

Judiciary Presentation to the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials



2020

July 29, 2020

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for undertaking the difficult but important work of setting elected officials' salaries as prescribed by the Washington State Constitution. On behalf of the justices of the Washington Supreme Court, and the judges of the Washington Court of Appeals and superior, district and municipal courts in Washington, we offer for your consideration an overview of the Washington judiciary and information that we request you consider when setting salaries.

Washington is fortunate to have a talented and vibrant legal community dedicated to justice for all Washington residents. Administering justice depends on Washington's ability to attract exceptional legal talent to serve as judges in Washington's elected judiciary. The salaries set by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries of Elected Officials ("Salary Commission") support the state's ability to recruit diverse candidates to the bench. A salary approaching parity with judges in the federal judiciary is vitally important at this time when Washington's courts are experiencing generational turnover as many judges retire. At the same time, we appreciate that given the economic forecast, a salary increase that achieves that parity may not be possible this cycle.

We offer the information in this presentation for your consideration, and we look forward to answering any questions that you may have as you deliberate about judicial salaries. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like additional information.

Thank you for your commitment and hard work in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Debra L. Stephens
Chief Justice
Washington Supreme Court

Bradley A. Maxa
Presiding Chief Judge
Washington Court of Appeals

Judith H. Ramseyer
President Judge
Superior Court Judges' Association

Michelle K. Gehlsen
President Judge
District & Municipal Court
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Executive Summary

We recognize that the Salary Commission must base salaries on realistic standards in order to pay elected officials according to the duties of their office and to attract citizens of the highest quality to public service. This presentation offers insight into the duties of a judge in Washington, and salary information for certain comparator legal professions that inform the issue of attracting the highest quality talent.

The Salary Commission has long recognized parity with salaries in the federal judiciary as a goal informing its salary setting decisions. This goal is addressed in the 2004 Owen-Pottier report prepared for the Salary Commission and is an adopted policy of the American Bar Association. We urge you to continue to recognize parity with federal judge salaries as an important goal.

Attracting and retaining high quality state court judges requires a competitive salary that does not erode with inflation or mandatory deductions that are not applied to comparator positions (*i.e.*, federal judgeships). We recognize that the Salary Commission lacks authority to establish or consider retirement benefits. We nonetheless urge you to consider net salary in your salary setting work so you have a valid and accurate basis for comparison.

Even with the much needed and significant adjustment to judicial salaries made by the Salary Commission in 2018, the wide pay gap between the salaries of Washington judges and federal judges continues despite closely comparable work. We ask the Salary Commission to keep this important benchmark in mind as you conduct your work this year and into the future.

Overview of the Washington Judiciary and the Duties of Judges

Judges at each level of court play critical and distinct roles in the administration of justice in our state. Judges are expected to preside at criminal trials; impose punishment for crimes; preside over civil, probate, and family law cases; decide complex issues on appeal; manage growing caseloads; see that the courts' orders are enforced; and perform executive oversight within the branch of government. Our communities expect judges to resolve disputes that involve violence, family abuse, and juvenile crime, as well as settle civil conflicts among individuals, businesses, and government agencies. Their duties require judges to remain impartial and to make difficult, often unpopular, decisions.

Above and beyond their judicial duties, judges also have executive and administrative responsibility for the operations of the judicial branch. They must ensure that courts run efficiently, lawfully, and safely, and that citizens have access to the justice system. To do so, they must manage the resources, budgets, policies, and personnel of the court. They also participate in local and statewide efforts to improve the justice system. They speak with community groups and in classrooms; participate in youth events; and work with senior, student, and collegiate organizations. Judges routinely participate on statewide task forces and commissions, provide input to legislators and other government officials on court issues, and work in their local communities to find better ways to administer justice and instill public trust and confidence in the justice system.

Structure and Subject Matter Jurisdiction of Levels of Court

Supreme Court

9 justices (elected to six-year terms)

- Rule on appeals from the Court of Appeals
- Rule on direct appeals when action of state officers is involved, the constitutionality of a statute is questioned, there are conflicting statutes or rules of law, or when the issue is of broad public interest
- Oversee administration of the state court system
- Promulgate rules of court through a public rulemaking process
- Participate in the improvement of the justice system and civic and community events
- Supervise attorney standards and discipline statewide

Court of Appeals

22 judges (elected to six-year terms) in Seattle (Division I), Tacoma (Division II), and Spokane (Division III)

- Rule on most of the appeals filed from superior courts
- Conduct accelerated review of appeals involving parental termination, dependency, and juvenile cases
- Review administrative agency decisions
- Rule on petitions for discretionary review
- Rule on personal restraint petitions (a process to challenge a conviction or sentence, different from a traditional appeal)
- Participate in court administration, improvement of the justice system, and civic and community activities

Superior Courts

194 judges (elected to four-year terms) in 32 judicial districts, each composed of one or more counties

- Decide cases as courts with exclusive original jurisdiction over civil cases involving more than \$100,000
- Exercise original jurisdiction in real property cases, tax legality, probate, and domestic matters
- Exercise original jurisdiction in all felony criminal cases
- Decide cases as courts with exclusive original jurisdiction over juvenile matters
- Rule on appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction
- Issue domestic violence protection orders
- Participate in court administration, improvement of the justice system, and civic and community activities

District and Municipal Courts (Courts of Limited Jurisdiction)

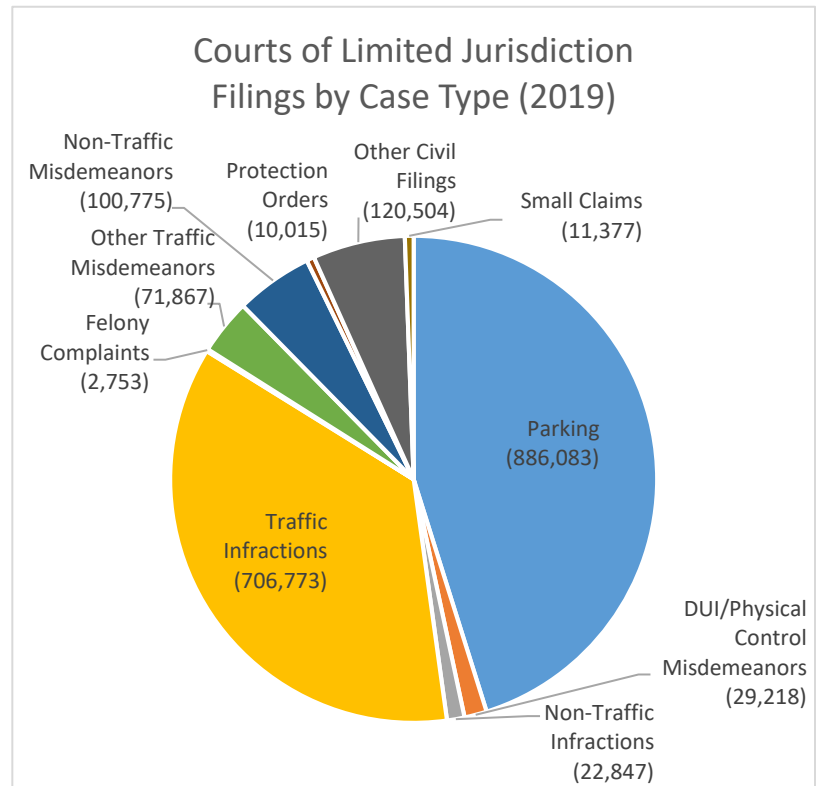
207 judges (district court judges elected to four-year terms; municipal court judges elected or appointed)

