

To: Whatcom County Council
From: Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials
Subject: Elected Official Salary Schedule for 2020 and 2021
Date: April 24, 2019

Starting in January 2019, the Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials met multiple times in order to complete its task of setting the 2020 and 2021 salaries for elected officials.

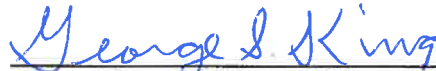
The Commission has used information from comparable jurisdictions, considered the unique challenges of some of our local offices, and considered written and oral testimony from elected officials and the general public. Members of the Commission have actively participated in the process and shared their unique perspective in the discussions that led to the Commission's salary placements.

Attached please find the Salary Commission's salary placements for Whatcom County elected officials for 2020 and 2021.

It has been an honor to be selected and serve on the Salary Commission for Whatcom County.



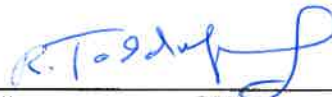
Jon Sitkin, Commission Chairperson
(Legal Profession)



Steve (George) King – Citizen at Large

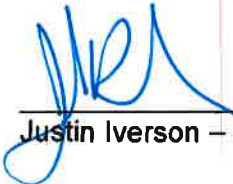


Wendy Wefer-Clinton, Vice-Chairperson
(Personnel Management)

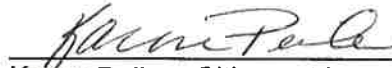


R. Todd Morris – Citizen at Large

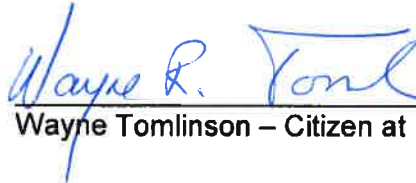
Bonaventura Broadway – Citizen at Large



Justin Iverson – Organized Labor



Karen Peila – Citizen at Large



Wayne Tomlinson – Citizen at Large

Whatcom County Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials

Salary Placements April 18, 2019

Position	2019 Salary	2020	2021
Assessor	\$108,519	\$117,758	\$126,272
Auditor	\$108,519	\$117,758	\$126,272
Treasurer	\$108,519	\$117,758	\$126,272
Sheriff	\$142,000	\$160,806	\$172,432
Prosecuting Attorney	\$172,402	\$185,985	\$194,675
County Executive	\$172,402	\$185,985	\$194,675
County Council	\$31,867	\$35,802	\$40,180

All Positions:

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA): The Salary Commission used *the Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers - West Urban* to establish the projected rate of inflation. To better reflect recent trends in inflation, the current Commission used the average rate of inflation for the last five years, 2014 through 2018, versus the 10-year average prior Commissions used. Based on this, the Commission establishes a 2.23% percent COLA in 2020 and 2021. See Attachment A.

The Commission recognized that most, if not all, elected officials seek public office in Whatcom County Government to serve the citizens of Whatcom County and not for financial remuneration. However, the Commission was mindful of salary costs to the taxpayers, balanced with the consideration that low salaries may be a disincentive to attracting quality candidates.

Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer, Sheriff: The Salary Commission identified the six Counties that Whatcom County traditionally uses for salary compensation discussions (Benton, Cowlitz, Kitsap, Skagit, Thurston, Yakima). There was discussion as to whether

the list should be limited to four counties, and whether Benton, Cowlitz and Skagit were appropriate comparisons, and replaced with Clark County and Snohomish or Spokane. After deciding to use the aforementioned six counties, the Commission then compared the compensation for the Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer and Sheriff positions at those six Counties to compensation paid at Whatcom County using the following for benchmarks:

- Assessed Value
- Population
- Number of Employees
- Budget

In all cases, these Whatcom County positions are currently above their market comparables. See Attachment B. The Commission also sought to compare the cost of living in the different counties based on the best available data.

The Commission also evaluated compensation for the most senior “deputy” who reported directly to the elected official at Whatcom County. The Commission determined that the elected official’s compensation is currently below that of their deputy, should their deputy be at top step (excluding longevity), and that other management positions at the county are compensated at a higher rate than their deputy. See Attachment C.

The Commission determined the Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer and Sheriff should make approximately 10% more than the potential top step of their deputy (excluding longevity pay) established over the next two year salary cycle. Based on this, the Commission increased compensation for the Assessor, Auditor, Treasurer and Sheriff to 5% above the potential top step of their deputy plus COLA for 2020, and 5% plus COLA for 2021.

Prosecuting Attorney: The prior Salary Commission established compensation for this position at slightly less than the compensation of a Superior Court Judge. That Commission felt the compensation for the Prosecuting Attorney was appropriate for Whatcom County, even if less than the compensation for a Superior Court Judge.

The current Commission concurs that the compensation for this position is appropriately placed at slightly less than the compensation for Superior Court Judge. However, it also supports assuring the compensation for the position remains close to that of a Superior Court Judge. The Commission considered the duties of the Prosecuting Attorney and considered those of other judicial positions in Whatcom County Government, such as District Court Judges and Superior Court Commissioners.

The Commission determined the Prosecuting Attorney should be compensated at \$5,000 less than a Superior Court Judge, whose compensation is determined by the Washington Citizens’ Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials. See Attachment D.

The Commission also encourages future Salary Commissions to look at this salary placement further, and whether the salary should or should not continue to be linked to Superior Court Judge compensation.

County Executive: The prior Salary Commission elevated the County Executive compensation to a level similar to the Prosecuting Attorney. That reflected the historical parity in pay between the County Executive and the Prosecuting Attorney.

