



## **Salary Commission**

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Date: April 26, 2024

To: Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners

From: 2024 Salary Commission  
Kelly Anderson  
Koffi Dessou  
Karen Ehn  
Heather Pedersen (Chair)  
Travis Southworth-Neumeyer

Re: Multnomah County Salary Commission Report 2024

Under the authority of Section 4.30 of the Multnomah County Home Rule Charter as amended November 2010, the 2024 Multnomah County Salary Commission was appointed by the County Auditor to set salaries for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) members, the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners, the Sheriff, and the supplemental salary of the District Attorney.

Enclosed is the Salary Commission's report, which sets the salaries for these positions and documents the basis for our decisions. We will be happy to answer questions or provide additional information upon request.

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2024 Multnomah County Salary Commission  
Summary of Recommendations

Position	Current Salary	2024/25 Salary	2025/26 Salary	Notes
County Commissioner	\$131,162	\$144,278 +COLA <sup>1</sup> 7/1/2024	+ COLA 7/1/2025	Anchored to the minimum of the Department Director 1 salary range
Chair, Board of County Commissioners	\$217,860	\$239,646 + COLA 7/1/2024	+ COLA 7/1/2025	Anchored to 85% through the range of the Department Director 2 salary range
Sheriff	\$217,860	\$239,646 + COLA 7/1/2024	+ COLA 7/1/2025	Anchored to 85% through the range of the Department Director 2 salary range
District Attorney (County-paid Supplemental Salary)	\$98,372 (+ State \$164,517)	\$108,208 + COLA 7/1/2024	+ COLA 7/1/2025	County supplemental compensation anchored at 75% of the minimum of the Department Director 1 salary range (applies to the County supplemental portion of salary only – the state salary is independent of this portion)

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> “COLA” refers to a Cost of Living Adjustment granted to non-represented employees of Multnomah County.

## **Executive Summary**

In each even year, the Salary Commission collects and analyzes data related to the compensation of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), the Chair of the BOCC, the Sheriff, and the supplemental salary of the District Attorney. Data reviewed includes both external market data as well as the compensation of County staff (internal comparisons). Since 2018, the Salary Commission has placed an emphasis on internal comparisons when reviewing elected official salaries, and has used the methodology of anchoring all elected official compensation to a point within the salary range of either Department Director 1 or Department Director 2.

This year, the Salary Commission received notice from County Human Resources that they were conducting a salary study for select non-represented classifications, including the Department Director series. In March 2024, the Salary Commission learned the outcome of the study, which will result in a one-grade (10%) increase for Department Director 1 and Department Director 2, effective July 1, 2024, before any cost of living adjustment is applied.

### **County Commissioners**

This Commission collected and analyzed data on comparable positions in other jurisdictions, and found the Commissioner positions are compensated 6% above the external market. The 2024 Salary Commission agrees to continue the established approach of anchoring County Commissioner pay to the minimum of the Department Director 1 salary range, which will be \$144,278 effective July 1, 2024, and increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. Additionally, for 2025/26, the County Commissioner salary rate shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26.

### **Chair, Board of County Commissioners**

This Commission collected and analyzed data of County Chair positions in other jurisdictions. Due to the unique nature of the Multnomah County Chair, which serves as the County CEO and Budget Officer, the external market does not yield comparable positions; therefore, internal pay equity continues to drive the Salary Commission's recommendation.

In 2022, the Salary Commission adjusted their methodology, setting the 2022/23 salary for the Chair at 85% through the range of the Department Director 2, where it had previously been set at 75% through the range. This change was in consideration of the significant

executive responsibilities the Chair holds and compression with the actual salaries of Department Director 2 incumbents. The Commission noted appointed Department Director 2 incumbents reporting to the Chair might earn up to 6% more; however, this was deemed acceptable due to the nature of an elected official vs. appointed incumbent.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) position, classified as Department Director, Principal, was added in 2011 and is also under the general supervision of the County Chair. Currently, the COO is paid 21% more than the Chair. Effective July 1, 2024, this spread would reduce to 9.8%. At this time, it is not known whether the Department Director, Principal will receive a similar increase to the Department Director 1 and 2.