- Decide cases (concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts) regarding civil actions involving \$100,000 or less
- Decide cases (concurrent jurisdiction with superior courts) of all misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors
- Decide small claims cases (\$10,000 or less)
- Decide cases as courts with original jurisdiction in all traffic infraction matters
- Issue emergency domestic violence protection orders, sexual assault protection orders, and other civil anti-harassment orders
- Issue orders for name changes
- Participate in court administration, improvement of the justice system, and civic and community activities

District and Municipal Courts (Courts of Limited Jurisdiction)

Courts of limited jurisdiction include district and municipal courts. District courts are county courts and serve defined territories within the counties. Municipal courts are those created by cities and towns. There are 207 district and municipal court judges in Washington.

More than two million cases are filed annually in district and municipal courts. Excluding parking infractions, seven out of every eight cases filed in all Washington state courts are filed at this level. This is due primarily to the broad jurisdiction that these courts have over traffic violations and misdemeanors. In addition to the judicial responsibilities associated with millions of filings annually, many district and municipal court judges have demanding administrative responsibilities to supervise court business, case processing, operations, policies, personnel, and resources.



District courts have jurisdiction over both criminal and civil cases. Criminal jurisdiction includes misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor cases that involve traffic or non-traffic offenses. Jurisdiction in civil cases includes damages for injury to individuals or personal property and contract disputes in amounts of up to \$100,000. District courts also have jurisdiction over traffic and non-traffic infractions, civil proceedings for which a monetary penalty, but no jail sentence, may be imposed. District courts also handle small claims cases.

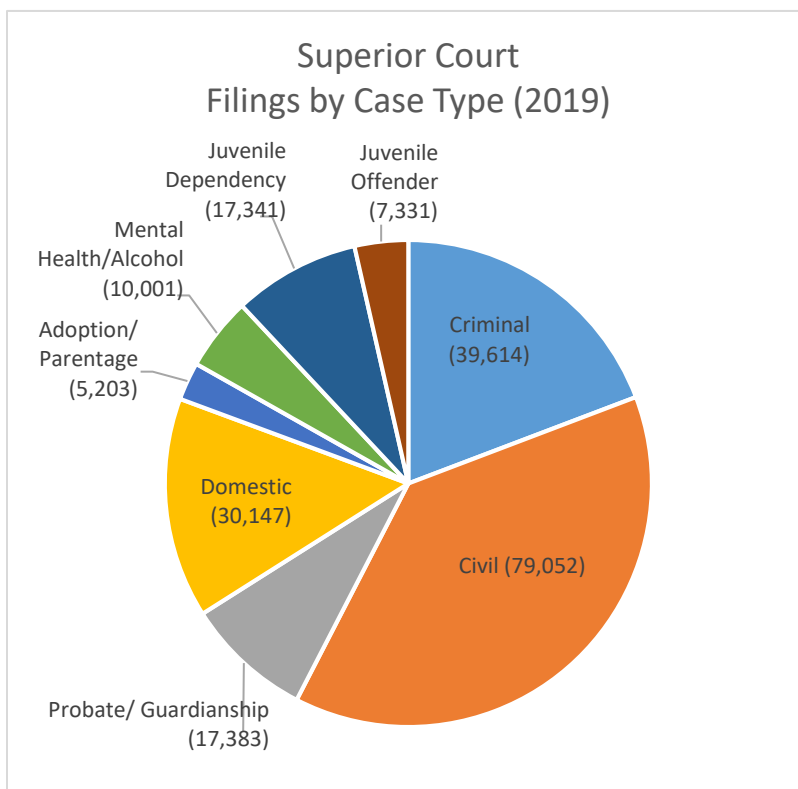
Violations of municipal or city ordinances are heard in municipal courts. A municipal court's authority over these ordinance violations is similar to the authority that district courts have over state law violations. Like district courts, municipal courts only have jurisdiction over gross misdemeanors, misdemeanors, and infractions. Municipal courts can also issue domestic violence protection orders and no-contact orders.

District court judges are elected to four-year terms. Municipal court judges may be elected or appointed to a four-year term, depending on state law provisions. Judges of courts of limited jurisdiction belong to the District and Municipal Court Judges' Association. The association was created by state statute to study and make recommendations concerning the operation of courts served by its members. Specific committees of the association work throughout the year to improve the court system and to communicate with other court levels, the legislature, bar associations, the media, and the public.

Superior Courts

Superior courts are trial courts, frequently referred to as “general jurisdiction” courts because there is no limit on the types of civil and criminal cases they can hear. Superior courts also have jurisdiction over cases appealed from district and municipal courts. There are 194 superior court judges statewide.

All superior courts are grouped into single or multi-county districts. There are 32 such districts in Washington. Counties with large populations usually comprise one district, while in less-populated areas, a district may consist of two or more counties. A superior courthouse is located in each of Washington’s 39 counties. In rural districts, judges rotate between their counties as needed.



As “general jurisdiction” courts, superior court judges preside over all manner of legal actions, from the most serious criminal prosecution and sentencing, multimillion dollar contract or medical malpractice claims; through marital dissolutions, juvenile offender cases, child welfare and termination of parental rights, guardianships, probate, and adoptions; to and including fender-bender personal injury cases, neighbor disputes, property crime, drug court, and mental health matters. The body of law and the range of litigants, many not represented by counsel or requiring interpreter services, are vast. Many disputes are resolved by trial, with

and without a jury. In trial, the parties call witnesses, present evidence, and make argument, which then is considered in light of governing law to reach a verdict/decision. A superior court judge also will decide hundreds of motions submitted by litigants related to pending matters.

Superior court judges are elected to four-year terms. There is a presiding judge in each county or judicial district who handles specific administrative functions and acts as spokesperson for the court. All superior court judges participate in local court

administration, sitting on committees, working with local bar associations, and engage in civic activities beyond their courtroom duties.

Superior court judges also belong to an organization established by law, the Superior Court Judges' Association. Through committees, judges work to improve the court system statewide by communicating with other court levels, the legislature, bar associations, the media, and the public.

Court of Appeals

Litigants have a constitutional right to file a direct appeal in the Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals considers and decides appeals from final superior court judgments and orders, except those rendered in death penalty cases. The Court of Appeals also decides appeals from final government agency administrative decisions.

