

Senate Bill No. 210

(By Senators Kessler (Mr. President), Cookman, Unger,
Fitzsimmons, Green and Williams)

[Introduced February 19, 2013; referred to the Committee on the
Judiciary; and then to the Committee on Finance.]

**FISCAL
NOTE**

A BILL to amend and reenact §50-1-3, §50-1-8, §50-1-9 and §50-1-9a
of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, all relating
to equally compensating all state magistrates, magistrate
assistants, magistrate court clerks and magistrate court
deputy clerks.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That §50-1-3, §50-1-8, §50-1-9 and §50-1-9a of the Code of
West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended and reenacted, all to
read as follows:

ARTICLE 1. COURTS AND OFFICERS.

§50-1-3. Salaries of magistrates.

~~(a) The Legislature finds and declares that:~~

~~(1) The West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals has held that~~

1 ~~a salary system for magistrates which is based upon the population~~
2 ~~that each magistrate serves does not violate the equal protection~~
3 ~~clause of the Constitution of the United States;~~

4 ~~(2) The West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals has held that~~
5 ~~a salary system for magistrates which is based upon the population~~
6 ~~that each magistrate serves does not violate section thirty-nine,~~
7 ~~article VI of the Constitution of West Virginia;~~

8 ~~(3) The utilization of a two-tiered salary schedule for~~
9 ~~magistrates is an equitable and rational manner by which~~
10 ~~magistrates should be compensated for work performed;~~

11 ~~(4) Organizing the two tiers of the salary schedule into one~~
12 ~~tier for magistrates serving less than eight thousand four hundred~~
13 ~~in population and the second tier for magistrates serving eight~~
14 ~~thousand four hundred or more in population is rational and~~
15 ~~equitable given current statistical information relating to~~
16 ~~population and caseload; and~~

17 ~~(5) That all magistrates who fall under the same tier should~~
18 ~~be compensated equally.~~

19 ~~(b) The salary of each magistrate shall be paid by the state.~~
20 ~~Magistrates who serve fewer than eight thousand four hundred in~~
21 ~~population shall be paid annual salaries of thirty thousand six~~
22 ~~hundred twenty-five dollars and magistrates who serve eight~~
23 ~~thousand four hundred or more in population shall be paid annual~~

1 ~~salaries of thirty-seven thousand dollars: Provided, That on and~~
2 ~~after the first day of July, two thousand three, magistrates who~~
3 ~~serve fewer than eight thousand four hundred in population shall be~~
4 ~~paid annual salaries of thirty-three thousand six hundred twenty-~~
5 ~~five dollars and magistrates who serve eight thousand four hundred~~
6 ~~or more in population shall be paid annual salaries of forty~~
7 ~~thousand dollars: Provided, however, That on and after the first~~
8 ~~day of July, two thousand five, magistrates who serve fewer than~~
9 ~~eight thousand four hundred in population shall be paid annual~~
10 ~~salaries of forty-three thousand six hundred twenty-five dollars~~
11 ~~and magistrates who serve eight thousand four hundred or more in~~
12 ~~population shall be paid annual salaries of fifty thousand dollars.~~
13 ~~Provided further, That on and after the first day of July, 2011,~~
14 ~~magistrates who serve fewer than eight thousand four hundred in~~
15 ~~population shall be paid annual salaries of \$51,125 and magistrates~~
16 ~~who serve eight thousand four hundred or more in population shall~~
17 ~~be paid annual salaries of \$57,500.~~

18 ~~(c) For the purpose of determining the population served by~~
19 ~~each magistrate, the number of magistrates authorized for each~~
20 ~~county shall be divided into the population of each county. For the~~
21 ~~purpose of this article, the population of each county is the~~
22 ~~population as determined by the last preceding decennial census~~
23 ~~taken under the authority of the United States government.~~

1 All magistrates shall be compensated equally. Beginning July
2 1, 2013, the annual salary of all magistrates is \$57,500.

3 **§50-1-8. Magistrate court clerks; salaries; duties; duties of**
4 **circuit clerk.**

5 (a) In each county having three or more magistrates the judge
6 of the circuit court or the chief judge of the circuit court, if
7 there is more than one judge of the circuit court, shall appoint a
8 magistrate court clerk. ~~In all other counties the judge may~~
9 ~~appoint a magistrate court clerk or may by rule require the duties~~
10 ~~of the magistrate court clerk to be performed by the clerk of the~~
11 ~~circuit court, in which event the circuit court clerk is entitled~~
12 ~~to additional compensation in the amount of \$2,500 per year. The~~
13 magistrate court clerk serves at the will and pleasure of the
14 circuit judge.