The 2024 Salary Commission agrees to continue the established approach of anchoring County Chair pay to 85% through the new Department Director 2 salary range. Effective July 1, 2024, the Chair's salary will change from \$217,860 to \$239,646. The Chair's salary shall also be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. For 2025/26, the County Chair salary rate shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26.

### **Multnomah County Sheriff**

This Commission collected and analyzed data on Sheriff positions in other jurisdictions, and found the Sheriff compensated at 15% above the external market average. The Commission noted, however, the Sheriff's salary is just 1.3% above market average in relation to other Portland-Metro area county Sheriff positions. The Salary Commission also considered compression with direct reports, including the Undersheriff and Chief Deputy positions as well as the salaries of Multnomah County department directors.

In 2022, the Salary Commission adjusted their methodology, setting the 2022/23 salary for Sheriff at 85% through the range of the Department Director 2, where it had previously been set at 75% through the range. The reasons for the increase included compression with other department heads and the increasing complexity of Sheriff's Office activities and services.

The 2024 Salary Commission agrees to continue the established approach of anchoring Sheriff pay to 85% through the new Department Director 2 salary range. Effective July 1, 2024, the Sheriff's salary will change from \$217,860 to \$239,646. The Sheriff's salary shall also be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. For 2025/26, the Sheriff's salary rate shall be increased

by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26.

### **District Attorney - County Paid Supplemental Salary**

The District Attorney's salary is comprised of a State of Oregon salary (which is the same for all county district attorneys) and a Multnomah County supplemental salary. In 2022, the Salary Commission adjusted their methodology, setting the 2022/23 county salary for District Attorney at 75% of the minimum of the Department Director 1 salary range. Prior to that, the Commission had set the District Attorney's targeted total salary at 75% of the Department Director 2 salary range, which resulted in a fluctuation in the county portion each year as the State portion increased separately. Setting the county salary at 75% of the minimum of the Department Director 1 salary range also provided an increase in the county salary, which improved the District Attorney's market placement.

This Commission collected and analyzed data on District Attorney positions in other jurisdictions, and found the District Attorney compensated at 12% above the external market average. The Commission noted, however, the District Attorney's salary to be 7% *below* market average in relation to other Portland-Metro area county District Attorney positions.

The 2024 Salary Commission agrees to continue the established approach of anchoring District Attorney pay to 75% of the minimum of the new Department Director 1 salary range. Effective July 1, 2024, the county portion of the District Attorney's salary will change from \$98,372 to \$108,208, resulting in a combined salary of \$272,725.

The County supplemental salary for the District Attorney shall also be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. For 2025/26, the supplemental salary shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26.

Respectfully submitted this 26th day of April, 2024.

### **By the Multnomah County Salary Commission:**

Kelly Anderson  
Koffi Dessou  
Karen Ehn  
Heather Pedersen (Chair)  
Travis Southworth-Neumeyer

## SALARY COMMISSION HISTORY

In November, 1984 the Home Rule Charter was amended as follows:

"The Auditor shall appoint a five-member salary commission, composed of qualified people with personnel experience by January 1, 1986, and by January 1 in each even year thereafter..(to make) salary adjustment recommendations, if any..."

The first Salary Commission was appointed in 1986 and a new Salary Commission has been appointed in each even year, up to the current 2024 Salary Commission.

In 1990, the voters approved a ballot measure submitted by the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission, which allowed the BOCC to approve their own salary increases rather than salary increase recommendations being referred to the voters. The measure also specified they were not allowed to set salaries higher than the recommendation from the Salary Commission.

In 1991, a County Counsel's opinion stated the Salary Commission may also make recommendations regarding the salaries of the Sheriff and District Attorney, if requested.