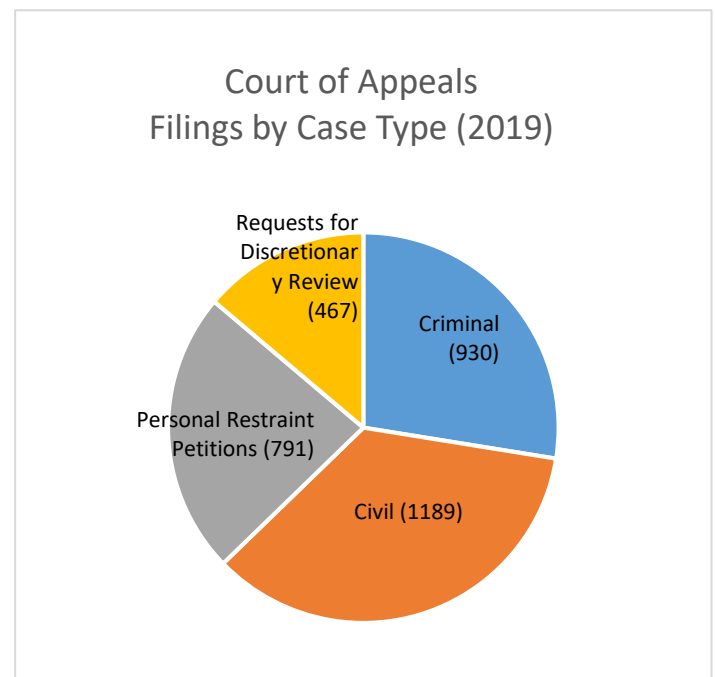
The Court of Appeals in Washington is divided into three divisions. Each division serves a specific geographic area of the state. Division I is located in Seattle and has ten judges. Division II is located in Tacoma has seven judges. Division III has five judges and is located in Spokane. These divisions consider appeals from trial courts in their respective divisions.

Court of Appeals judges read the briefs and excerpts of the record submitted in the cases, research the legal issues necessary to resolve the cases, hear oral argument on selected cases, and then conference (discuss) every case in panels of three judges.

After the case is conferenced, the writing judge drafts an opinion that is read and edited by other panel members. Sometimes the judges draft concurring or dissenting opinions. Published Court of Appeals decisions are binding precedent in the state. Unpublished opinions are considered “persuasive authority” in the state. The published opinions are available in bound form in law libraries across the country and online. Unpublished opinions are available online.

In 2019, Court of Appeals judges issued 1,571 written opinions. This is an average of over 71 opinions per writing judge. Because the court hears cases in three-judge panels, this means that each judge on average also participated in and signed an additional 140 opinions written by another judge.

In addition to deciding cases that result in formal opinions, Court of Appeals judges decide personal restraint petitions and various motions such as motions for discretionary review, motions for reconsideration, and motions to modify commissioner rulings, as well as procedural motions. Court of Appeals

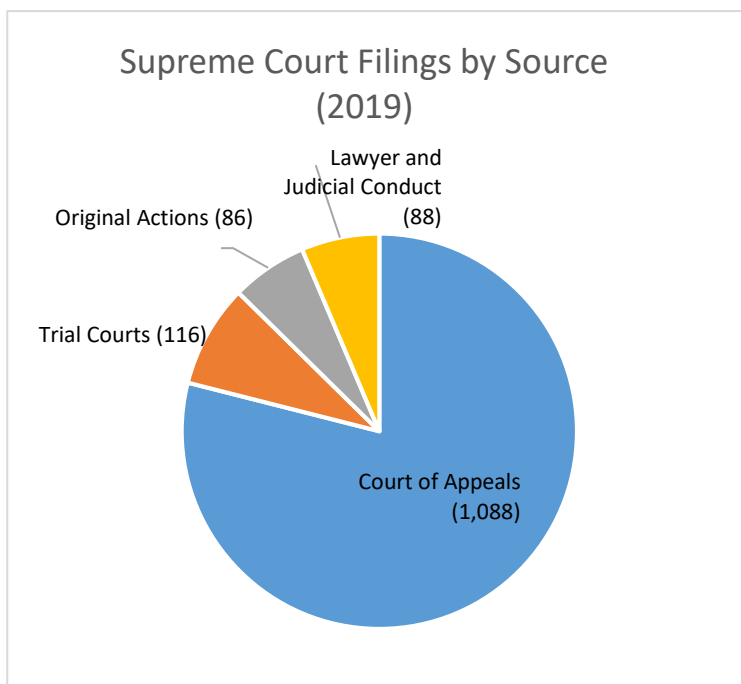


judges are also responsible for the oversight of the Court's budget and personnel and the management and processing of cases. They participate on statewide judicial administration committees and in community or school activities. They also sit as pro tem judges in trial courts and on the Supreme Court.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the state's highest court. Its opinions are published, become the law of the state, and set precedent for subsequent cases decided in Washington. There are nine justices on the Supreme Court who are elected by the voters statewide to six-year terms. Terms are staggered to maintain continuity of the Court. The justices select a Chief Justice to lead the Court.

Most cases begin at the trial court level and usually go to the Court of Appeals before making their way to the Supreme Court. By constitution, a few cases can start in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court will typically review a trial court decision directly if the action involves a state officer, a trial court has ruled a statute or ordinance unconstitutional, conflicting statutes or rules of law are involved, or the issue is of broad public interest and requires a prompt and ultimate determination. All cases in which the death penalty has been imposed are reviewed directly by the Supreme Court. In all other cases, the decision on whether to review a Court of Appeals decision is left to the discretion of the Court.



All nine justices hear and dispose of cases argued throughout the year. Most cases are decided on the basis of the record from the trial court, plus written and oral arguments.

As leaders of the state judicial branch, the justices frequently preside over efforts to improve the judicial system by serving as chairs or members of the Board for Judicial Administration, the Gender and Justice Commission, the Minority and Justice Commission, the Commission on Children in Foster Care, the Interpreter Commission, the Judicial Information System Committee, the Bench-Bar-Press

Committee, and many others. The Supreme Court also governs the Pattern Forms Committee, the Pattern Jury Instruction Committee, and the Certified Professional Guardian Board. The Supreme Court governs the certification and discipline of professional guardians, hears cases involving the suspension or removal of a judge, and hears matters involving lawyer discipline. The Supreme Court promulgates rules of court through a public rulemaking process.

Federal Judge Salaries

Parity with federal judge salaries has long been considered an important factor to consider when setting state judge salaries. You may receive recommendations to do otherwise, but we urge you to continue the Salary Commission's longstanding regard of parity with federal judge salaries as an important goal. If you are inclined to adopt an alternate benchmark, we would like the opportunity to discuss any new recommendation with you.

In 2004, a study prepared by Owen-Pottier Human Resource Consultants for the Salary Commission addressed the issue:

A reasonable course of action for the Commission to follow is to move toward a degree of parity with the federal bench over time. Such action can be justified in part by the fact that federal judges perform substantially similar work as our state judges but have significantly more job security since they are appointed for life, while state judges must run for reelection.

The Salary Commission, in recent salary increase decisions explicitly recognized the increases were to maintain working toward the benchmark of federal judge salaries. The use of the word "parity" meaning "equality or equivalence" is significant.

