

## Comparison of state legislative salaries

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There is a significant amount of variance in legislator salaries among the 50 states. In California, legislators are paid \$110,459 per year in salary. Comparatively, New Hampshire legislators earn just \$200 per two-year term without per diem. New Mexico is the only state that does not pay its legislators a salary, but lawmakers do still earn per diem.

The top five states with the highest-paid base legislative salaries are:

- California - \$110,459/year
- New York - \$110,000/year
- Pennsylvania - \$88,610/year
- Michigan - \$71,685/year
- Massachusetts - \$66,257/year

All of the top five highest-paid legislatures are full-time. Depending on the state, some state legislators work part-time in the government and maintain jobs outside the legislature. According to *Politico*, 42 of the 117 men (36%) serving in state legislatures who had 2018 financial disclosure forms available had jobs in addition to their legislative duties. Six of the 49 women (14%) legislators had jobs outside the legislature. [\[1\]](#)

### How state legislator salaries are set

Salaries of state legislators are determined in four ways.

- Nineteen states use a commission of some kind to determine the salary of legislators. The powers of these commissions vary from non-binding reports to reports that are implemented unless voted down by the legislature, not approved by the governor, or overturned by citizen referenda.
- In two of these states mentioned above—Arizona and Nebraska—any recommendation to change legislators' pay must be approved by voters before going into effect.
- Some states tie legislative salaries to those of other state employees.
- Other states allow the legislators themselves to set their own salaries.

States with a policy of allowing legislators to set their own salaries encounter what the *National Conference of State Legislatures* calls the "pay problem," in which the political risk associated with possible negative perceptions of legislators who vote to increase their own pay prevents legislatures from raising salaries. When this happens, it is possible for inflation to outpace the rate of pay, meaning legislative salaries may decline over time.

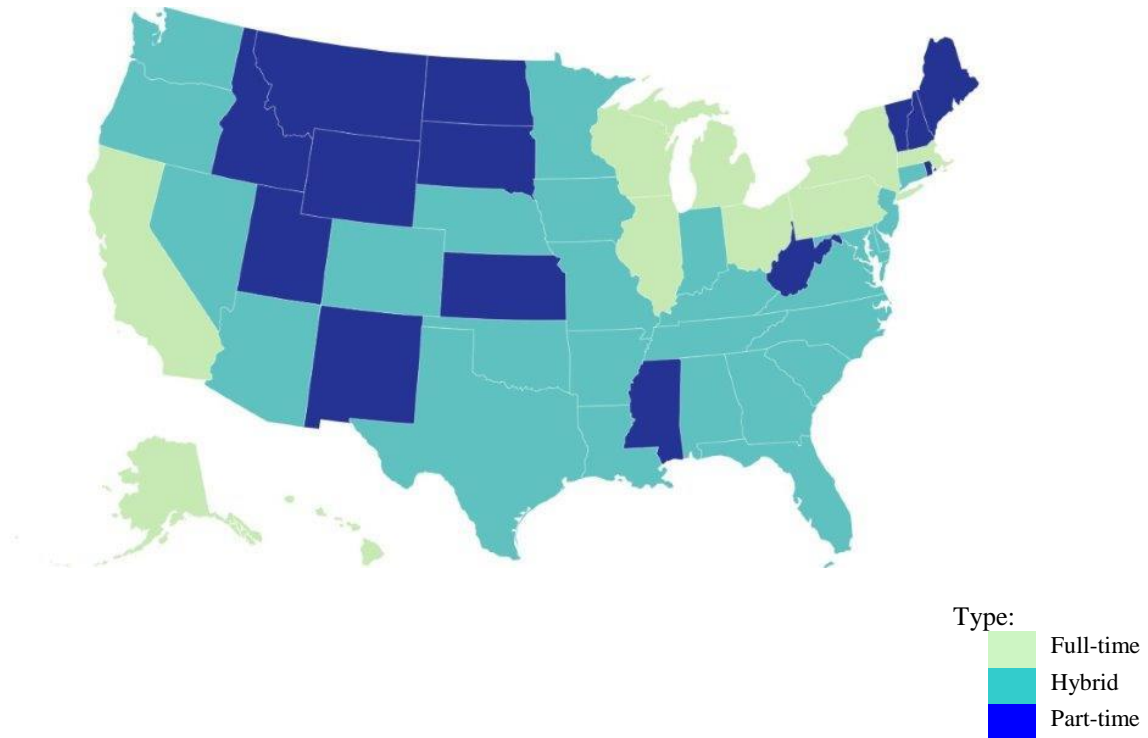
## Full-time and part-time legislatures

See also: [States with a full-time legislature](#)

The *National Conference of State Legislatures* classifies state legislatures as full-time, part-time, or hybrid.

- *Full-time* states have legislators who devote **84 percent** of a full-time job to their legislative duties which include committee hearings, listening sessions, constituent service, and time spent campaigning. On average, each full-time legislator is paid about **\$82,358**.
- *Hybrid* states have legislators who devote **74 percent** of a full-time job to their legislative duties. Legislators estimate they spend more than two-thirds of a full-time job on their legislative duties. On average, each hybrid legislator is paid about **\$41,110**.
- *Part-time* states have legislators who devote **57 percent** of a full-time job to their legislative duties. On average, each legislator is paid about **\$18,449**. These are also called "traditional or citizen legislatures" and the legislators typically need additional sources of income outside the legislature to make a living.

### State legislatures by type



Map: Ballotpedia Source: [National Conference of State Legislatures](#)

## Full-time and part-time state legislatures

Full-time legislatures	Hybrid legislatures	Part-time legislatures
Alaska	Alabama	Idaho
California	Arizona	Kansas
Hawaii	Arkansas	Maine
Illinois	Colorado	Mississippi
Massachusetts	Connecticut	Montana
Michigan	Delaware	New Hampshire
New York	Florida	New Mexico
Ohio	Georgia	North Dakota
Pennsylvania	Indiana	Rhode Island
Wisconsin	Iowa	South Dakota
	Kentucky	Utah
	Louisiana	Vermont
	Maryland	West Virginia
	Minnesota	Wyoming
	Missouri	
	Nebraska	
	Nevada	
	New Jersey	
	North Carolina	
	Oklahoma	
	Oregon	
	South Carolina	
	Tennessee	
	Texas	
	Virginia	
	Washington	

Chart: Ballotpedia Source: [National Conference of State Legislatures](#)