In 2004, the voters approved a ballot measure submitted by the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission, which modified the language of the County Charter, Section 4.30 to read as follows:

*"The auditor shall appoint a five-member salary commission, composed of qualified human resource professionals with compensation experience, by January 1 of each even year. The salary commission shall set the salaries for the chair of the board of county commissioners and the county commissioners, documenting the basis of its decisions."*

In October 2005, the Salary Commission was given the authority, under BOCC Resolution No. 05-169, to recommend salary adjustments to the District Attorney's salary in future years. Included in the BOCC Resolution No. 05-169 was a provision that the District Attorney receive the annual cost of living increases, based on the total salary granted to other non-represented staff in the County.

Beginning in October 2007, the Board of County Commissioners requested the Auditor to include the Sheriff's salary in the Salary Commission study, through Resolution No. 97-160.

Ballot measure 26-76, adopted by the people November 2, 2010, amended the Home Rule Charter, giving authority to the Salary Commission to set the salary of the Sheriff and the County paid supplemental salary of the District Attorney.



## **APPENDIX**

### **CONTENTS OF THIS APPENDIX**

This Appendix contains sections on the following:

- Board of County Commissioners (Commissioner and Chair)
- Sheriff
- District Attorney - County-paid supplemental salary
- Acknowledgements

## **I. BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS POSITIONS**

The 2018 Salary Commission adopted the emphasis of internal comparisons for all elected officials, including Commissioners and the Chair, anchoring compensation to a point within the salary range of the Department Director 1 and Department Director 2, respectively. The 2020 Salary Commission upheld this methodology.

The 2022 Salary Commission adopted the same methodology for Commissioners; however, for the position of the Chair, the Salary Commission adjusted the anchor position from 75% to 85% through Department Director 2 due to increased compression with internal salaries and to better align the position amongst direct reports.

This methodology is upheld by the 2024 Salary Commission.

## **METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS**

Compensation theory suggests that considering both external market data and internal pay equity is the most widely accepted methodology for setting salary rates. This is the revised approach taken by previous Salary Commissions and is being reaffirmed by the 2024 Salary Commission.

The Salary Commission collected and reviewed data from a number of sources as summarized below.

### **1. Survey information for County Commissioner provided by the County Human Resources (HR) Office:**

The County HR office previously identified several comparable counties for purposes of comparing County Commissioner salaries. The current Salary Commission continues to believe there are sufficient Pacific Northwest comparators. This year, the Salary Commission also requested and received data from Oklahoma County, which is nearest in population to Multnomah County and contains a major metropolitan area, Oklahoma City, similar in size to Portland. While this information was reviewed, it did not significantly influence this commission's recommendations, as Oklahoma County has a significantly different County governance structure. The current Salary Commission continues to limit the geographic adjustment to a single index used by the County HR Office, from the Economic Research Institute (ERI).

**Exhibit A: Comparison of County Commissioner Salaries in Comparable Counties  
January 2024**

<b>County</b>	<b>Actual Salary 1/1/2024</b>	<b>Geographic Adjustment*</b>	<b>Equivalent Portland Salary</b>
Clackamas County, OR	\$125,085	None	\$125,085
Lane County, OR	\$87,869	8.58%	\$95,409
Marion County, OR	\$121,077	5.46%	\$127,692
Pierce County, WA	\$128,724	-4.41%	\$123,047
Snohomish County, WA	\$140,763	-11.44%	\$124,658
Thurston County, WA	\$139,560	4.02%	\$145,166
Washington County, OR	\$124,982	None	\$124,982
Average			\$123,720
		<b>Multnomah Co</b>	\$131,162
		Differential	6.02%

*Geographic adjustment via ERI data through the Multnomah County Human Resources Office.*

*Salary Data Source: Multnomah County Auditor’s Office Survey, January, 2024*

*Note: Washington County established a Salary Commission in 2020, which sets the salaries for their Board of County Commissioners.*

*Note: Not adjusted for any employer paid pickup contribution to the retirement system.*

The above data was collected in January, 2024. It is possible these jurisdictions will increase salaries at some point in 2024. Using this data to set 2025/26 salaries creates what is called a “lag” effect in compensation terms, but is still the best data to use at this point in time.

