



# WASHOE COUNTY

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## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: *June 25, 2024*

**DATE:** June 14, 2024

**TO:** Board of County Commissioners

**FROM:** James Conway, Court Administrator, Reno Justice Court  
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**THROUGH:** Kate Thomas, Assistant County Manager

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation to approve Cost of Living Adjustments in base wage of 3% effective July 1, 2024 [FY 24/25 estimated fiscal impact \$120,177]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.25% beginning July 1, 2025 [FY 25/26 estimated fiscal impact \$124,083]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.5% beginning July 1, 2026 [FY 26/27 estimated fiscal impact \$128,426]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.25% beginning July 1, 2027 [FY 27/28 estimated fiscal impact \$132,600] for the Justices of the Peace of Reno, Sparks, Wadsworth, and Incline Justice Court. [Estimated total fiscal impact \$505,286]. (All Commission Districts.)

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### SUMMARY

Justice Court Judges have followed various processes for salary schedule changes. The recommendation for salaries for the Judges is a COLA of 3% effective July 1, 2024, a COLA of 3.25% effective July 1, 2025, a COLA of 3.5% effective July 1, 2026, and a COLA of 3.25% effective July 1, 2027, to be commensurate with Washoe County Public Attorneys Association (WCPAA). These updates would also be commensurate with the Unclassified Management and Non-Represented Confidential employees, Second Judicial District Court employees, Justice Courts employees (excluding Justices of the Peace), Juvenile Services employees, and Truckee River Flood Management Authority's Executive Director, General Counsel, and Chief Financial Officer are commensurate with the COLA(s) negotiated with the Washoe County Employees Association (WCEA), Washoe County Alternative Sentencing Officers Association (WCASOA), and Washoe County Nurses' Association (WCNA), and Washoe County District Attorney's Investigator Association (WCDAIA).

**Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item:** Fiscal Sustainability and Valued, engaged employee workforce.

AGENDA ITEM # \_\_\_\_\_

## **PREVIOUS ACTION**

September 20, 2006, the Board of County Commissioners established minimum compensation for the Justices of the Peace for Reno, Sparks, Incline, and Wadsworth Townships per NRS 4.040 and approved a memorandum of understanding regarding the process for future salary adjustments.

On February 23, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners rescinded the November 2006 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Justices of the Peace and the Washoe County Board of County Commissioners, which recognized the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) judicial compensation study every even-numbered year and aligned the Justices of the Peace salary schedule increases with elected officials listed in NRS 245.043 pursuant to Senate Bill 482 (2015 Legislature).

On October 12, 2021, the Board of County Commissioners approved a salary adjustment for seated justices of the peace during any time the Court is operating with fewer than the full complement of judges authorized by NRS 4.020 (1)(b).

On July 19, 2022, the Board of County Commissioners approved an additional increase to Reno Justice Court justice-of-the-peace salary when the Court is operating with two or fewer justice of the peace positions than what is authorized by NRS 4.020 (1)(b).

On May 23, 2023, the Board of County Commissioners rescinded the February 23, 2016 decision to tie increases to the base salary of Justices of the Peace to increases to the salaries of elected officials listed in NRS 245.043. This decision was made in conjunction with approving a comprehensive classification and compensation study of all justice court positions, including the justices of the peace.

On April 16, 2024, the Board approved a payment of \$752.56 per day, retroactive to July 1, 2023, to Reno Justice Court judges who preside over pretrial detention hearings on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

On May 14, 2024, the Board approved a payment of \$752.56 per day, retroactive to July 1, 2023, to Sparks, Wadsworth, and Incline Justice Court judges who preside over pretrial detention hearings on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

On May 21, 2024, the Board approved the Final Fiscal Year 2025 budget, which included a 5.0% salary increase for the Judges.

## **BACKGROUND**

Justice Court Judges have followed various processes for salary schedule changes. The recommendation for salaries for the Judges is a COLA of 3% effective July 1, 2024, a COLA of 3.25% effective July 1, 2025, a COLA of 3.5% effective July 1, 2026, and a COLA of 3.25% effective July 1, 2027. This is commensurate with the COLA's negotiated with the WCPAA, WCEA, WCASOA, WCNA, and WCDAIA.

On May 23, 2023, the BCC approved and adopted the recommendations of a classification and compensation study that the justice courts commissioned (Trupp study) and approved a procedure to request additional increases to judicial compensation in the

annual budget cycle. The Trupp study stated that “in order to maintain parity with similar positions in the County, judges should receive analogous annual increases and COLAs to those received by the positions of PD, APD, and DDA V.”

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The annual FY 24/25 fiscal impact associated with these recommendations is estimated at \$120,177 and a portion is included in the FY 24/25 approved budget. These cost increases may necessitate a budget adjustment during the fiscal year. The Budget Division will monitor the budget status related to these changes and propose necessary budget adjustments as needed.

The FY 24/25 impact is broken out as follows:

**FY 24/25**

Description	Judges	Total
COLA	\$120,177	\$120,177
<b>TOTAL FY 24/25</b>	<b>\$120,177</b>	<b>\$120,177</b>

The annual FY 25/26 fiscal impact associated with these recommendations is estimated at \$124,083 and if approved will be included in the FY 25/26 budget and is broken out as follows:

**FY 25/26**

Description	Judges	Total
COLA	\$124,083	\$124,083
<b>TOTAL FY 25/26</b>	<b>\$124,083</b>	<b>\$124,083</b>

The annual FY 26/27 fiscal impact associated with these recommendations is estimated at \$128,426 and if approved will be included in the FY 26/27 budget and is broken out as follows:

**FY 26/27**

Description	Judges	Total
COLA	\$128,426	\$128,426
<b>TOTAL FY 26/27</b>	<b>\$128,426</b>	<b>\$128,426</b>

The annual FY 27/28 fiscal impact associated with these recommendations is estimated at \$132,600 and if approved will be included in the FY 27/28 budget and is broken out as follows:

**FY 27/28**

Description	Judges	Total
COLA	\$132,600	\$132,600
<b>TOTAL FY 27/28</b>	<b>\$132,600</b>	<b>\$132,600</b>

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommendation to approve Cost of Living Adjustments in base wage of 3% effective July 1, 2024 [FY 24/25 estimated fiscal impact \$120,177]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.25% beginning July 1, 2025 [FY 25/26 estimated fiscal impact \$124,083]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.5% beginning July 1, 2026 [FY 26/27 estimated fiscal impact \$128,426]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.25% beginning July 1, 2027 [FY 27/28 estimated fiscal impact \$132,600] for the Justices of the Peace of Reno, Sparks, Wadsworth, and Incline Justice Court. [Estimated total fiscal impact \$505,286].

**POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

*“Move to approve to approve Cost of Living Adjustments in base wage of 3% effective July 1, 2024 [FY 24/25 estimated fiscal impact \$120,177]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.25% beginning July 1, 2025 [FY 25/26 estimated fiscal impact \$124,083]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.5% beginning July 1, 2026 [FY 26/27 estimated fiscal impact \$128,426]; a cost of living adjustment in base wages of 3.25% beginning July 1, 2027 [FY 27/28 estimated fiscal impact \$132,600] for the Justices of the Peace of Reno, Sparks, Wadsworth, and Incline Justice Court. [Estimated total fiscal impact \$505,286].*