

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 12-93—sSB 31

Judiciary Committee

Government Administration and Elections Committee

**AN ACT ESTABLISHING A COMMISSION ON JUDICIAL
COMPENSATION**

SUMMARY: This act creates a 12-member Commission on Judicial Compensation to make recommendations on judicial compensation, taking into account factors the act specifies. Specifically, the act requires the commission to:

1. examine the adequacy of and need to adjust compensation for judges, family support magistrates, senior judges, judge trial referees, and family support referees;
2. make compensation recommendations every four years, beginning by January 2, 2013; and
3. report its findings to the governor, Office of Policy and Management (OPM) secretary, legislature, chief justice, and chief court administrator.

By January 9, 2013 and every four years after, the act requires the chief court administrator to estimate expenditures needed to implement the report's recommendations for each fiscal year of the next and the subsequent biennium and transmit them to the OPM secretary, Appropriations Committee through the Office of Fiscal Analysis, and Judiciary Committee. The governor's biennial budget must include the chief court administrator's estimated expenditures. By law, the governor's budget must already include the Judicial Branch's estimated expenditures from the chief court administrator.

The act removes the existing Compensation Commission's responsibility to make recommendations for judges' compensation, pensions, workers' compensation, and other benefits, leaving it responsible for making recommendations regarding compensation for legislators and constitutional officers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2012

MEMBERS

The act requires commission members to be appointed as follows:

1. four by the governor;
2. one each by the Senate president pro tempore, House speaker, and House and Senate majority and minority leaders; and
3. two by the Supreme Court chief justice.

To the extent practicable, the act requires appointing authorities to appoint members with experience in financial management, human resources administration, or determining executive compensation.

The act limits members to one four-year term, but they may serve until a

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successor is appointed and qualified. Appointing authorities can fill a vacancy for the unexpired portion of a term.

The act requires the commission to elect its chairperson from among its members. A majority is a quorum.

JUDICIAL OFFICIALS

The act requires the commission to make compensation recommendations for the following judicial officials:

1. Supreme Court chief justice and associate justices;
2. Appellate Court chief judge and judges;
3. Superior Court judges;
4. chief court administrator, if a judge or justice;
5. deputy chief court administrator, if a judge;
6. appellate, judicial district, and chief administrative judges;
7. senior judges and judge trial referees; and
8. chief family support magistrate, family support magistrates, and family support referees.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The act requires the commission to consider all appropriate factors when making compensation recommendations, including the:

1. state's overall economic climate;
2. inflation rate;
3. compensation for other states' and federal judges;
4. compensation for attorneys employed by government agencies, academic institutions, and private and nonprofit organizations;
5. state's interest in attracting highly qualified and experienced attorneys to serve in judicial capacities;
6. compensation adjustments for state employees during the applicable fiscal years; and
7. state's ability to fund compensation increases.

OLR Tracking: CR:JKL:VR:ts:eh