**2. Survey information for County Chair provided by the County Human Resources (HR) Office:**

This Salary Commission concurs with previous commissions who were unable to match the Multnomah County’s Chair position to another county with any degree of confidence. There are counties in the Pacific Northwest that match the demographics of Multnomah County closely enough to be considered contenders. However, their organizational structures vary widely, some with responsibilities split between the legislative body and a county executive who manages operations. In Multnomah County, those responsibilities are held solely by the Chair of the BOCC, with the assistance of a Chief Operating Officer, who supervises Department Directors under the authority of the County Chair. This year, we found no equivalent job matches.

**3. Comparability between the Chair and County Department Directors:**

The Chair has countywide operational and fiscal responsibilities, which the County Commissioners do not. Eight department directors in four salary ranges are under the authority of the Chair, including the COO. Salaries for all positions are detailed in Exhibit B below.

**Exhibit B: Department Directors' 2023/24 Salaries**

Department	Classification	2023/24 Salary	Pay Scale Minimum	Pay Scale Midpoint	Pay Scale Maximum
Community Justice	Department Director 1	\$209,859	\$131,162	\$170,510	\$209,859
Community Services	Department Director 1	\$203,700	\$131,162	\$170,510	\$209,859
Library	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
County Assets	Department Director 2 / CIO	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
Human Services	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
Joint Office of Homeless Services	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
County Management	COO/Principal Dept Director	\$263,170	\$174,577	\$226,950	\$279,322
Health Services	Health Department Director	\$279,322	\$174,577	\$226,950	\$279,322

Compensation theory suggests the spread between a supervisor and subordinate should be 10% to 25%. The Chair’s salary compared with the positions under their authority shows the Chair is paid less than all but two incumbents. The Chair’s salary is set at 85% through the salary range of the Department Director 2. Due to the nature of this elected position vs. the appointed incumbents, this was deemed acceptable.

**4. Tenure in the job:**

Generally speaking, salary will increase based in part on tenure in the position. As these are elected, a newly elected BOCC member will receive the salary of the outgoing BOCC member. Consequently, tenure in the position is not a factor in considering an appropriate salary.

**5. Assumption of full-time:**

Although there is no mandated requirement, this Salary Commission continues to assume Commissioner and Chair are full-time positions and salaries set based on this assumption.

**6. Benefits considerations:**

Elected officials receive the same benefits as any other County employee with the exception of disability insurance. The level of benefits for elected officials is not within the scope of the Salary Commission's authorized review.

#### **7. Consumer Price Index (CPI) considerations:**

CPI data is an integral part of the information base in the data presented. It influences the market data from other counties and from within the County in determining appropriate salary ranges for department directors.

#### **8. Pay for performance:**

BOCC salaries relate to the office and not the elected incumbent. In other words, salaries are based on what the *job* is worth. Because it does not include a "pay for performance" model, the set salary is not a measure of the worth of the *individual* who occupies the position.

#### **9. Compensation philosophy:**

Typically, an organization will consider three factors when designing compensation programs. These are the ability for an organization to 1) attract, 2) retain and 3) motivate employees. Attracting talent for the BOCC is limited to the local area so salary comparability with other jurisdictions is not relevant to a certain extent. Nevertheless, this Salary Commission believes that an equitable and competitive salary will attract a larger number of highly qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds to run for, and be willing to serve in, these elected offices.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND REASONING**

The Salary Commission has strived to keep the Chair's salary closely aligned with those under the authority of the Chair. In this case, the most significant and heavily weighted data is internal equity. Greater weight is given to internal equity considerations than to the external market for the following reasons:

- a. Internal equity (data regarding Department Directors) is a professionally-acceptable method for assigning a salary;
- b. External market data has not provided acceptable job matches; however, future Salary Commissions should continue to search, as external comparators are also an important consideration.

