

**WHATCOM COUNTY COMMISSION ON SALARIES
FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

[Virtual Meeting](#)

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Minutes from March 26, 2025 Meeting**
- 4. Public Comment – cap of 18 minutes total**
 - 4.1. Any interested attendee will be given 3 minutes for public comment
- 5. Old Business**
 - 5.1. Review Data Summary
 - Comparable Counties
 - Other Position Data
 - County Department Head Salaries
 - 5.2. Commissioner Data Requests
 - Clarification on benefits offered update on Commissioner Data Request
 - Updated Department Head Salaries
- 6. New Business**
 - 6.1. Discuss recommendations
- 7. Next Steps**
 - 7.1. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 23rd 4 – 6 p.m. PDT
- 8. Adjourn**

Attachments

- 5.1 Summary Data
- 5.2 Commission Data Request document with links

Whatcom County Executive's Office is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: 2025 WC Salary Commission

Time: Jan 29, 2025 16:00 Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Every 2 weeks on Wed, until Apr 23, 2025, 7 occurrence(s)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly:

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/tZlude6grDgjG9Z3FoYDz_63x1cKbFNWiRRA/ics?icsToken=DNTB4qxTs7THNlaUUgAALAAAAMoU6WjacQz54jQSgqGmclJzTIgIeQWYgvBodBpGNG4w2iRBf3_hC5cv2VI7cQLb4wLaOfci2sEuVLeLRDAwMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=BwaWVz-fSwK9Ue7908Qneg

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86327823912>

Meeting ID: 863 2782 3912

One tap mobile

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- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
- +1 305 224 1968 US
- +1 309 205 3325 US
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 360 209 5623 US
- +1 386 347 5053 US
- +1 507 473 4847 US
- +1 564 217 2000 US
- +1 646 931 3860 US
- +1 689 278 1000 US
- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
- 833 548 0276 US Toll-free
- 833 548 0282 US Toll-free
- 877 853 5247 US Toll-free
- 888 788 0099 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 863 2782 3912

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86327823912>

Join by SIP

- 86327823912@zoomcrc.com

Join by H.323

- 144.195.19.161 (US West)
- 206.247.11.121 (US East)
- 115.114.131.7 (India Mumbai)
- 115.114.115.7 (India Hyderabad)
- 159.124.15.191 (Amsterdam Netherlands)
- 159.124.47.249 (Germany)
- 159.124.104.213 (Australia Sydney)
- 159.124.74.212 (Australia Melbourne)
- 170.114.180.219 (Singapore)
- 64.211.144.160 (Brazil)
- 159.124.132.243 (Mexico)
- 159.124.168.213 (Canada Toronto)
- 159.124.196.25 (Canada Vancouver)
- 170.114.194.163 (Japan Tokyo)
- 147.124.100.25 (Japan Osaka)

Meeting ID: 863 2782 3912

Summary of Monthly Data (Updated April 1, 2025)

Position/Data Description	Description	All	Assessor	Auditor	Treasurer	Executive	Prosecuting Attorney	Sheriff	County Council
Current Pay (2025):	Monthly pay from 7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025		\$ 13,911	\$ 13,911	\$ 13,911	\$ 19,592	\$ 19,005	\$ 18,434	\$ 6,368
Pay as of 7/1/2025	Monthly pay from 7/1/2025 - 12/31/2025		\$ 14,411	\$ 14,411	\$ 14,411	\$ 20,297	\$ 19,688	\$ 19,097	\$ 6,596
WA State Superior Judge Pay 2025 (eff 7/1/2025)	Pay for comparable State position						\$ 19,705		
WA State Superior Judge Pay 2026 (eff 7/1/2026)	Pay for comparable State position						\$ 20,301		
City of Bellingham Police Chief (2023)	Pay for comprable City position (largest in							\$ 17,555	
WA State Legislators 2025 (eff 7/1/2025)	Pay for comparable State position								\$ 5,534
WA State Legislators 2026 (eff 7/1/2026)	Pay for comparable State position								\$ 5,927
City of Bellingham Council 2025	Pay for comprable City position (largest in								\$ 5,923
City of Bellingham Council 2026	Pay for comprable City position (largest in								\$ 6,101
Second-in-Command Title(s)	Highest position (and pay) for the position that reports to the elected official. All but the Undersherrif are non-represented positions.		Chief Deputy Assessor	Chief Deputy Auditor	Chief Deputy Treasurer	Deputy Executive	Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor/ Chief Criminal Deputy Prosecutor	Undersheriff	N/A
Second-in-Command Actual			\$ 9,491	\$ 9,852	\$ 11,437	\$ 15,127	\$15,629/\$16,223	\$ 14,870	N/A
Second-in-Command Top Step	Highest possible pay for the position that		\$ 11,437	\$ 11,437	\$ 11,437	\$ 18,228	\$ 16,223	\$ 15,645	N/A
Department Heads - Whatcom County									
Top of Range 16		\$15,305							
Finance Director - Range 16 Actual		\$13,685							
IT Director - Range 16 Actual		\$14,745							
HR Director - Range 16 Actual		\$14,745							
Facilities Director - Range 16 Actual		\$14,745							
Additional Information:									
Step 20 of 2023 Salary Matrix (Unrepresented EE's)	Highest pay (step) for the highest (level)		\$ 19,322						
Step 19 of 2023 Salary Matrix (Unrepresented EE's)	Highest pay (step) for the highest occupied		\$ 18,228						
Unrep COLA (2024)	Cost of Living Adjustment for non-represented		4%						
Unrep COLA (2025)	Cost of Living Adjustment for non-represented		3%						
CPI-U West Region 5-year Average			4.28%						

Notes:

** previously used by 2021 commission

***State salaries are updated on 7/1 vs. Whatcom County adjustments which are effective 1/1

[State Salary information](#)

Every effort was made to ensure accurate numbers, but in some cases there could be slight differences due to timing, rounding or other insignificant matters.

