

# **HB0608– MSBA Support Letter (2026.02.06 - Judicial**

Uploaded by: Shaoli Sarkar

Position: FAV



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**Bill:** HB 608 - Courts - Administrative Judges - Annual Stipend

**Committee:** House Appropriations Committee

**Position:** Favorable

**Date:** February 6, 2026

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The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **supports** House Bill 608 - Courts - Administrative Judges - Annual Stipend, authorizing the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court of Maryland and a judge who serves as an administrative judge for a circuit court or the District Court to receive an annual stipend in addition to the judge's annual salary. Through its advocacy committees and various practice-specific sections, MSBA monitors and takes positions on legislation that protects the legal profession, preserves the integrity of the judicial system, and ensures access to justice for Marylanders.

MSBA supports reasonable and equitable compensation for the profession, in line with judicial salaries and stipends in other states, to attract and retain a capable, diverse, and inclusive group of judges in Maryland. HB 608 provides a reasonable compensation mechanism for the additional role and responsibilities of the Chief Judge and administrative judges to oversee court operations and budget, judicial efficiency, and personnel management, in addition to their caseload.

MSBA supports HB 608 and urges a favorable report.

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# **Administrative Judges Compensation Review final 20**

Uploaded by: Will Vormelker

Position: FAV



SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL COMPENSATION  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE COMPENSATION

FEBRUARY 2026

# Special Committee on Judicial Compensation | Administrative Judge Compensation

In its proposal to the Judicial Compensation Commission (Commission) the Judiciary's Special Committee on Judicial Compensation (Committee) recommended a taxable stipend for the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court, and circuit and District Court Administrative Judges in Maryland effective July 1, 2026, to ensure (1) compensatory fairness for administrative duties, (2) improved ability to attract and retain experienced judges for these administrative positions, and (3) alignment with cross-state practice. National research and state statutes show several workable models and a range of amounts that can be adapted to Maryland. The Committee requested that the Commission recommend the adoption of a \$7,500 annual stipend for each County Administrative Judge serving on a Circuit Court as well as for each District Court Administrative Judge. In addition, the Committee requested that the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court receive a \$7,500 annual stipend to reflect that position's additional administrative duties.

The Commission unanimously voted to recommend that the General Assembly provide a \$7,500 annual stipend to the 37 affected judges.

## *Administrative Judge Compensation*

The Chief Judge of the Appellate Court, as well as circuit and District Court Administrative Judges are responsible for and execute considerable administrative duties in addition to their full-time adjudicative duties as judges of their respective courts. These duties, which are prescribed by Rule,<sup>1</sup> include budget oversight, case management and scheduling, coordination with county

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<sup>1</sup> See Rules 16-103, 16-105 and 16-107.

Rule 16-103, governing the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court, provides, "the Chief Judge of the Appellate Court is responsible for the administration of the Appellate Court and, with respect to that court and to the extent applicable, has the authority of a County Administrative Judge."

Rule 16-105, applicable to Circuit Court County Administrative Judges, contains a more detailed list of duties:

(b) Duties. Subject to the provisions of this Chapter, other applicable law, the general supervision of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the general supervision of the Circuit Administrative Judge, the County Administrative Judge is responsible for the administration of the circuit court, including:

- (1) supervision of the judges, officials, and employees of the court;
- (2) assignment of judges within the court pursuant to Rule 16-302 (Assignment of Actions for Trial; Case Management Plan);
- (3) supervision and expeditious disposition of cases filed in the court, control over the trial and other calendars of the court, assignment of cases for trial and hearing pursuant to Rule 16-302 (Assignment of Actions for Trial; Case Management Plan) and Rule 16-304 (Chambers Judge), and scheduling of court sessions;
- (4) preparation of the court's budget;
- (5) preparation of a case management plan for the court pursuant to Rule 16-302;
- (6) preparation of a continuity of operations plan for the court pursuant to Rule 16-803;
- (7) preparation of a jury plan for the court pursuant to Code, Courts Article, Title 8, Subtitle 2 and implementation of that plan;

Cross reference: See Rule 16-402 (e).