## **2024/25 AND 2025/26 SALARIES**

The 2024 Salary Commission sets the 2024/25 rate for County Commissioner salaries at the minimum of the new Department Director 1 salary range (\$144,278) effective July 1, 2024. This rate shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. Additionally, for 2025/26, the salary rate shall be increased by any cost of living increase given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26. This Commission encourages future Commissions to review and monitor internal pay equity between Commissioner and department director positions and other elected officials.

The 2024 Salary Commission sets the 2024/25 rate for the Chair at \$239,646, which is a rate equivalent to 85% through the Department Director 2 salary range, effective July 1, 2024. This rate shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. Additionally, for 2025/26, the salary rate shall be increased by any cost of living increase given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26.

## **II. SHERIFF**

## METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

The Salary Commission collected and reviewed current data from a number of sources, including:

### 1. Sheriff salaries in counties in Oregon and Washington:

The Salary Commission considered market data from the following counties in Oregon and Washington:

Oregon: Clackamas, Lane, Marion and Washington  
 Washington: Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston

The Salary Commission recognizes that while other counties have jail responsibilities, the Multnomah County Sheriff is responsible for a corrections system that is nearly twice as large as other local counties. In addition, the Sheriff now oversees the Transit Police Division and oversees a U.S. Marshall contract, unlike local counties. The span of responsibility is different in significant ways for the Multnomah County Sheriff in comparison to most other counties in Oregon and Washington. The Salary Commission notes that some Oregon counties have a larger law enforcement (patrol) presence than Multnomah County, however, those jurisdictions' total number of staff are still smaller.

Salary data was collected from the jurisdictions listed in Exhibit A. The Salary Commission continues to limit the geographic adjustment to a single index used by the County HR Office, from the Economic Research Institute (ERI).

**Exhibit A: Sheriff Salaries Adjusted for Geographical Differences  
 January 2024**

County	Actual Salary	Geographic Adjustment*	Equivalent Portland Salary
Clackamas, OR	\$219,634	0.00%	\$219,634
Lane County, OR	\$174,282	3.74%	\$180,806
Marion County, OR	\$187,720	2.84%	\$193,046
Washington County, OR	\$210,558	0.00%	\$210,558
Pierce County, WA	\$191,100	-4.69%	\$182,132
Snohomish County, WA	\$184,219	-11.93%	\$162,250
Thurston County, WA	\$172,416	3.37%	\$178,231
Average			\$189,522
<b>Multnomah County</b>			<b>\$217,861</b>
Differential			14.95%

\*Geographic adjustment via ERI data through the Multnomah County Human Resources Office.

Salary Data Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Office Salary Survey January 2024.

Note: Not adjusted for any employer paid pickup contribution to the retirement system.

The survey data shows the Sheriff’s salary to be 14.95% higher than the average of jurisdictions surveyed. The Commission noted, however, the Sheriff’s salary to be just 1.3% above market average in relation to other Portland-Metro area county Sheriff positions.

**2. Comparability between the Sheriff and Multnomah County Department Directors:**

There are eight Department Directors in the County in four pay ranges, including the Chief Operating Officer.

**Exhibit B: Department Directors’ 2023/2024 Salaries**

Department	Classification	2023/24 Salary	Pay Scale Minimum	Pay Scale Midpoint	Pay Scale Maximum
Community Justice	Department Director 1	\$209,859	\$131,162	\$170,510	\$209,859
Community Services	Department Director 1	\$203,700	\$131,162	\$170,510	\$209,859
Library	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
County Assets	Department Director 2 / CIO	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
Human Services	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
Joint Office of Homeless Services	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
County Management	COO/Principal Dept Director	\$263,170	\$174,577	\$226,950	\$279,322
Health Services	Health Department Director	\$279,322	\$174,577	\$226,950	\$279,322

Given the level of authority and responsibility over the Sheriff’s Office, the Sheriff is most closely aligned with Department Director 2. In order to maintain internal equity, the Salary Commission continues to set the Sheriff’s salary at 85% through the Department Director 2 salary range.