Comparable Counties		
2001 Arbitration Decision	2022 Non-rep Salary Survey*	AWC Survey*
Benton	Benton	Benton
Cowlitz	(no response)	(2/4)
Kitsap	Kitsap	Kitsap
Skagit	Skagit	Skagit
Thurston	(no response)	Thurston
Yakima	Yakima	Yakima
	Snohomish	Clark
	City of:	
	Bellingham	
	Federal Way	
	Kirkland	
	Renton (no response)	
	Richland	
	Yakima	
	Auburn (no response)	
* union arbitration decision from 2001	*Gallagher, the compensation consultant determined these comparables. The ones labeled "no response" were identified but they did not respond so their data was not included in the analysis	** this process involves identifying the 4 counties above and below Whatcom on each measure (population, assessed value, FT ee's, Annual expenditures). Only counties that met that

Prosecutor Salaries*		
Match Superior Court Judge	Exceed Superior Court	Below Superior Court Judge
Whatcom		
Benton	King	
	Snohomish	Cowlitz
Kitsap		
		Skagit
Thurston		
Yakima		
Pierce		
Spokane		
Clark		
Grant		
Mason		
Kittitas		
Island		

*as reported by Prosecutor Richey in his written report

Additional Position Data for consideration*		
	Internal	External
Executive		
Prosecuting Attorney		WA State Superior Court Judge
Sherriff **	County Dept. Heads; Undersherriff	City of Bellingham (COB) Police Chief
Treasurer	Finance Manager; Deputy (with 25% differential)	City of Bellingham Finance Manager; Bellingham School District Finance Manager; Port of Bellingham CFO
Assessor	County Dept. Heads; Deputy	
Auditor	County Dept. Heads (IT Mgr/HR Mgr/Finance Mgr); Deputy (w/ 25% differential)	
County Council		

*based on statements in the elected officials written statements, the following positions are identified as ones to consider when setting salaries

** the Sherriff noted that pay and benefits can be different than identified positions

Commissioner Data Request
Updated 3/31/2025

1. AWC data for "Summary of Data" on document.
Updated Data Pending with 2/5/25 target delivery date.
[Summary of Data](#)
[Whatcom County Electeds and Seconds 2023](#)
[Whatcom County Electeds and Seconds 2025](#)
[COLA by Group](#)
2. The updated salary grid for non-represented employees at the County.
[Unrepresented Position Titles and Salary Matrix.](#)
3. A copy of the 2025 budget.
Full budget is online at the link below. Final version is not published yet but I confirmed it would be the same information except some technical corrections and more narrative. <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/89954/Executives-Recommended-2025-2026-Budget>
4. Any and all written compensation philosophies that exist for elected or employee groups at the County.
"Classifying County Positions Policy" as well as the attached [2025 Unrepresented Resolution](#). Collective Bargaining Agreements are also [online](#).
5. Information on what counties are used as "comparable counties" for any elected or employee groups at the county.
Comparable Counties for all groups are Benton, Cowlitz, Kitsap, Skagit, Thurston and Yakima and listed in their agreements. More information about how those counties were determined can be found in the PERC Interest Arbitration decision from 2001 [online](#):
6. The revenue forecast for the county broken down by major categories (i.e. property tax, b&o tax revenue, etc).
Requested information from our Finance Office but in interim, please see revenue summary in the County budget and let me know if additional information is needed. <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/89954/Executives-Recommended-2025-2026-Budget>
7. Crime rates in the county as well as comparable counties
Information is available on our Sheriff's Office website: <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3442/Crime-Stats>

More information about comparable counties can be found on the WASPC site. The document is very large, but searchable and contains summaries within for each of the requested counties. (For example, you can find Skagit Co Sheriff's Office on page 396 & 397)

<https://waspc.memberclicks.net/assets/Crime%20in%20Washington%202023-compressed.pdf>
<https://www.waspc.org/cjis-statistics---reports>

8. Information about the roles and responsibilities for the positions (job descriptions, etc).

See attached County Charter Article 3. Full Charter is [online](#).

9. 10-year Salary History for the position.

[Elected Official Salary Increases.History.xls](#)

[Commissioner Darwin's Year over Year Salary Change Spreadsheet](#)

10. Population of Whatcom County for the last 10 years (2014-2024)

The most recent Comprehensive Plan is attached which shows total population in Figure 3 on page 6.

[Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan](#)

11. Funding for elected position salaries

[All elected positions are funded out of the general fund.](#)

[Clarification from Steve Oliver, Treasurer](#)

12. Benefits available to elected officials

[Information from HR](#)

[Benefit Rates](#)

The benefits offered are also outlined in Section 7 of the [Unrepresented Resolution](#).

[Information about vacation, sick and leave entitlements.](#)

13. Written Statements from Elected Officials are in this [google drive folder](#).

Additional information:

[City and County Execs with Exec Branch 2024](#)

[Dept Head Salaries - 2025 Updated](#)

Attachments can be accessed via this [google drive](#).