate.

Recommendation One: The Commission recommends that the Legislature appropriate a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to the salaries of the governor, the lieutenant governor, the attorney general, the state auditor, and the state treasurer equal to the adjustment appropriated for all other State of Utah employees within the Executive Branch.

Part Three – The Judiciary

The Commission’s Recommendation for Utah’s Judiciary FY27 compensation increase

The Commission gave careful consideration and engaged in substantial deliberation prior to arriving at its recommendation for the FY27 compensation increase for Utah’s judges. It studied information on applicant pool trends for judicial vacancies presented by Chief Justice Durrant and Administrator Drechsel as previously described (Appendix C). While the compensation of Utah’s judges is among the top third of all U.S. states, the Commission recommends that the Judiciary receive the COLA increase appropriated for all State of Utah employees.¹

Recommendation Two: The Commission recommends that the Legislature appropriate a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) equal to that appropriated for all other State of Utah employees to the

¹ The Commission wishes to request an examination into the potential increase in the number of judges in the state of Utah.

salaries of district court judges and that the salaries of other judicial officers be then calculated pursuant to U.C.A. Section 67-8-2.

Conclusion

The Elected Official and Judicial Compensation Commission reports that its statutory obligation to recommend to the Legislature salaries for the governor, the lieutenant governor, the attorney general, the state auditor, the state treasurer, the district court judges, and that the salaries of other judicial officers be then calculated pursuant to U.C.A. Section 67-8-2 is complete. The Commission determined these recommendations after considering the factors outlined in Utah Code Section 67-8-5 (2) and hereby submits this report to the Executive Appropriations Committee.

Appendix A

| <h2>Median Wage Comparison</h2> | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | <i>Governor</i> | <i>Lieutenant governor</i> | <i>Attorney general</i> | <i>Treasurer</i> | <i>Auditor</i> |
| Utah | \$193,100 | \$173,790 | \$183,445 | \$173,790 | \$173,790 |
| 15 Western States ONLY | \$128,191 | \$130,157 | \$146,774 | \$128,375 | \$130,653 |
| Population - Within 1 mil. | \$133,510 | \$120,115 | \$131,024 | \$109,186 | \$130,373 |
| All States | \$155,488 | \$117,810 | \$154,815 | \$130,653 | \$144,789 |
| Local Counties and Cities | \$168,286 | \$206,593 | \$217,948 | \$157,155 | \$158,197 |
| Local Private Companies | \$970,902 | N/A | \$541,807 | \$505,902 | N/A |

Utah Code 67-22-1(2)

The Legislature fixes benefits for the constitutional offices as follows:

(a) governor:

- (i) a vehicle for official and personal use;
- (ii) housing;
- (iii) household and security staff;
- (iv) household expenses;
- (v) retirement benefits as provided in Title 49, Utah State Retirement and Insurance Benefit Act;
- (vi) health insurance;
- (vii) dental insurance;
- (viii) basic life insurance;
- (ix) workers' compensation;
- (x) required employer contribution to Social Security;
- (xi) long-term disability income insurance; and
- (xii) the same additional state paid life insurance available to other non career service employees; and

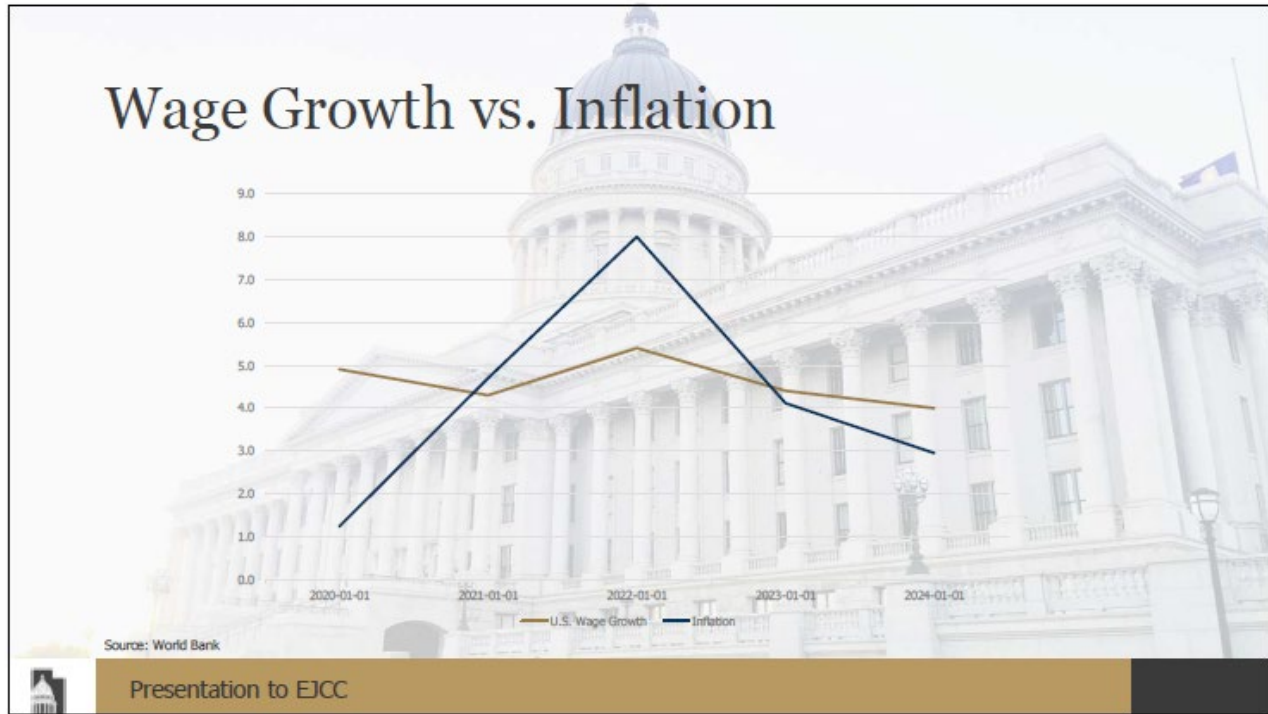
Utah Code 67-22-1(2)