**3. Comparability between the Sheriff and their direct reports:**

Oregon state law ORS 204.112 provides guidance related to County Sheriff salaries, citing “The sheriff’s salary shall be fixed in an amount which is not less than that for any member of the sheriff’s department.” However, as a home rule county, Multnomah County’s Salary Commission is not bound by statute and has the discretion to set the salary of the Sheriff regardless of their direct reports.

The highest-level position below the Sheriff with an incumbent is Chief Deputy at \$209,859. The higher classification of Undersheriff is vacant, mainly because the salary is set at the same level as Chief Deputy and there has been a minimal salary difference between Chief Deputy and Sheriff. Compensation theory suggests the spread between a supervisor and



subordinate should be 10% to 25%. Currently, there is a 3.8% difference between the Sheriff and their direct reports. The Salary Commission notes the Department Director 2 range increase on July 1, 2024 will increase that spread to 14%, allowing room for an Undersheriff position without going above the Sheriff's salary.

#### **4. Tenure in the job:**

For most positions, salary will increase based in part on tenure in the position. Should a new Sheriff be elected, they would receive the salary of the outgoing Sheriff. Consequently, tenure in the position is not a factor in determining an appropriate salary.

#### **5. Benefits considerations:**

Elected officials receive the same benefits as any other County employee with the exception of disability insurance. The level of benefits for elected officials is not within the scope of the Salary Commission's authorized review.

#### **6. Internal equity versus external market considerations:**

Consideration is given to internal equity as well the external market:

- a. Internal equity (data regarding department directors and subordinates) is a professionally acceptable method for assigning a salary;
- b. Concerning external market data (data regarding other county Sheriff salaries), while not exactly matching the operations of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, the comparison to other Pacific Northwest Sheriff positions is still relevant and forms the basis of an additional source of information for purposes of recommending salary for the Multnomah County Sheriff position.

#### **7. Consumer Price Index (CPI) considerations:**

CPI data is an integral part of the information base in the data presented. It influences the market data from other counties and from within the County in determining appropriate salary ranges for department directors.

#### **8. Compensation philosophy:**

Typically, an organization will consider three factors when designing compensation programs. These are the ability for an organization to 1) attract, 2) retain and 3)

motivate employees. Attracting talent for the Sheriff's position is limited to the local area and to those with the required certifications. Nevertheless, this Salary Commission believes that an equitable and competitive salary will attract a larger number of highly qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds to run for, and be willing to serve in, this and other elected offices.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND REASONING**

In 2022, the change in methodology for setting the Sheriff's salary was primarily intended to align Multnomah County with other county Sheriff's in the Portland Metro area. Now, alignment with direct reports, including the Undersheriff and Chief Deputy positions, has taken the forefront. This Salary Commission is pleased to note the salary range change for Department Director 2 will alleviate compression with direct reports in 2024/2025 and will continue to monitor this alignment.

### **2024/25 and 2025/26 SALARY**

The 2024 Salary Commission sets the 2024/25 rate for the Sheriff at \$239,646, which is a rate equivalent to 85% through the Department Director 2 salary range, effective July 1, 2024. This rate shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. Additionally, for 2025/26, the salary rate shall be increased by any cost of living increase given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025-26.

The Salary Commission notes the following principles were considered in this salary determination:

1. The recommendations come from professionals in the field of compensation and are based on (to the best of our knowledge) accurate, relevant and appropriate data and methodologies; and
2. The salary recommendations relate to the office and not to the person; in other words, the salary is based on what the *job* is worth and because it does not include a "pay for performance" model is not a measure of the worth of the *individual* who occupies the position; and
3. Being paid for what the job is objectively worth is extremely vital to maintaining high quality leadership for the Sheriff and their successor; thus, the public will be better served.

