

# Washington State Judicial Branch

## 2025-27 Biennial Budget

### Continue Merit Increases

**Agency:** Administrative Office of the Courts

**Decision Package Code/Title:** 97 – Merit System Increases

**Agency Recommendation Summary Text:**

The Administrative Office of the Courts requests funding to continue providing merit increases for eligible employees. (General Fund-State)

**Fiscal Summary:**

	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennial	FY 2028	FY 2029	Biennial
<b>Staffing</b>						
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Operating Expenditures</b>						
Fund 001-1	\$1,364,000	\$1,364,000	\$2,728,000	\$1,364,000	\$1,364,000	\$2,728,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>						
	\$1,364,000	\$1,364,000	\$2,728,000	\$1,364,000	\$1,364,000	\$2,728,000

**Package Description:**

As part of remaining competitive in the public sector job market, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has added new steps to all judicial branch salary ranges and removed the Step M longevity cap. This request will fund merit increases for eligible employees.

**Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served:**

None.

**Explain what alternatives were explored by the agency and why they were rejected as solutions:**

There is no alternative. When necessary, AOC staff served the people of Washington without receiving the merit increments they earned. Most state employees receive annual salary step increases. It is appropriate for the AOC to provide periodic salary step increases for eligible staff.

**What are the consequences of not funding this request?**

The agency cannot absorb the increases. If this request is not funded, salary step increases would be frozen.

**Is this an expansion or alteration of a current program or service?**

This is not an expansion or alteration of a current program or service.

**Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions:**

The request is based on a calculation of the merit increases that are scheduled to occur in the 2025-27 biennium.

Expenditures by Object	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>	<u>FY 2028</u>	<u>FY 2029</u>
A Salaries and Wages	1,146,000	1,146,000	1,146,000	1,146,000
B Employee Benefits	218,000	218,000	218,000	218,000
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>1,364,000</b>	<b>1,364,000</b>	<b>1,364,000</b>	<b>1,364,000</b>

Administrative Office of the Courts  
Maintenance Level – 97 – Merit System Increments

**How does the package relate to the Judicial Branch principal policy objectives?**

Not applicable.

**Are there impacts to other governmental entities?**

None.

**Stakeholder response:**

None.

**Are there legal or administrative mandates that require this package to be funded?**

None.

**Does current law need to be changed to successfully implement this package?**

None.

**Are there impacts to state facilities?**

None.

**Are there other supporting materials that strengthen the case for this request?**

None.

**Are there information technology impacts?**

No.

**Agency Contacts:**

Christopher Stanley, 360-357-2406, [christopher.stanley@courts.wa.gov](mailto:christopher.stanley@courts.wa.gov)

Angie Wirkkala, 360-704-5528, [angie.wirkkala@courts.wa.gov](mailto:angie.wirkkala@courts.wa.gov)