Considering the scope of management responsibility of the County Executive, the current Salary Commission concurs with this placement. The Commission concluded the County Executive compensation shall match the Prosecuting Attorney's compensation for 2020 and 2021.

County Council: In considering compensation for the County Council, the Commission considered the breadth of responsibility vested in Council members. The Commission recognized that the Council position often required near full time demands while considered a part time position. The Commission felt that increasing compensation for the County Council positions helps continue to assure a strong pool of candidates for these critical elected officials.

The Commission increased compensation for the County Council positions by 10% plus COLA for 2020, and 10% plus COLA for 2021.

ATTACHMENT A

Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers

Original Data Value

http://data.bls.gov/pdq/SurveyOutputServlet?data_tool=dropmap&series_id=C

Series Id: CUUR0400SA0,CUUS0400SA0

Not Seasonally Adjusted

Area: West urban

Item: All items

Year	Annual	% Change
2002	184.7	
2003	188.6	2.11%
2004	193.0	2.33%
2005	198.9	3.06%
2006	205.7	3.42%
2007	212.230	3.17%
2008	219.646	3.49%
2009	218.822	-0.38%
2010	221.203	1.09%
2011	227.485	2.84%
2012	232.376	2.15%
2013	235.824	1.48%
2014	240.215	1.86%
2015	243.015	1.17%
2016	247.705	1.93%
2017	254.738	2.84%
2018	263.263	3.35%

2014-2018

2.23% 5-year avg

ATTACHMENT B

Summary Elected Official 2019 Salary Comparison

	Assessor	Auditor	Executive	Prosecuting Attorney	Sheriff	Treasurer
Population	\$ 8,991	\$ 8,991	\$ -	\$ 13,973	\$ 10,621	\$ 8,991
Assessed Value	\$ 8,991	\$ 8,991	\$ -	\$ 13,973	\$ 10,621	\$ 8,991
Annual Expenditures	\$ 8,991	\$ 8,991	\$ -	\$ 13,973	\$ 10,621	\$ 8,991
Full-Time Employees	\$ 8,991	\$ 8,991	\$ -	\$ 13,973	\$ 10,621	\$ 8,991
Average:	\$ 8,991	\$ 8,991	\$ 14,367	\$ 13,973	\$ 10,621	\$ 8,991
Whatcom County:	\$9,043	\$9,043	\$14,367	\$14,367	\$11,833	\$9,043
Salary Difference	\$ 52	\$ 52	\$ -	\$ 394	\$ 1,212	\$ 52
Percentage Difference	0.58%	0.58%	0.00%	2.82%	11.41%	0.58%

WHATCOM COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS & SECONDS

ATTACHMENT C

	2019	
Assessor	\$9,043	
Chief Deputy Assessor	\$9,142	<i>Actual</i>
	\$9,142	<i>Top Step</i>
Auditor	\$9,043	
Chief Deputy Auditor	\$9,040	<i>Actual</i>
	\$9,142	<i>Top Step</i>
Treasurer	\$9,043	
Chief Deputy Treasurer	\$9,040	<i>Actual</i>
	\$9,142	<i>Top Step</i>
Sheriff	\$11,833	
Undersheriff	*12,903	<i>Actual</i>
	\$12,484	<i>Top Step</i>
	*includes longevity	

2019
Monthly
Deputy plus 5%
\$ 9,599

2020	2020
Monthly	Annual Total
Plus 2.23% COLA	
\$ 9,813	\$ 117,758

2021	2021
Monthly	Annual Total
5% plus 2.23% COLA	
\$ 10,523	\$ 126,272

\$ 9,599

\$ 9,813	\$ 117,758
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\$ 10,523	\$ 126,272
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\$ 9,599

\$ 9,813	\$ 117,758
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\$ 10,523	\$ 126,272
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\$ 13,108

\$ 13,401	\$ 160,806
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\$ 14,369	\$ 172,432
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	2019
Prosecuting Attorney	\$14,367
County Executive	\$14,367

2020	2020
Monthly	Annual Total
Sup Ct Judge minus \$5,000	
\$ 15,499	\$ 185,985

2021	2021
Monthly	Annual Total
Sup Ct Judge minus \$5,000	
\$ 16,223	\$ 194,675

\$ 15,499	\$ 185,985
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\$ 16,223	\$ 194,675
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	2019
County Council	\$2,656

2020	2020
Monthly	Annual Total
10% plus 2.23% COLA	
\$ 2,983	\$ 35,802

2021	2021
Monthly	Annual Total
10% plus 2.23% COLA	
\$ 3,348	\$ 40,180

ATTACHMENT D



Washington Citizens' Commission
on Salaries for Elected Officials

Salary Information

SALARY INFORMATION

Final 2019 and 2020 Salary Schedule

Judicial Branch

Position	Current Salary	Salary Effective 7/1/2019	Salary Effective 7/1/2020
Supreme Court Chief Justice	193,162	213,773	223,499
Supreme Court Justices	190,415	210,732	220,320
Court of Appeals Judges	181,263	200,603	209,730
Superior Court Judges	172,571	190,985	199,675
District Court Judges	164,313	181,846	190,120

Information about the components of the 2019 and 2020 final salary schedule follows:

Judicial Branch:

- Increase the base salary for the positions by 8.5% in 2019 and 2.5% in 2020 to move towards “parity” with the Federal Bench; and
- Cost of living adjustment of 2% in 2019 and 2% in 2020.