### III. DISTRICT ATTORNEY

#### SALARY HISTORY

Oregon District Attorneys receive a set salary from the State of Oregon (currently \$164,517). Some counties, including Multnomah County, choose to supplement the state salary with an additional county-paid salary. This Salary Commission only has authority over the county salary.

In 2022, the Salary Commission adjusted the methodology for the county portion to 75% of the minimum of Department Director 1. The 2024 Salary Commission upholds this methodology.

#### METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

##### 1. District Attorney’s salaries in counties in Oregon and Washington:

The Salary Commission considered market data from the following counties in Oregon and Washington:

- Oregon: Clackamas, Lane, Marion and Washington
- Washington: Pierce, Snohomish and Thurston

Salary data was collected from the jurisdictions listed in Exhibit A below. The Salary Commission continues to limit the geographic adjustment to a single index used by the County HR Office, from the Economic Research Institute (ERI).

**Exhibit A: District Attorney Salaries Adjusted for Geographical Differences  
January 2024**

County	Total Salary (State + County)	Geographic Adjustment*	Equivalent Portland Salary
Clackamas, OR	\$281,520	0.00%	\$281,520
Lane County, OR	\$228,378	2.76%	\$234,688
Marion County, OR	\$214,375	2.74%	\$220,252
Washington County, OR	\$286,652	0.00%	\$286,652
Pierce County, WA	\$217,391	-4.52%	\$207,564
Snohomish County, WA	\$222,063	-12.23%	\$194,908
Thurston County, WA	\$217,391	2.41%	\$222,637
Average:			\$235,460
<b>Multnomah Co.</b>			<b>\$262,889</b>
Differential:			12.01%

*\*Geographic adjustment via ERI data through Multnomah County Human Resources Office.  
 Salary Data Source: Multnomah County Auditor's Office Salary Survey January 2024  
 Note: Not adjusted for any employer paid pickup contribution to the retirement system.*

A prior Salary Commission noted there are differences in duties among District Attorneys in Oregon and Washington counties. Most counties are only responsible for prosecuting crimes that have occurred within their jurisdictional boundaries. However, the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office also provides Termination of Parental Rights services to the entire state, works with the US Attorney's Office to prosecute some federal cases, and prosecutes all city code crimes within the City of Portland.

**2. Comparability between the District Attorney and Multnomah County department directors:**

There are eight department directors in four salary ranges, including the COO. Salaries for all positions are detailed in Exhibit B below.

**Exhibit B: Department Directors' 2023/24 Salaries**

Department	Classification	2023/24 Salary	Pay Scale Minimum	Pay Scale Midpoint	Pay Scale Maximum
Community Justice	Department Director 1	\$209,859	\$131,162	\$170,510	\$209,859
Community Services	Department Director 1	\$203,700	\$131,162	\$170,510	\$209,859
Library	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
County Assets	Department Director 2 / CIO	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
Human Services	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
Joint Office of Homeless Services	Department Director 2	\$230,846	\$144,278	\$187,562	\$230,846
County Management	COO/Principal Dept Director	\$263,170	\$174,577	\$226,950	\$279,322
Health Services	Health Department Director	\$279,322	\$174,577	\$226,950	\$279,322

The midpoint of the Department Director 2 salary range is \$187,562 and all of the current Department Directors are paid above their respective midpoints with many at the range maximum. In order to maintain internal equity, based on the comparison to the other Department Directors, the County-only portion of the District Attorney's salary is set to 75% of the minimum of the Department Director 1 range (\$98,372), with the additional State salary of \$164,517 for a total of \$262,889.

### **3. Comparability between the District Attorney and their direct reports:**

The highest-level, non-elected position in the District Attorney's office is District Attorney First Assistant. The current incumbent is currently paid \$262,715, just \$173.00/year below the District Attorney. The current District Attorney has eleven direct reports, four within 2.5% of the District Attorney's total salary. Compensation theory suggests the spread between a supervisor and subordinate should be 10% to 25%.

