

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 589

**FISCAL
NOTE**

By Senator Woodrum

[Introduced February 25, 2025; referred
to the Committee on the Judiciary; and then to the
Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend and reenact §50-1-3, §51-1-10a, §51-2-13, §51-2A-6, and §51-11-11 of the Code
2 of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to increasing the annual salary of
3 magistrates, justices of the Supreme Court of Appeals, circuit court judges, family court
4 judges, and judges of the Intermediate Court of Appeals.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

CHAPTER 50. MAGISTRATE COURTS.

ARTICLE 1. COURTS AND OFFICERS.

§50-1-3. Salaries of magistrates.

1 Notwithstanding any provisions of this code to the contrary, beginning July 1, 2021, the
2 annual salary of a magistrate shall be \$60,375, and beginning July 1, 2022, the annual salary of a
3 magistrate shall be \$63,250: Provided, That beginning July 1, 2025, the annual salary of a
4 magistrate shall be \$75,840.

CHAPTER 51. COURTS AND THEIR OFFICERS.

ARTICLE 1. SUPREME COURT OF APPEALS.

§51-1-10a. Salary of justices.

1 The salary of each of the justices of the Supreme Court of Appeals shall be \$95,000 per
2 year: *Provided, That beginning July 1, 2005, the salary of each of the justices of the Supreme*
3 *Court shall be \$121,000: Provided, however, That beginning July 1, 2011, the annual salary of a*
4 *justice of the Supreme Court shall be \$136,000: Provided further, That beginning July 1, 2021, the*
5 *annual salary of a justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals shall be \$142,800, and beginning July*
6 *1, 2022, the annual salary of a justice of the Supreme Court of Appeals shall be \$149,600: And*
7 *provided further, That beginning July 1, 2025, the annual salary of a justice of the Supreme Court*
8 *of Appeals shall be \$167,552.*

ARTICLE 2. CIRCUIT COURTS; CIRCUIT JUDGES.

§51-2-13. Salaries of judges of circuit courts.

1 The salaries of the judges of the various circuit courts shall be paid solely out of the State
2 Treasury. No county, county commission, board of commissioners, or other political subdivision
3 shall supplement or add to such salaries.

4 The annual salary of all circuit judges shall be \$90,000 per year: *Provided*, That beginning
5 July 1, 2005, the annual salary of all circuit judges shall be \$116,000 per year: *Provided, however*,
6 That beginning July 1, 2011, the annual salary of a circuit court judge shall be \$126,000: *Provided*
7 *further*, That beginning July 1, 2021, the annual salary of a circuit judge shall be \$132,300 and
8 beginning July 1, 2022, the annual salary of a circuit court judge shall be \$138,600-: *And provided*
9 *further*, That beginning July 1, 2025, the annual salary of a circuit judge shall be \$155,232.

ARTICLE 2A. FAMILY COURTS.

§51-2A-6. Compensation and expenses of family court judges and their staffs.

1 (a) A family court judge is entitled to receive as compensation for his or her services an
2 annual salary of \$62,500: *Provided*, That beginning July 1, 2005, a family court judge is entitled to
3 receive as compensation for his or her services an annual salary of \$82,500: *Provided, however*,
4 That beginning July 1, 2011, the annual salary of a family court judge shall be \$94,500: *Provided*
5 *further*, That beginning July 1, 2020, the annual salary of a family court judge shall be \$103,950-:
6 *And provided further*, That beginning July 1, 2025, the annual salary of a family court judge shall
7 *be \$125,416.*

8 (b) The secretary-clerk of the family court judge is appointed by the family court judge and
9 serves at his or her will and pleasure. The secretary-clerk of the family court shall be paid at least
10 twice per month by the state. The annual salary of all secretary-clerks of the family court is
11 \$42,576. Beginning July 1, 2023, the annual salary of a family court secretary-clerk shall be
12 \$44,876. Family court secretary-clerks may receive any general salary increase granted to state
13 employees, whose salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a percentage increase or an

14 across-the-board increase enacted after July 1, 2023.

15 (c) The family court judge may employ not more than one family case coordinator who
16 serves at his or her will and pleasure: *Provided*, That the Supreme Court of Appeals may authorize
17 additional family case coordinators if the workload of a circuit's family court requires extra staff
18 support. The annual salary of the family case coordinator of the family court judge shall be
19 established by the Administrative Director of the Supreme Court of Appeals but may not exceed
20 \$54,576. Beginning July 1, 2023, the annual salary of a family court case coordinator shall not
21 exceed \$56,876. Family court case coordinators may receive any general salary increase granted
22 to state employees, whose salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a percentage increase or
23 an across-the-board increase enacted after July 1, 2023. If more than one family case coordinator
24 is approved by the Supreme Court of Appeals, then the chief family court judge of that circuit shall
25 appoint, supervise, and assign job duties for any additional family case coordinator as needed for
26 that circuit.

27 (d) The sheriff or his or her designated deputy shall serve as a bailiff for a family court
28 judge. The sheriff of each county shall serve or designate persons to serve so as to assure that a
29 bailiff is available when a family court judge determines the same is necessary for the orderly and
30 efficient conduct of the business of the family court.

31 (e) Disbursement of salaries for family court judges and members of their staffs are made
32 by or pursuant to the order of the Director of the Administrative Office of the Supreme Court of
33 Appeals.

34 (f) Family court judges and members of their staffs ~~staff~~ are allowed their actual and
35 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. The expenses and compensation
36 will be determined and paid by the Director of the Administrative Office of the Supreme Court of
37 Appeals under such guidelines as he or she may prescribe, as approved by the Supreme Court of
38 Appeals.

39 (g) The Supreme Court of Appeals is authorized to create additional classifications of

40 support staff that it deems necessary to adequately and efficiently staff the family courts of this
41 state, including, but not limited to, receptionists, assistant case coordinators, and assistant
42 secretary-clerks. The Supreme Court of Appeals may determine the authority to hire and
43 terminate, supervise, and assign job duties for these positions pursuant to its own employment
44 rules, policies, and procedures. The annual salary of additional support staff authorized by this
45 section shall not exceed the regular annual salary of a secretary-clerk and shall be paid by the
46 state on the same basis established for secretary-clerks as provided in this section.

ARTICLE 11. THE WEST VIRGINIA APPELLATE REORGANIZATION ACT.

§51-11-11. Judicial compensation and benefits; expenses.

1 (a) The annual salary of a Judge of the Intermediate Court of Appeals is \$142,500-;
2 Provided, That beginning July 1, 2025 the annual salary of a Judge of the Intermediate Court of
3 Appeals shall be \$159,600. The budget for the payment of compensation and expenses of
4 Intermediate Court of Appeals judges shall be included in the appropriation for the Supreme Court
5 of Appeals.

6 (b) Judges of the Intermediate Court of Appeals and staff shall be reimbursed for their
7 actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties under the guidelines
8 prescribed by the Administrative Director of the Supreme Court of Appeals.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide pay increases to members of the judiciary.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law
and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.