FISCAL SNAPSHOT

JUSTICES' AND JUDGES' COMPENSATION

Date: January 2026 **Analyst: Robin R. Risko**

Summary

Of the total $383.6 million Gross appropriated in the FY 2025-26 Judiciary budget, $128.0 million, or 33%, supports justices' and judges' compensation. Of the total $276.1 million general fund/general purpose (GF/GP) appropriated, $124.9 million, or 45%, supports justices' and judges' compensation.

Background

As required by the Michigan Constitution, the State Officers Compensation Commission (SOCC) determines salaries for Supreme Court justices. Salaries for judges of the Court of Appeals and judges of the circuit, probate, and district courts are determined by the Revised Judicature Act of 1961. Prior to 2016, salaries for all other judges were based on a percentage of the salary paid to a justice of the Supreme Court. Effective January 1, 2016, the Revised Judicature Act was amended to change salary calculations for all other judges. Amendments required salaries to equal a percentage of the salary of a Supreme Court justice as of December 31, 2015, plus an amount based on percentage pay increases, excluding lump-sum payments, paid to civil service nonexclusively represented employees classified as executives and administrators. Effective October 1, 2022, a subsequent amendment to the Revised Judicature Act required the salary of a district court judge to equal that of a probate court judge.

Recent Activity

Supreme Court justices' salaries currently stand at $181,483. In May 2023, SOCC recommended a 7% salary increase for justices for 2025 and 2026. In order to take effect, SOCC recommendations require legislative approval via a concurrent resolution prior to the next general election. The resolution did not make it all the way through the legislative process before the general election in November 2024, so the salary increases did not take effect. For FY 2025-26, the salary for a judge of the Court of Appeals is $201,493 and the salary for a circuit, probate, and district court judge is $186,163. The Supreme Court consists of 7 justices and, currently, there are 25 Court of Appeals judges, 223 circuit court judges, 104 probate court judges, and 232 district court judges. Supreme Court justices', Court of Appeals judges', and district court judges' salaries are paid 100% with GF/GP. Circuit and probate court judges' salaries are paid primarily with GF/GP and also with a portion of state restricted Court Fee Fund revenue.

The Bottom Line

In FY 2025-26, the state will spend $110.4 million on salaries for justices and judges. In addition to the cost of salaries, the state will pay a little over $7.2 million for associated FICA expenses and a little over $7.6 million for associated retirement costs for justices and judges.

Court	# of Justices/ Judges	Annual Salary	Total Cost of Salaries Only
Supreme Court	7	$181,483.00	$1,270,381.00
Court of Appeals	25	$201,493.32	$5,037,333.00
Circuit Court	223	$186,163.12	$41,514,375.76
Probate Court	103 full-time	$186,163.12	$19,174,801.36
Probate Court	1 part-time	$25,750.00	$25,750.00
District Court	232	$186,163.12	$43,189,843.84
		Total Cost of Salaries for Justices and Judges	$110,212,484.96