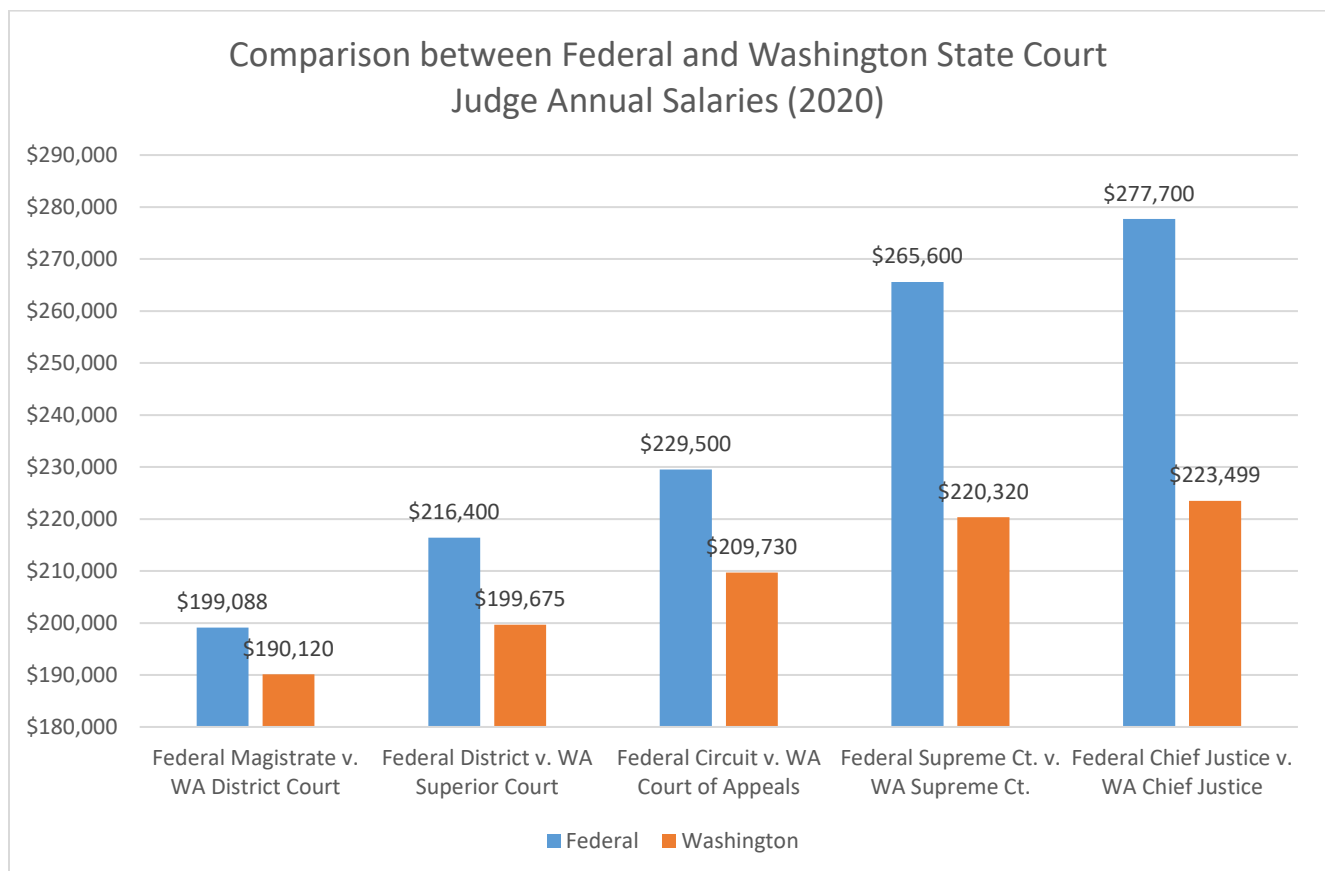
The American Bar Association (ABA) has also adopted the following policy on the issue:

Be it resolved that the American Bar Association recommends that salaries of justices of the highest courts of the states should be substantially equal to the salaries paid to judges of the United States court of appeals, and the salaries of the state trial judges of courts of general jurisdiction should substantially equal the salaries paid to judges of the United States district courts.

The ABA went on to recognize that state court judges are called on to decide many more disputes than the judges of the federal courts. Their decisions affect the "life, liberty and property" of millions of citizens every year. While only on rare occasions do their decisions achieve the publicity accorded by the media to many decisions of the United States Supreme Court, the quality of justice accorded in state courts is in reality the quality of justice in the United States. Annual Report of the American Bar Association, 1981.

The U.S. Supreme Court and appellate courts are similar in function to the Washington Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. The federal district courts are similar to Washington superior courts. The work of federal magistrates is most similar to Washington district courts, hearing misdemeanor cases, preliminary hearings, and civil trials. These federal positions draw from the same pool of attorneys as state judicial offices. There are federal courts in several locations in Washington including Seattle, Tacoma, Bellingham, Vancouver, Spokane, Yakima, and Richland.

The gap between federal and state judge salaries was at its lowest point in 2013 thanks to years of work by the Salary Commission. In 2014, federal judge salaries were all adjusted and increased substantially, causing the gap to widen again. The 2018 salary adjustments by the Salary Commission helped to reduce the gap, but the chart below shows how Washington judges' salaries compare to their federal counterparts, as of July 2020.



Years of Service, Age, and Turnover in the Judiciary

As the state population ages, so too do our judges. More than half of all judges in Washington are 60 years of age or older. This means significant turnover in the judiciary will continue, making recruitment and retention all the more important.

The tables below show key age and turnover data for each level of court.

<i>Supreme Court</i>	
<i>Total Justices</i>	9
<i>Avg. Age</i>	61
<i>Median Age</i>	63
<i>Avg. Years on Court</i>	12.08
<i>% Greater than 10 Years on Court</i>	45%
<i>% Greater than 15 Years on Court</i>	33%
<i>New Justices Since 1/1/16</i>	2 (22%)

<i>Court of Appeals</i>	
<i>Total Judges</i>	22
<i>Avg. Age</i>	58
<i>Median Age</i>	60.5
<i>Avg. Years on Court</i>	6.77
<i>% Greater than 10 Years on Court</i>	19%
<i>% Greater than 15 Years on Court</i>	5%
<i>New Judges Since 1/1/16</i>	9 (41%)

<i>Superior Courts</i>	
<i>Total Judges</i>	194
<i>Avg. Age</i>	56.27
<i>Median Age</i>	57
<i>Avg. Years on Court</i>	7.23
<i>% Greater than 10 Years on Court</i>	25.8%
<i>% Greater than 15 Years on Court</i>	11.4%
<i>New Judges Since 1/1/16</i>	77 (40%)

<i>District & Municipal Courts</i>	
<i>Total Judges</i>	207
<i>Avg. Age</i>	57.61
<i>Median Age</i>	59
<i>Avg. Years on Court</i>	10.04
<i>% Greater than 10 Years on Court</i>	36.2%
<i>% Greater than 15 Years on Court</i>	24%
<i>New Judges Since 1/1/16</i>	67 (33%)

Retirement Deductions, Inflation, and Housing Costs: Impact on Net Salary

Thanks to the Salary Commission, salaries for Washington's state court judges have increased over the last five years. Inflation, escalating home prices, and pension deduction rate increases, however, have substantially reduced the buying power of those salaries. Despite the Salary Commission's efforts to bring about parity, these steadily increasing pension deductions have widened the gap between federal and state judicial salaries.

