

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2002 Session

**FISCAL NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 839

(Senator Baker)

Judicial Proceedings

Judiciary

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**Cecil County and Kent County - Orphans' Court Judges - Salaries**

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This bill increases the annual salary of Cecil County Orphans' Court judges from \$4,500 annually to \$5,500 annually. The bill also increases the annual salary of the Kent County Orphans' Court judges from \$3,600 annually to \$4,000 annually.

The salary increases take effect at the beginning of the next term of office.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill would not directly affect State operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** Expenditures by Cecil County would increase by an estimated \$1,650 (including fringe benefits) in FY 2003 due to the January 1, 2003 effective date of anticipated salary increases. Full year expenditure increases beginning in FY 2004 would be approximately \$3,300.

Expenditures by Kent County would increase by an estimated \$875 (including fringe benefits) in FY 2003 due to the December 1, 2002 effective date of anticipated salary increases. Full year expenditure increases beginning in FY 2004 would be approximately \$1,500.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The judges for the Cecil County Orphans' Court currently earn \$4,500 annually, while the judges for the Kent County Orphans' Court earn \$3,600 annually. Compensation and allowances for orphans' court judges are set by statute.

**Background:** An orphans' court is a probate court. Orphans' court judges are elected to serve four-year terms. Each county, other than Harford and Montgomery counties, has three judges sitting on its orphans' court. In Harford and Montgomery counties, circuit court judges preside in orphans' court. The chief judge of each county is appointed by the Governor. An orphans' court may establish that a will is valid, administer an estate, and direct the conduct of an executor of an estate.

The last time salaries for the Cecil and Kent County Orphans' Court judges were increased was 1998. At that time the salary for the Cecil County Orphans' Court judges was raised from \$3,500 annually to \$4,500 annually, and the salary for the Kent County Orphans' Court judges was raised from \$2,080 annually to \$3,600 annually.

The salaries for orphans' court judges vary greatly across the State. The salary provisions in State law are set forth below:

<u>County</u>	<u>Salary</u>
Allegany	annual salary set by the county commissioners
Anne Arundel	\$19,000 annually with an additional \$500 for the chief judge
Baltimore City	\$50,000 annually for associate judges, \$60,000 annually for the chief judge
Baltimore	\$30,000 annually for associate judges, \$32,000 annually for the chief judge
Calvert	\$5,000 annually for associate judges, \$5,200 annually for the chief judge
Caroline	\$4,500 annually for each judge
Carroll	\$10,000 annually for each judge
Cecil	\$4,500 annually for each judge
Charles	through 2002, \$6,365 annually for each judge; beginning 2003, \$7,000 annually
Dorchester	\$3,500 annually for each judge
Frederick	\$6,000 annually for associate judges, \$6,500 annually for the chief judge
Garrett	annual salary set by the county commissioners
Howard	\$6,380 annually for associate judges, \$7,400 annually for the chief judge
Kent	\$3,600 annually for each judge
Prince George's	through the current term of office, \$31,500 annually for associate judges, \$32,000 annually for the chief judge; beginning at the start of the next term of office, \$36,500 annually for associate judges, \$37,000 annually for the chief judge
Queen Anne's	annual salary set by the county commissioners
St. Mary's	\$3,000 annually for each judge
Somerset	\$34 a day for each day spent attending court sessions
Talbot	annual salary set by the county council
Washington	\$6,000 annually for each judge
Wicomico	\$3,200 annually for each judge
Worcester	set by county commissioners, but not less than \$30 a day for each day spent attending court sessions

In addition, many of the orphans' court judges also receive allowances for travel and other expenses.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Cecil County, Kent County, Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), State Prosecutor's Office, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 11, 2002  
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