15 (b) Magistrate court clerks shall be ~~paid a monthly salary by~~
16 ~~the state. Magistrate court clerks serving magistrates who serve~~
17 ~~less than eight thousand four hundred in population shall be paid~~
18 ~~up to \$26,436 per year and magistrate court clerks serving~~
19 ~~magistrates who serve eight thousand four hundred or more in~~
20 ~~population shall be paid up to \$31,344 per year: *Provided, That on*~~
21 ~~and after July 1, 2006, magistrate court clerks serving magistrates~~
22 ~~who serve less than eight thousand four hundred in population shall~~
23 ~~be paid up to \$31,436 per year and magistrate court clerks serving~~

~~1 magistrates who serve eight thousand four hundred or more in
2 population shall be paid up to \$36,344 per year: *Provided,*
3 *however,* That on and after July 1, 2007, magistrate court clerks
4 serving magistrates who serve less than eight thousand four hundred
5 in population shall be paid up to \$36,436 per year and magistrate
6 court clerks serving magistrates who serve eight thousand four
7 hundred or more in population shall be paid up to \$41,344 per year:
8 *Provided further,* That after the effective date of this section,
9 any general salary increase granted to all state employees, whose
10 salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a percentage increase
11 or an "across the board" increase, may also be granted to
12 magistrate court clerks. For the purpose of determining the
13 population served by each magistrate, the number of magistrates
14 authorized for each county shall be divided into the population of
15 each county. The salary of the magistrate court clerk shall be
16 established by the judge of the circuit court, or the chief judge
17 of the circuit court if there is more than one judge of the circuit
18 court, within the limits set forth in this section compensated
19 equally.~~

20 (c) Beginning July 1, 2013, the annual salary of all
21 magistrate court clerks is \$44,720. After the effective date of
22 this section, any general salary increase granted to state
23 employees, whose salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a

1 percentage increase or an "across-the-board" increase, may also be
2 granted to magistrate court clerks.

3 ~~(c)~~ (d) In addition to other duties that may be imposed by the
4 provisions of this chapter, ~~or~~ by the rules of the Supreme Court of
5 Appeals, ~~or~~ by the judge of the circuit court or the chief judge of
6 the circuit court if there is more than one judge of the circuit
7 court, it is the duty of the magistrate court clerk to establish
8 and maintain appropriate dockets and records in a centralized
9 system for the magistrate court, to assist in the preparation of
10 the reports required of the court and to carry out, on behalf of
11 the magistrates or chief magistrate if a chief magistrate is
12 appointed, the administrative duties of the court.

13 ~~(d)~~ (e) The magistrate court clerk ~~or if there is no~~
14 ~~magistrate court clerk in the county, the clerk of the circuit~~
15 ~~court,~~ may issue all manner of civil process and require the
16 enforcement of subpoenas and subpoenas duces tecum in magistrate
17 court.

18 **§50-1-9. Magistrate assistants; salary; duties.**

19 (a) In each county there shall be one magistrate assistant for
20 each magistrate. Each magistrate assistant shall be appointed by
21 the magistrate under whose authority and supervision and at whose
22 will and pleasure he or she shall serve. The assistant shall not
23 be a member of the immediate family of any magistrate and shall not

1 have been convicted of a felony or ~~any~~ a misdemeanor involving
2 moral turpitude and shall reside in the State of West Virginia.
3 For the purpose of this section, "immediate family" means the
4 relationships of mother, father, sister, brother, child or spouse.

5 (b) A magistrate assistant ~~shall have~~ has the duties, clerical
6 or otherwise, assigned by the magistrate and prescribed by the
7 rules of the Supreme Court of Appeals or the judge of the circuit
8 court or the chief judge of the circuit court if there is more than
9 one judge of the circuit court. In addition to these duties,
10 magistrate assistants shall perform and are accountable to the
11 magistrate court clerks with respect to the following duties:

12 (1) The preparation of summons in civil actions;

13 (2) The assignment of civil actions to the various
14 magistrates;

15 (3) The collection of all costs, fees, fines, forfeitures and
16 penalties which are payable to the court;

17 (4) The submission of moneys, along with an accounting of the
18 moneys, to appropriate authorities as provided by law;

19 (5) The daily disposition of closed files which are to be
20 located in the magistrate clerk's office;

21 (6) All duties related to the gathering of information and
22 documents necessary for the preparation of administrative reports
23 and documents required by the rules of the Supreme Court of Appeals

1 or the judge of the circuit court or the chief judge of the circuit
2 court if there is more than one judge of the circuit court;

3 (7) All duties relating to the notification, certification and
4 payment of jurors serving pursuant to the terms of this chapter;

5 (8) All other duties or responsibilities whereby the
6 magistrate assistant is accountable to the magistrate court clerk
7 as determined by the magistrate.