We recognize that setting or adjusting benefits, including retirement benefits, is not within the authority of the Salary Commission. However, since it is not possible to disassociate net salary from gross salary, we offer information about how retirement deductions from gross salary impact net salary for the Salary Commission to consider in its parity analysis.

In Washington, judges participate in the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). Judges pay a significant portion of their salary for this benefit, however. Judges also typically come onto the bench later in their careers, limiting the number of years these benefits actually accrue. Members of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and superior courts currently have 17.25% of their income deducted from their paychecks for their pension. District and municipal court judges currently have 19.75% deducted. These rates have increased substantially over the last several years. Federal judges, on the other hand, do not contribute any portion of their salary toward their own retirement. Accordingly, a straight comparison of gross salaries does not convey an accurate story.

Housing costs are another factor worth considering. In the Puget Sound region, where more than half of all Washington judges reside, home prices have increased 86% since 2012 according to the Puget Sound Regional Council. This is especially significant as Washington works to recruit new judges. A reduction in pay in an area with a high cost of living is a disincentive for the most experienced and qualified attorneys to seek the bench. Yet highly qualified jurists best meet the demands of the work and serve the needs of Washington citizens. Additional information about regional housing costs is provided in Appendix B.

The chart below uses superior court judges' salary data to demonstrate where salaries stand when adjusted for inflation and pension deduction rate increases.

Year	Actual Annual Salary ¹	PERS Deduction Rate	Salary After PERS Deduction	Salary Comm. Increase %	Inflation % ²	Real Dollar Value of Salary Net of PERS	Fed. Dist. Ct. Salary	Diff Between Fed & Superior Ct (Net of PERS)
2002	\$120,144	0.65%	\$119,363	2.30%	1.90%	\$117,137	\$150,000	\$30,637
2003	\$121,972	1.18%	\$120,533	0.00%	1.60%	\$115,293	\$154,700	\$34,167
2004	\$122,785	1.18%	\$121,336	2.00%	1.20%	\$116,204	\$158,100	\$36,764
2005	\$125,655	2.25%	\$122,828	3.00%	2.80%	\$116,430	\$162,100	\$39,272
2006	\$129,425	3.50%	\$124,895	3.00%	3.70%	\$115,644	\$165,200	\$40,305
2007	\$134,985	6.25%	\$126,548	6.81%	3.90%	\$118,885	\$165,200	\$38,652
2008	\$143,597	7.88%	\$132,281	5.57%	4.20%	\$120,449	\$169,300	\$37,019
2009	\$148,832	11.13%	\$132,267	0.00%	0.60%	\$119,730	\$174,000	\$41,733
2010	\$148,832	7.25%	\$138,042	0.00%	0.30%	\$119,372	\$174,000	\$35,958
2011	\$148,832	7.25%	\$138,042	0.00%	2.70%	\$116,234	\$174,000	\$35,958
2012	\$148,832	9.10%	\$135,288	0.00%	2.50%	\$113,399	\$174,000	\$38,712
2013	\$149,824	9.10%	\$136,190	2.00%	1.20%	\$114,296	\$174,000	\$37,810
2014	\$153,327	9.80%	\$138,301	3.00%	1.80%	\$115,643	\$199,100	\$60,799
2015	\$158,448	12.80%	\$138,167	4.00%	1.40%	\$118,608	\$201,100	\$62,933
2016	\$163,702	12.80%	\$142,748	2.00%	2.20%	\$118,376	\$203,100	\$60,352
2017	\$166,976	15.95%	\$140,343	2.00%	3.10%	\$117,113	\$205,100	\$64,757
2018	\$170,315	15.95%	\$143,150	2.00%	3.10%	\$115,863	\$208,000	\$64,850
2019	\$180,627	17.25%	\$149,469	10.67%	2.50%	\$124,978	\$210,900	\$61,431
2020	\$195,149	17.25%	\$161,486	4.55%	2.00%	\$128,102	\$216,400	\$54,914

1 Actual gross salary received in the given calendar year

2 Inflation rate = year over year percentage increases in the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue CPI-U (Assumes inflation rate of 2.0% for 2020)

Concluding Remarks

With deep gratitude for the challenging and important work of setting the salaries of elected officials, we offer the considerations in this report to you. We understand how the task before you is complicated by the current economic circumstance confronting the state and the nation. We hope that with the information in this report in mind, you will continue to endorse parity with federal judge salaries as an important and appropriate goal of the Salary Commission. Recognizing that the current economic climate may not support further closing the parity gap at this time, we ask that you include elected judges in any cost of living adjustments made when you set the salaries of all of Washington's elected officials. Please let us know if we can answer any questions.

Appendices

Appendix A: 2020 Survey of Judicial Salaries, National Center for State Courts

Appendix B: Puget Sound Trends -- Housing Affordability, Puget Sound Regional Council, May 2019

