

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1102

C 24 L 23
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning judge pro tempore compensation.

Sponsors: Representatives Taylor and Timmons; by request of Administrative Office of the Courts.

House Committee on Civil Rights & Judiciary
Senate Committee on Law & Justice

Background:

Superior court judges and court commissioners hear felony and other criminal matters, civil matters, domestic relations matters, guardianship and probate matters, juvenile matters, and child dependency cases. Additionally, superior court judges hear appeals from lower courts and appeals from state administrative agencies.

The Washington Constitution provides that a case in the superior court may be tried by a judge pro tempore who is a sitting elected judge and is acting as a judge pro tempore pursuant to Supreme Court rule without the agreement of the parties. Otherwise, a judge pro tempore who is a member of the bar may try the case with the written agreement of the parties if the judge is approved by the court and sworn to try the case. The assignments of judges pro tempore are based on the judges' experience and provide for the right to a change of judge pro tempore once during the case.

The annual salary of the judges of the superior court is established by the Washington Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials (Commission). The cost of the salaries for superior court judges are split by the state and by the county in which the court is located. According to the Commission's website, the Commission has set the current salary for a superior court judge at \$203,169 with a proposed increase to \$217,391 on July 1, 2023.

Pay for superior court judges pro tempore varies depending on the pro tempore's status:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- An attorney who is not a retired or active judge receives 1/250 of a superior court judge's yearly salary for each day of work as a judge pro tempore.
- A retired judge receives 60 percent of 1/250 of a superior court judge's salary for each day of work as a judge pro tempore.
- An active judge of another court receives no compensation for work as a judge pro tempore.

Summary:

The daily compensation for a retired judge of a Washington court serving as a judge pro tempore in superior court is increased to be consistent with the compensation paid to practicing attorneys serving in that role. For both practicing attorneys and retired judges, the compensation for each day of work as a judge pro tempore of the superior court is 1/250 of a superior court judge's yearly salary.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 96 0

Senate 49 0

Effective: July 23, 2023