The Legislature fixes benefits for the constitutional offices as follows:

(b) lieutenant governor, attorney general, state auditor, and state treasurer:

- (i) a vehicle for official and personal use;
- (ii) the option of participating in a:
 - (A) state retirement system in accordance with Title 49, Utah State Retirement and Insurance Benefit Act:
 - (I) Chapter 12, Public Employees' Contributory Retirement Act;
 - (II) Chapter 13, Public Employees' Noncontributory Retirement Act; or
 - (III) Chapter 22, New Public Employees' Tier II Contributory Retirement Act; or
 - (B) deferred compensation plan administered by the State Retirement Office, in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code and its accompanying rules and regulations;
- (iii) health insurance;
- (iv) dental insurance;
- (v) basic life insurance;
- (vi) workers' compensation;
- (vii) required employer contribution to Social Security;
- (viii) long-term disability income insurance; and
- (ix) the same additional state paid life insurance available to other non career service employees.

Appendix B



Appendix C

1) APPLICANT POOL TRENDS

The number of applicants for vacant judicial positions continues to trend downward. This is true for both district court and juvenile court in both rural¹ and urban² locations, as indicated in **Chart 1** and **Chart 2** below:

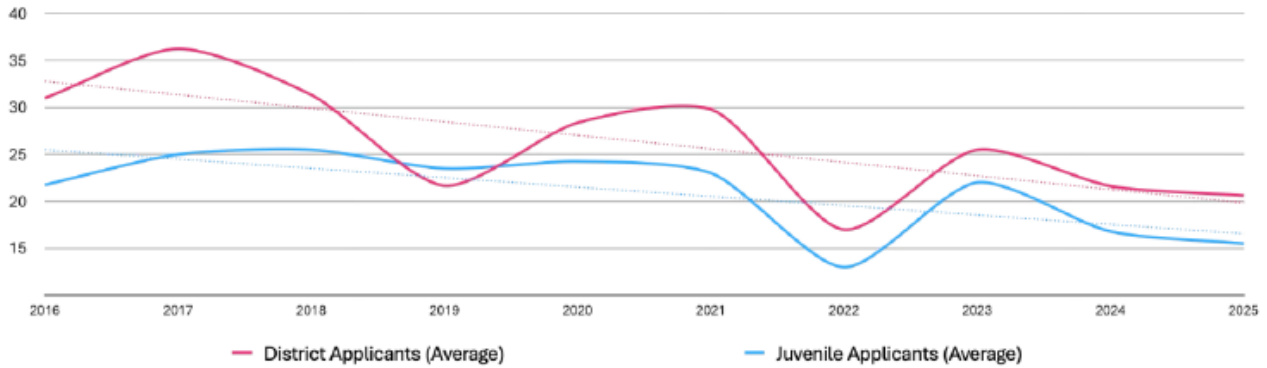


Chart 1 – Average numbers of applications for judicial vacancies in **DISTRICT** and **JUVENILE** courts: 2016-2025.

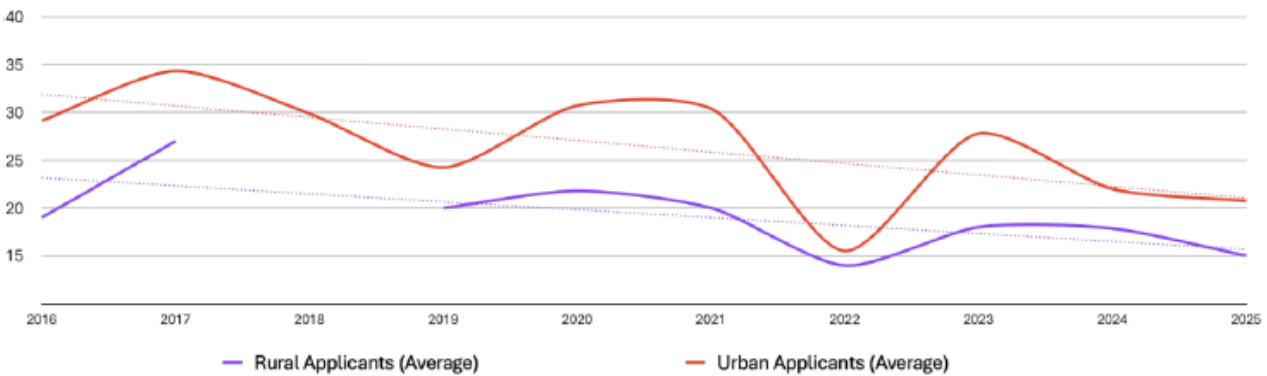


Chart 2 – Average numbers of applications for judicial vacancies in **URBAN** and **RURAL** locations: 2016-2025.

¹ “Rural” locations were identified as courts operating in First, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth judicial districts.

² “Urban” locations were identified as courts operating in the Second, Third, and Fourth judicial districts (Weber / Davis / Morgan, Salt Lake / Summit / Tooele, and Utah / Wasatch / Millard / Juab counties).