- (8) preparation of any plan to create a problem-solving court program for the court pursuant to Rule 16-207;

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officials, emergency management, policy implementation, procurement oversight, and supervision of judges and court officials, while representing the respective court publicly.

Despite these additional and significant administrative responsibilities, county circuit courts and the District Court administrative judges' salaries are equivalent to those of the judges on their respective courts. Although the salary of Chief Judge of the Appellate Court is \$3,000 higher than the judges of the Appellate Court, the differential does not adequately reflect the administrative workload of the Chief Judge.

## *Other Jurisdictions' Approaches to Administrative Judge Compensation*

A study completed by the National Center for State Courts in 2024 shows that a number of other jurisdictions recognize these extra administrative responsibilities at the general and intermediate appellate courts and have authorized salary supplements for administrative judges. At the intermediate appellate court level, 18 states provide for an additional salary supplement. At the general jurisdiction court level, 15 states plus the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have salary supplements. Below is a list of the states that recognize the additional responsibilities at the general jurisdiction level.

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- (9) ordering the purchase of all equipment and supplies for (A) the court, and (B) the ancillary services and officials of the court, including magistrates, auditors, examiners, court administrators, court reporters, jury commissioner, staff of the medical offices, and all other court personnel except personnel comprising the Clerk of Court's office;
  - (10) except as otherwise provided in section (c) of this Rule, supervision of and responsibility for the employment, discharge, and classification of court personnel and personnel of its ancillary services and the maintenance of personnel files, unless a majority of the judges of the court disapproves of a specific action;
  - (11) implementation and enforcement of all administrative policies, rules, orders, and directives of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the State Court Administrator, and the Circuit Administrative Judge of the judicial circuit; and
  - (12) performance of any other administrative duties necessary to the effective administration of the internal management of the court and the prompt disposition of litigation in it.

Rule 16-107, applicable to Administrative Judges of the District Court, provides:

“Duties. Subject to the direction of the Chief Judge of the District Court, the administrative judges, in their respective districts, are responsible for (1) the administration, operation, and maintenance of the court; (2) the conduct and scheduling of the court's business; and (3) subject to the approval of the Chief Judge of the District Court, the appointment and discharge of commissioners of the District Court within their respective administrative districts pursuant to Article IV, § 41G of the Maryland Constitution.”

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	NCSC Survey of General Jurisdiction Courts (as of July 2024) <sup>2</sup>
<b>California</b>	2% for Presiding Judges with 2-14 judges in the court; 4% for Presiding Judges with 15 or more judges in the court
<b>Connecticut</b>	\$11,038
<b>District of Columbia</b>	\$500
<b>Georgia</b>	Chief Judges in some circuits do receive additional supplements, the amount varies by circuit
<b>Guam</b>	\$10,000
<b>Idaho</b>	\$3,000
<b>Indiana</b>	Some counties elect to pay a county supplement to their trial court judges while other counties elect not to pay the county supplement. The maximum amount is \$5,000 and amounts paid varies by county.
<b>Kansas</b>	\$1,510
<b>Kentucky</b>	\$1,000
<b>Maine</b>	\$7,218
<b>New Jersey</b>	\$3,000
<b>New Mexico</b>	\$1,805
<b>North Dakota</b>	\$4,862
<b>Northern Mariana Islands</b>	\$3,000
<b>Rhode Island</b>	Median for the range is \$228,120

<sup>2</sup> The National Center for State Courts' (NCSC) Survey of Judicial Salaries, "Supplemental Salaries Chief/Presiding Judges," as of July, 2024 <https://perma.cc/A9UW-GK4N>.

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<b>South Dakota</b>	\$2,000
<b>Texas</b>	In a county with more than five district courts, a district judge who serves as a local administrative district judge under [Texas Government Code] Section 74.091 is entitled to an annual base salary from the state in the amount equal to \$5,000 more than the maximum salary from the state to which the judge is otherwise entitled
<b>Utah</b>	\$2,000
<b>U.S. Virgin Islands</b>	\$10,000