8 (c) Magistrate assistants shall be ~~paid a monthly salary by~~
9 ~~the state. Magistrate assistants serving magistrates who serve~~
10 ~~less than eight thousand four hundred in population shall be paid~~
11 ~~up to \$23,148 per year and magistrate assistants serving~~
12 ~~magistrates who serve eight thousand four hundred or more in~~
13 ~~population shall be paid up to \$26,244 per year: Provided, That on~~
14 ~~and after July 1, 2006, magistrate assistants serving magistrates~~
15 ~~who serve less than eight thousand four hundred in population shall~~
16 ~~be paid up to \$28,148 per year and magistrate assistants serving~~
17 ~~magistrates who serve eight thousand four hundred or more in~~
18 ~~population shall be paid up to \$31,244 per year: Provided,~~
19 ~~however, That on and after July 1, 2007, magistrate assistants~~
20 ~~serving magistrates who serve less than eight thousand four hundred~~
21 ~~in population shall be paid up to \$33,148 per year and magistrate~~
22 ~~assistants serving magistrates who serve eight thousand four~~
23 ~~hundred or more in population shall be paid up to \$36,244 per year:~~

1 ~~Provided further, That after the effective date of this section,~~
2 ~~any general salary increase granted to all state employees, whose~~
3 ~~salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a percentage increase~~
4 ~~or an "across-the-board" increase, may also be granted to~~
5 ~~magistrate assistants. For the purpose of determining the~~
6 ~~population served by each magistrate, the number of magistrates~~
7 ~~authorized for each county shall be divided into the population of~~
8 ~~each county. The salary of the magistrate assistant shall be~~
9 ~~established by the magistrate within the limits set forth in this~~
10 ~~section compensated equally.~~

11 (d) Beginning July 1, 2013, the annual salary of all
12 magistrate assistants is \$39,348. After the effective date of this
13 section, any general salary increase granted to state employees,
14 whose salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a percentage
15 increase or an "across-the-board" increase, may also be granted to
16 magistrate assistants.

17 **§50-1-9a. Magistrate court deputy clerks; duties; salary.**

18 (a) Whenever required by workload and upon the recommendation
19 of the judge of the circuit court, or the chief judge of the
20 circuit court if there is more than one judge of the circuit court,
21 the Supreme Court of Appeals may, by rule, provide for the
22 appointment of magistrate court deputy clerks not to exceed
23 seventy-two in number. The magistrate court deputy clerks shall be

1 appointed by the judge of the circuit court, or the chief judge if
2 there is more than one judge of the circuit court, to serve at his
3 or her will and pleasure under the immediate supervision of the
4 magistrate court clerk.

5 (b) Magistrate court deputy clerks ~~shall~~ have the duties,
6 clerical or otherwise, as may be assigned by the magistrate court
7 clerk and as may be prescribed by the rules of the Supreme Court of
8 Appeals or the judge of the circuit court or the chief judge if
9 there is more than one judge of the circuit court. Magistrate
10 court deputy clerks may also exercise the power and perform the
11 duties of the magistrate court clerk as may be delegated or
12 assigned by the magistrate court clerk.

13 (c) A magistrate court deputy clerk may not be an immediate
14 family member of any magistrate, magistrate court clerk, magistrate
15 assistant or judge of the circuit court within the same county, may
16 not have been convicted of a felony or ~~any~~ a misdemeanor involving
17 moral turpitude and must reside in this state. For purposes of
18 this subsection, "immediate family member" means a mother, father,
19 sister, brother, child or spouse.

20 (d) Magistrate court deputy clerks shall be ~~paid an annual~~
21 ~~salary by the state on the same basis and in the same amounts~~
22 ~~established for magistrate assistants in each county, as provided~~
23 ~~in section nine of this article~~ compensated equally.

1 (e) Beginning July 1, 2013, the annual salary of all
2 magistrate court deputy clerks is \$39,348. After the effective date
3 of this section, any general salary increase granted to state
4 employees, whose salaries are not set by statute, expressed as a
5 percentage increase or an "across-the-board" increase, may also be
6 granted to magistrate court deputy clerks.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to provide that all magistrates, magistrate assistants, magistrate court clerks and deputy clerks be paid equally.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.