### **4. Tenure in the job:**

For most positions, salary will increase based in part on tenure in the position. This is an elected position and presumably, should a new District Attorney be elected, they would receive the salary of the outgoing District Attorney. Consequently, tenure in the position is not a factor in considering an appropriate salary.

### **5. Benefits considerations:**

Of the data available to this Salary Commission, there are differences in benefits packages provided to Oregon District Attorneys. However, the level of benefits is not within the scope of the Salary Commission's authorized review.

### **6. Internal equity versus external market considerations:**

Greater weight is given to internal equity considerations than to the external market for a couple of reasons:

- a. Internal equity (data regarding department directors and subordinates) is a professionally acceptable method for assigning a salary; and
- b. External market data (data regarding Oregon and Washington county district attorney salaries) may not be directly comparable to Multnomah County.

### **7. Consumer Price Index (CPI) considerations:**

CPI data is an integral part of the information base in the data presented. It has influenced the market data from both outside sources such as other counties and from within the County in determining an appropriate salary range for department directors.

### **8. Compensation philosophy:**

Typically, an organization will consider three factors when designing compensation programs. These are the ability for an organization to 1) attract, 2) retain and 3) motivate employees. Attracting talent for the District Attorney's position is limited to

the local area, and to those with the required experience and certifications. Nevertheless, this Salary Commission believes that an equitable and competitive salary will attract a larger number of highly qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds to run for, and be willing to serve in, this and other elected offices.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND REASONING**

The salaries of District Attorneys in Oregon and Washington jurisdictions are closely aligned to this position when, in fact, this position has greater responsibility than most, if not all, of the counties listed. Accordingly, it should be paid more than the average. This Salary Commission notes that the current salary of the District Attorney is -12% below these comparable counties.

The First Assistant Deputy District Attorney is paid essentially the same as the District Attorney at this time; however, this Salary Commission is pleased to note the salary range change for Department Director 2 will create a modest spread between the District Attorney and First Assistant in 2024/2025 and will continue to monitor this alignment.

## **2024/25 and 2025/26 SALARY**

The 2024 Salary Commission sets the 2024/25 county paid salary for the District Attorney at \$108,208, which is a rate equivalent to 75% of the minimum of the Department Director 1 salary range minimum, effective July 1, 2024. This rate shall be increased by any cost of living adjustment given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2024/25. Additionally, for 2025/26, the salary rate shall be increased by any cost of living increase given to Multnomah County non-represented employees for 2025/26.

## **ENHANCING SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC**

The Salary Commission notes the following principles were considered in this salary determination:

1. The recommendations come from professionals in the field of Compensation Administration and are based on (to the best of our knowledge) accurate, relevant and appropriate data and methodologies; and
2. The salary recommendations relate to the office and not to the person; in other words, the salary is based on what the *job* is worth and, because it does not include a "pay for performance" model, it is not a measure of the worth of the *individual* who occupies the position; and
3. Being paid for what the job is objectively worth is extremely vital to maintaining high quality leadership for the District Attorney and their successor; thus, the public will be better served.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The 2024 Salary Commission wishes to thank County Commissioner Julia Brim-Edwards, Chair Jessica Vega Pederson, District Attorney Mike Schmidt, and Sheriff Nicole Morrisey O'Donnell for meeting with us to describe their duties and responsibilities and the challenges they face. The information the Salary Commission received was helpful in assisting us understand these unique and important roles and to carry out our responsibilities.

We would also like to thank the Classification and Compensation staff within County Human Resources for providing the Salary Commission with detailed and timely information related to employee compensation and geographic comparison factors.

Finally, the 2024 Salary Commission wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to Jennifer McGuirk, Multnomah County Auditor. You were extremely attentive to the myriad of requests made this year. Thank you for your valued insight and for providing quick and thoughtful responses.