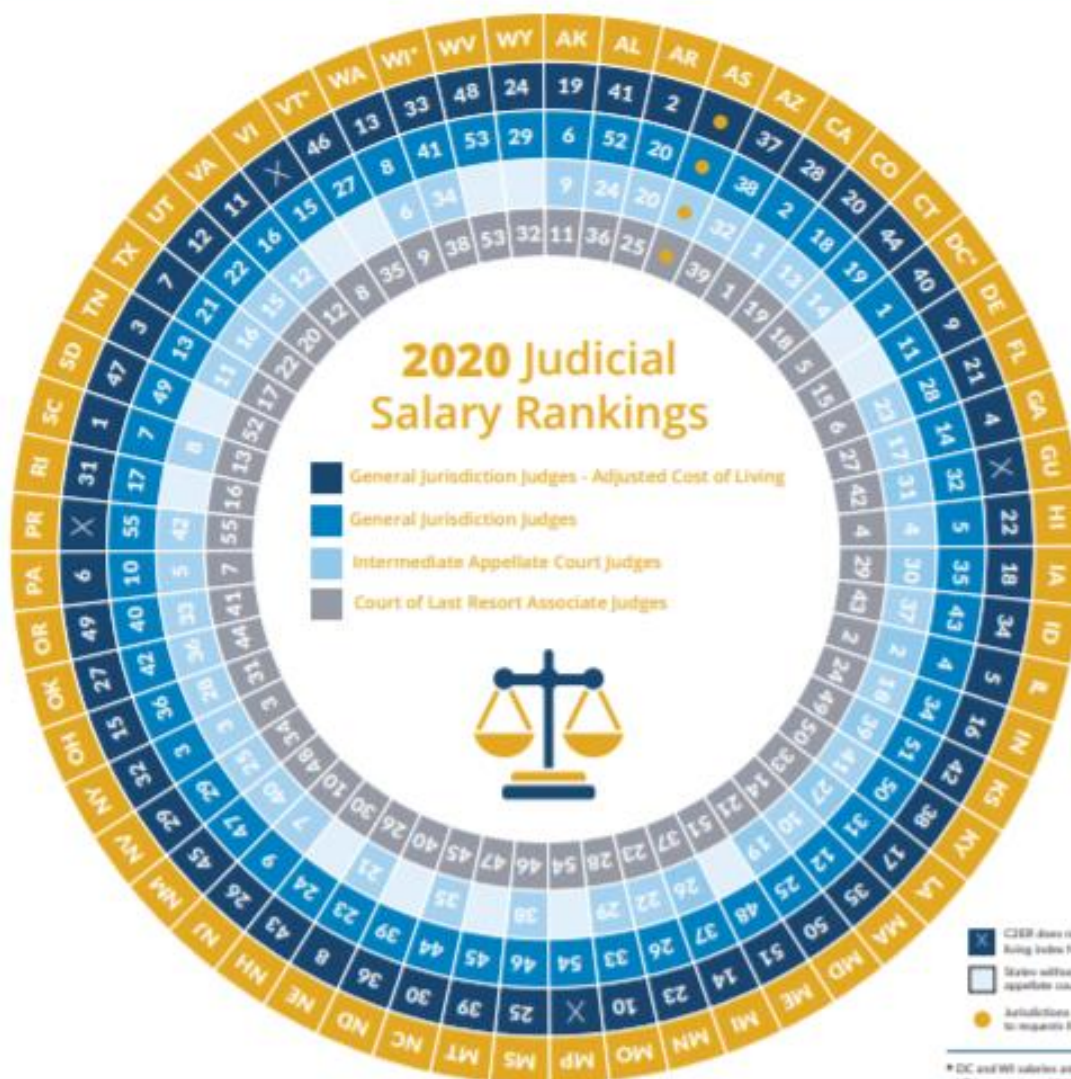
Appendix A: 2020 Survey of Judicial Salaries, National Center for State Courts

This Appendix, which follows on the succeeding two pages, is included because in the past the Commission has requested information about the salaries of judges in other states. We are not aware of surveys that produce an informed comparison of judicial salaries, particularly given the vastly differing state court structures across the nation. Because so many factors differ, including jurisdiction and responsibilities of judges at various levels or types of state courts, interstate comparisons are difficult to make. Washington judges must run for re-election every four or six years, while other states' judges may hold office for longer terms, or for life. Washington judges are prohibited by the canons of the Code of Judicial Conduct from raising money for election personally and cannot engage in political speech as they run for reelection. In some other states, judicial offices are partisan, which means a judicial candidate may receive substantial financial support from his or her political party when running for election. Because Washington judicial offices are non-partisan, most Washington judges pay the bulk of their campaign expenses themselves.

SURVEY OF Judicial Salaries

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Data and Rankings as of January 1, 2020*

This graphic depicts the rankings of judicial salaries, with the highest salary for each position having a rank of "1."



Judicial Salaries at a Glance

	Mean	Median	Range	
Chief, Highest Court	\$186,098	\$183,312	\$125,000	to \$273,712
Associate Justice, COLR	\$179,785	\$178,641	\$120,000	to \$261,013
Judge, Intermediate Appellate Court	\$173,132	\$172,066	\$105,000	to \$244,700
Judge, General Jurisdiction Trial Courts	\$161,750	\$160,688	\$89,600	to \$216,400
State Court Administrators	\$161,221	\$154,523	\$70,000	to \$299,004

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Salaries and Rankings - Listed Alphabetically by State Name

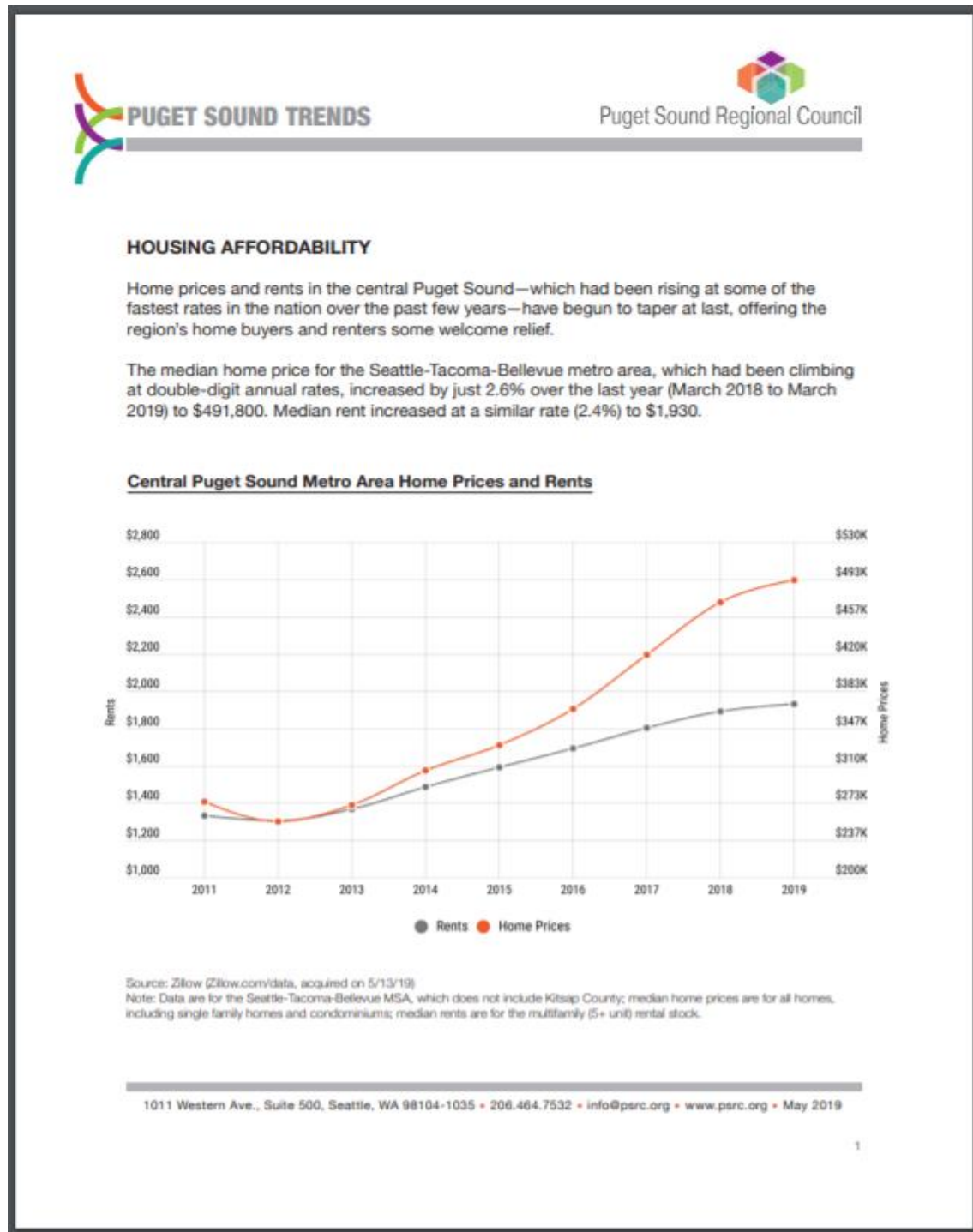
The table below lists the salaries and rankings for associate justices of the courts of last resort, associate judges of intermediate appellate courts and judges of general jurisdiction trial courts (actual salaries and cost-of-living-adjusted salaries as of January 1, 2020*). Salaries are ranked from highest to lowest, with the highest salary for each position having a rank of "1." The lowest salary has a rank of 55, except for the intermediate appellate courts, which exist in only 42 jurisdictions, and adjusted general jurisdiction, for which the adjustment factor is only available for 51 of the jurisdictions.

