

Salary and Workload Comparison of Similar State Appellate Courts

Below are the states the Salary Commission previously used as a salary comparison. Below are the current and updated salary information as well as a comparison of the workload.¹ When comparing the salaries of Supreme Court justices across the nation, Arkansas currently falls in the bottom half, ranking 29th in the country. An increase in salary would still fall well within the national norm.²

State	Current Salary	Supreme Court Opinions	COA Opinions
Tennessee	\$182,688	37	1549
Missouri	\$172,017	63	1290
Iowa	\$170,544	113	1359
Arkansas*	\$166,500	295	630

In Arkansas

This chart illustrates the number of opinions issued by the seven justices of the Arkansas Supreme Court, exclusive of motions, court time, or other administrative functions. The twelve member Arkansas Court of Appeals sits in three-judge panels. Assuming all four three-judge panels issued an equal amount of their total 630 opinion count, each panel would issue 157.5 opinions.

Salaries for state government attorneys in Arkansas are on the rise to be more competitive with the private market. As reported in 2016, the subcommittee of the Arkansas Legislative Council elected to increase salaries of state government attorneys by 8% to curb turnover in those positions occurring due to increased private sector earning potential.³ In September 2016, the University of Arkansas' general counsel position experienced an increase in salary from \$132,767 to \$190,656 as the University filled the vacant position, according to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette.⁴

**The Arkansas Supreme Court is the only state court in modern U.S. history to review seven death row appeals within a two-week period.*

¹ Westlaw case reporting of all opinions issued by the referenced courts between June 7, 2016 and June 7, 2017. It is difficult to obtain a comparison on the Louisiana Supreme Court as they sit in panels of three and operate on a different state system than the rest of the country. See Louisiana Supreme Court website, http://www.lasc.org/about_the_court/history.asp

² See <http://www.ncsc.org/~media/Microsites/Files/Judicial%20Salaries/JST-2017-layout.ashx>

³ Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Aug. 18, 2016.

⁴ Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Sept. 9, 2016. 8A