

Supreme Court of Kentucky

2026-13

AMENDED ORDER

IN RE: Amendments to Pay Practices for the Kentucky Court of Justice

Under Sections 110(5)(b) and 116 of the Kentucky Constitution, the Pay Practices for the Kentucky Court of Justice, entered March 12, 2024, by Supreme Court Administrative Order 2024-09 are hereby amended:

Subject to the policies and procedures set forth in AP Part III, Personnel Policies for the Kentucky Court of Justice (KCOJ Personnel Policies), employee salaries shall be set or modified only as provided by the following Pay Practices.

(1) Completion of Initial Probationary Period

Upon successful completion of the designated initial probationary period, as provided in KCOJ Personnel Policies, Section 4.04, a tenured employee shall receive a 5% increase in salary.

(2) Continuous Years of KCOJ Service

(a) Any KCOJ employee who completes five, ten, fifteen, and twenty years of continuous KCOJ service between February 1, 2022, and July 14, 2026, shall receive a 10% increase in salary.

(b) On or after July 15, 2026, an employee may, upon approval of the Chief Justice and if funding is available, receive a salary increase based on his or her years of continuous KCOJ service to the corresponding pay tier on the KCOJ Salary Schedule, if the corresponding salary is greater than his or her current salary.

(c) If awarded, the salary increases provided by subsection (a) or (b) of this Section shall be applied in the year of the service milestone on the first day of the month in which the eligible employee was hired.

(3) Transfers, Promotions, or Reclassifications

- (a) An employee transferred, promoted, or reclassified to a position in a higher pay grade shall receive a salary increase as follows:
 - (i) 7% increase for a position one pay grade higher;
 - (ii) 14% increase for a position two pay grades higher;
 - (iii) 21% increase for a position three pay grades higher; or
 - (iv) Increase to the minimum salary of the appropriate pay tier of the pay grade based on years of continuous KCOJ service if four or more pay grades higher.

- (b) An employee transferred or demoted to a position in a lower pay grade shall receive a salary decrease as follows:
 - (i) 7% decrease for a position one pay grade lower;
 - (ii) 14% decrease for a position two pay grades lower;
 - (iii) 21% decrease for a position three pay grades lower;
 - (iv) Decrease to the minimum salary of the appropriate pay tier of the pay grade based on years of continuous KCOJ service if four or more pay grades lower.

- (c) Any percentage increase or decrease authorized under this Section reflects the salary adjustment to be received upon successful completion of probation, if applicable.

- (d) An employee in a position that is reclassified to a lower pay grade shall retain the same salary earned prior to reclassification. The employee shall not receive any salary increase upon promotion, reclassification, assignment to special duty, or any other action unless the action places the employee in a pay grade higher than the original pay grade from which the employee was reclassified.

(4) Shift Differential

- (a) An employee assigned to work at least one full 7.5-hour shift between 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday or 5:00 pm Friday and 8:00 a.m. Monday each week for six pay periods or more is eligible for a shift differential increase of 10% of his or her base salary.

- (b) The shift differential increase shall be removed if the employee no longer qualifies.

(5) Temporary Assignments

- (a) Assignments to Special Duty
 - (i) An employee who is approved for assignment to special duty to a position in a higher pay grade pursuant to KCOJ Personnel Policies Section 4.01(8), may have his or her salary raised to the entry salary of the pay grade for the class of the new position.
 - (ii) An employee who is approved for assignment to special duty to a position in the same or lower pay grade will retain the salary he or she received prior to the assignment to special duty.
 - (iii) Upon conclusion of the assignment to special duty, the employee's salary shall be adjusted to the salary received prior to the temporary assignment but include all salary advancements and adjustments that would have been awarded if the employee had remained in his or her position prior to the assignment to special duty.

- (b) Judicial Support Specialists

Effective July 15, 2026, judicial support specialists shall not be eligible to receive the 7% increase in salary for meeting the criteria set forth in Section (5)(c) of Supreme Court Administrative Order 2024-09.

(6) Rehired Employees

- (a) An individual who previously separated from the KCOJ for reasons other than retirement, who is rehired to the same pay grade within six months of separating from employment with the KCOJ, shall receive the same salary he or she earned at the time of separation.
- (b) Any employee who receives a salary pursuant to subsection

(a) of this Section and who is appointed to a position that has been designated as tenured shall be required to successfully complete an initial probationary period as provided in the KCOJ Personnel Policies, Section 4.04 in order to obtain tenured status but shall not receive an additional salary increase for the successful completion of the probationary period as provided by Section (1) of these Pay Practices.

(c) Any employee who is rehired to a different job classification within six months of separating from employment with the KCOJ shall receive a salary according to the applicable pay practices, calculated from the previous pay grade and salary earned.

(d) Any employee who is rehired to the same job classification more than six months after separating from employment with the KCOJ shall receive a salary according to the applicable pay practices.

(7) Education and Job-Related Experience

(a) AOC Human Resources shall assign a new employee's pay tier by subtracting the minimum education and job-related years of experience requirements of the position from the new employee's actual education and job-related years of experience.

(b) College or graduate degrees shall be converted to years of experience as follows:

- (i) Two years for an associate degree;
- (ii) Four years for a bachelor's degree;
- (iii) Six years for a master's degree; and
- (iv) Seven years for a doctorate degree or juris doctor (JD).

(c) New employees shall not receive a salary that deviates from the starting pay tier calculated by AOC Human Resources and shall sign documentation acknowledging the starting pay tier calculated by AOC Human Resources.

(d) A current employee may request an education achievement

salary increase of 7% if he or she has:

- (i) Completed twenty-four months of continuous KCOJ work service following their most recent hire date;
- (ii) Obtained a college or graduate degree after February 24, 2020, from a nationally or regionally accredited academic institution in a field of study relevant to the employee's official job duties;
- (iii) Not been appointed to a position with the official job title of manager, executive officer, chief information officer, deputy director, or director;
- (iv) Not already obtained a degree at the same or higher level; and
- (v) Not had the degree considered in determining his or her starting pay tier at the time of appointment.

- (e) A determination that a current employee meets the criteria for an education achievement salary increase shall be within the discretion of the AOC Director and subject to the availability of budgetary funds.

(8) Revisions to Salary Schedule

If the salary schedule is revised, an employee's salary shall be adjusted to the pay grade and pay tier as calculated in Section (7) of these Pay Practices unless the revision would result in a decrease in salary, in which case the salary shall remain the same.

(9) Legislative Salary Increases

Salary increases based upon appropriations by the General Assembly shall be administered as provided by Supreme Court Administrative Order, defining eligible and ineligible recipients and applicable salary adjustments.

(10) Salary Limitations

All salary increases are subject to the limitations set forth in Administrative Order 2024-08, Salary Limitations, and any subsequent amendment thereof.

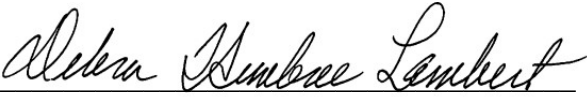
(11) Implementation of Pay Practices

Authority to implement these Pay Practices is vested in AOC Department Human Resources. Questions regarding policy and procedure or application of these Pay Practices should be directed to AOC Department of Human Resources.

This Order is effective upon entry but subject to change with or without notice and cannot form the basis of a contract for employment.

Entered this 27th day of April 2026.

LAMBERT, C.J.; BISIG, CONLEY, GOODWINE, KELLER, AND NICKELL, JJ.,
SITTING. ALL CONCUR. THOMPSON, J., NOT SITTING.


CHIEF JUSTICE