	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	\$166,072	36	\$165,072	24	\$126,018	52	94.3	\$133,613	41
Alaska	\$205,176	11	\$193,836	9	\$200,724	6	129.1	\$155,430	19
American Samoa	No Response		No Response		No Response		No Response		
Arizona	\$159,685	39	\$154,534	32	\$149,383	39	108.1	\$138,174	37
Arkansas	\$181,861	25	\$176,476	20	\$172,298	20	90.2	\$191,095	2
California	\$261,013	1	\$244,700	1	\$213,833	2	144.9	\$147,566	28
Colorado	\$188,151	19	\$180,697	13	\$173,248	18	111.6	\$155,242	20
Connecticut	\$191,178	18	\$179,552	14	\$172,663	19	130.9	\$131,875	44
Delaware	\$197,245	15	Not Applicable		\$185,444	11	110.2	\$168,289	9
District of Columbia	\$229,500	5	Not Applicable		\$216,400	1	158.5	\$136,523	40
Florida	\$220,600	6	\$169,554	23	\$160,688	28	104.3	\$154,135	21
Georgia	\$179,112	27	\$177,990	17	\$178,599	14	96.8	\$184,450	4
Guam	\$155,660	42	\$155,660	31	\$154,660	32	Not Applicable		
Hawaii	\$229,688	4	\$212,784	4	\$207,084	5	135.0	\$153,373	22
Idaho	\$155,200	43	\$145,200	37	\$139,200	43	97.4	\$142,870	34
Illinois	\$240,016	2	\$225,900	2	\$207,291	4	112.9	\$183,658	5
Indiana	\$182,030	24	\$176,948	18	\$151,137	34	95.9	\$157,658	16
Iowa	\$178,304	29	\$161,588	30	\$150,444	35	96.6	\$155,743	18
Kansas	\$145,641	49	\$140,940	39	\$128,636	51	96.7	\$133,009	42
Kentucky	\$142,362	50	\$136,631	41	\$130,306	50	95.4	\$137,288	38
Louisiana	\$174,583	33	\$163,331	27	\$156,972	31	99.6	\$157,578	17
Maine	\$142,210	51	Not Applicable		\$133,286	48	118.9	\$112,088	51
Maryland	\$186,433	21	\$176,633	19	\$164,433	25	131.1	\$125,405	50
Massachusetts	\$200,984	14	\$190,087	10	\$184,694	12	131.5	\$140,463	35
Michigan	\$164,610	37	\$163,909	26	\$148,656	37	93.6	\$159,907	14
Minnesota	\$182,139	23	\$171,624	22	\$161,108	26	105.1	\$153,274	23
Mississippi	\$152,250	46	\$144,827	38	\$136,000	46	89.4	\$152,077	25
Missouri	\$178,641	28	\$163,301	29	\$153,957	33	92.9	\$165,760	10
Montana	\$149,681	47	Not Applicable		\$136,896	45	100.1	\$136,714	39
Nebraska	\$181,588	26	\$172,509	21	\$167,969	23	96.5	\$170,600	8
Nevada	\$170,000	34	\$165,000	25	\$160,000	29	110.0	\$145,468	29
New Hampshire	\$175,837	30	Not Applicable		\$164,911	24	124.8	\$132,172	43
New Jersey	\$209,482	10	\$199,534	7	\$189,000	9	124.7	\$151,561	26
New Mexico	\$148,207	48	\$140,797	40	\$133,757	47	101.7	\$131,530	45
New York	\$233,400	3	\$222,200	3	\$210,900	3	146.9	\$143,583	32
North Carolina	\$152,843	45	\$146,521	35	\$138,617	44	95.9	\$144,525	30
North Dakota	\$159,409	40	Not Applicable		\$146,269	39	104.7	\$139,739	36
Northern Mariana Islands	\$126,000	54	Not Applicable		\$120,000	54	Not Applicable		
Ohio	\$175,214	31	\$163,309	28	\$150,183	36	94.9	\$158,206	15
Oklahoma	\$154,174	44	\$146,059	36	\$139,298	42	93.9	\$148,378	27
Oregon	\$157,356	41	\$154,244	33	\$145,188	40	115.6	\$125,565	48
Pennsylvania	\$215,037	7	\$202,898	5	\$186,665	10	107.1	\$174,311	6
Puerto Rico	\$120,000	55	\$105,000	42	\$89,600	55	Not Applicable		
Rhode Island	\$193,751	16	Not Applicable		\$175,700	17	121.8	\$144,273	31
South Carolina	\$202,057	13	\$197,005	8	\$191,954	7	100.3	\$191,349	1
South Dakota	\$140,315	52	Not Applicable		\$131,059	49	100.4	\$130,501	47
Tennessee	\$193,488	17	\$187,044	11	\$180,600	13	95.1	\$189,888	3
Texas	\$184,800	22	\$178,400	16	\$172,000	21	99.5	\$172,785	7
Utah	\$187,500	20	\$178,950	15	\$170,450	22	104.3	\$163,495	12
Vermont	\$169,121	35	Not Applicable		\$160,777	27	123.0	\$130,725	46
Virgin Islands	\$211,476	8	Not Applicable		\$178,240	15	Not Applicable		
Virginia	\$202,896	12	\$186,426	12	\$176,826	16	106.5	\$165,095	11
Washington	\$210,732	9	\$200,603	6	\$190,985	8	119.3	\$160,125	13
West Virginia	\$136,000	53	Not Applicable		\$126,000	53	97.3	\$129,535	48
Wisconsin	\$162,483	38	\$153,286	34	\$144,608	41	101.1	\$142,997	33
Wyoming	\$175,000	32	Not Applicable		\$160,000	29	104.4	\$153,223	24
Mean	\$179,785		\$173,132		\$161,750				
Median	\$178,641		\$172,066		\$160,688				
Range	\$120,000 to \$261,013		\$105,000 to \$244,700		\$89,600 to \$216,400				

The figures presented use 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. C2ER does not provide cost of living index for U.S. Territories. Due to the rounding of C2ER factors to the nearest hundredth for publication purposes, user calculations of our adjusted salary figures may not equate to the published totals. More detailed information can be found at www.c2er.org.

Appendix B: Puget Sound Trends -- Housing Affordability, Puget Sound Regional Council, May 2019

More Washington judges reside in this region than any other discrete area of the state, including 51% of superior court judges.



The housing market picture is more varied when looking at individual counties.

A recent **analysis by the Seattle Times** indicates that while the market for homes in the middle price range has cooled, the market for more affordable homes on the lower end of the price range remains quite heated. This is consistent with what county level data on median home prices show.

Median home prices dropped by 1.2% in King County, the region's most expensive housing market, where buyers had faced double-digit annual increases for six consecutive years. In relatively more affordable Kitsap and Pierce counties, median home prices continued to increase at a robust pace – 9.1% and 7.7%, respectively. Median home price increased by 4.7% in Snohomish County.

Housing Cost and Affordability Indicators

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Median Home Price (all homes)										
King	\$344,500	\$317,000	\$308,200	\$341,400	\$378,900	\$415,000	\$471,300	\$549,700	\$625,900	\$618,300
Kitsap	\$250,900	\$240,500	\$236,200	\$231,600	\$246,300	\$253,300	\$279,900	\$316,200	\$341,200	\$372,300
Pierce	\$230,900	\$215,500	\$197,000	\$200,900	\$221,200	\$235,100	\$257,800	\$288,900	\$324,400	\$349,400
Snohomish	\$284,800	\$244,600	\$232,800	\$253,800	\$286,700	\$312,800	\$351,000	\$400,200	\$449,100	\$470,000
Housing Affordability Index (all buyers)										(2018-Q4)
King	110.5	124.0	131.9	121.9	105.9	103.0	92.3	79.4	66.9	72.7
Kitsap	146.2	153.7	170.7	176.9	165.4	163.0	151.1	133.7	115.3	116.2
Pierce	150.6	175.9	201.0	187.3	165.7	158.8	148.8	130.5	108.8	109.9
Snohomish	137.5	165.6	173.3	158.9	134.6	129.8	124.6	108.9	91.4	93.5
Housing Affordability Index (first time buyers)										(2018-Q4)
King	61.1	66.4	72.7	66.9	59.2	58.5	53.2	46.5	39.8	43.5
Kitsap	88.4	90.0	96.4	103.5	102.9	107.2	104.6	97.1	87.6	90.2
Pierce	86.2	98.4	117.9	100.9	86.9	80.8	73.5	62.6	50.8	50.5
Snohomish	78.2	92.2	98.6	86.8	73.7	71.1	68.4	59.8	50.3	51.5
Median Rent (multifamily 5+ units)										
King	n/a	\$1,369	\$1,381	\$1,462	\$1,593	\$1,717	\$1,851	\$1,942	\$2,004	\$2,037
Kitsap	n/a	\$911	\$1,009	\$944	\$1,025	\$1,117	\$1,188	\$1,274	\$1,345	\$1,446
Pierce	n/a	\$1,148	\$1,105	\$1,103	\$1,193	\$1,206	\$1,251	\$1,346	\$1,434	\$1,482
Snohomish	n/a	\$1,243	\$1,224	\$1,277	\$1,336	\$1,419	\$1,511	\$1,625	\$1,695	\$1,790

Source: WCRER/UW Runstad Center; Zillow (Zillow.com/data, acquired on 5/13/19)

Note: Median home prices are for all homes, including single family homes and condominiums; median rents are for the multifamily (5+ unit) rental stock; median home price and rent estimates are for the month of March. The all buyers affordability index measures the ability of a typical family to make payments on median price resale home; it assumes a 20% down payment and 30-year amortizing mortgage; the first-time buyer affordability index assumes a less expensive home, lower down payment, and lower income; an index of 100.0 indicates balance between home prices and income; a higher index indicates greater affordability, while a lower index indicates less affordability; affordability indices are for the second quarter (Q2) unless noted otherwise.

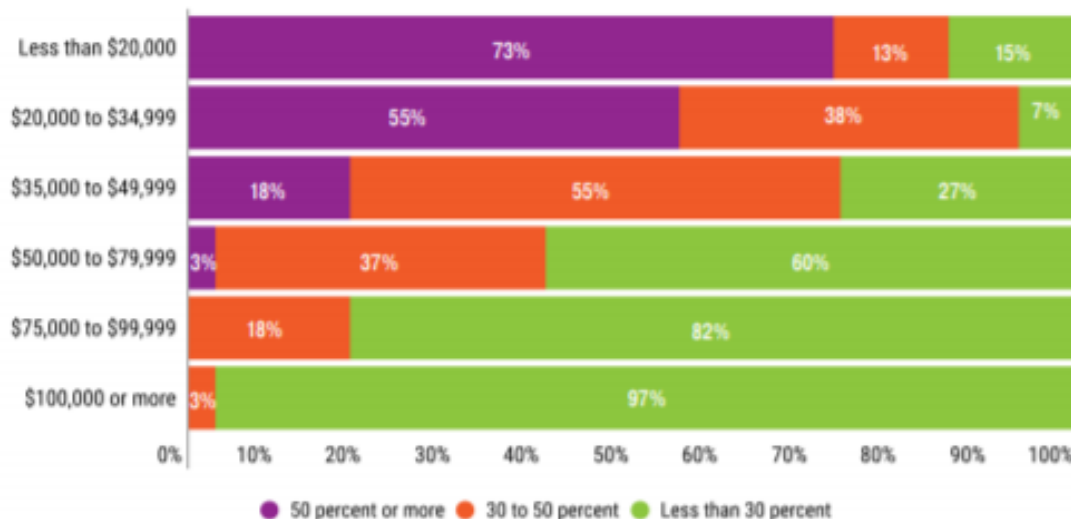
The latest affordability indices (for the fourth quarter of 2018) suggest the slowdown in the housing market may have placed a pause on further erosion of housing affordability across the region. Yet, the typical family remains unable to afford a median priced home in Snohomish County and especially King County. First-time buyers in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties face a severe lack of affordable options to allow them to establish a foothold in the homeownership market.

The rental market in King County continued to slow over the last year as well, with median rent growing by just 1.6%. Rents in Pierce County, which had been quite heated for a couple of years, increased at a noticeably slower rate of 3.3% over the past year. Rents in Snohomish County and especially Kitsap County remain brisk, increasing by 5.6% and 7.5%, respectively.

The rapid and sustained annual increases in rents over the past several years have resulted in serious housing cost burden for many of the region's renters, with the biggest impact falling on the lowest income households. Households are considered "housing cost burdened" if they spend more than 30% of their gross annual income on housing costs, including utilities. A household is defined as "severely cost burdened" if its housing costs constitute more than 50% of gross annual income.

Central Puget Sound Renter Housing Cost Burden

Percent of households spending more than 30 or 50 percent of income on housing



Source: 2017 ACS 1-Year PUMS

More than one-third of moderate-income renter households earning \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year are housing cost burdened, with 3% experiencing severe cost burden. The proportion of cost burdened and severely cost burdened renters rises dramatically for lower income households.

Housing affordability is a key priority that will be addressed in the update to the region's VISION 2050 growth strategy.