



## COLORADO DISTRICT ATTORNEYS' COUNCIL DA Salary Review Info Sheet



The elected district attorneys are the only people in any DA's office paid by the state as they are statewide elected officials. The state only pays 80% of the minimum mandatory salary and benefits for the elected DA. All other attorneys/staff/operating costs in offices are funded locally or through grants – when DAs can get grants.

Based upon requirements of HB 07-1170 – codified in CRS 20-1-301 – concerning the compensation of the elected district attorneys, every four years the legislature is required to review the salaries of the elected DAs and make recommendations, if appropriate, to the General Assembly regarding such compensation. This review is required in 2020.

The salary of the elected DA cannot be set to be applicable within a term in which a DA was elected (only every four years).

At the time of the 2007 bill, elected DAs were still being paid based off of the 1997 statutory minimum of \$67,500. It was meant to address a 10-year period of zero increase.

The introduced version of that 2007 bill merely tied the DA's salary to the judge's – per the statute that controls pay raises for district court judges – under the premise that DAs should be paid at a comparable rate. At that time, a district court judge was making approximately \$129,000. The Judicial Department objected to DA salaries being tied to the judicial salaries as they didn't want to have to convince the legislature to agree to a DA salary increase every time they wanted increases for their judges.

The bill was then amended in the Senate to its current form that used an incremental increase over a four-year period starting from \$67,500 in 2009 to \$130,000 in 2012, BUT IT WAS STILL PREMISED on getting the minimum DA salary to the same level as a district court judge. Accordingly, the minimum salary was increased over time as follows:

Year	DA Min. Salary
2009	\$100,000
2010	\$110,000
2011	\$120,000
2012	\$130,000

**The bill passed with overwhelming support in both houses.**



# COLORADO DISTRICT ATTORNEYS' COUNCIL

## DA Salary Review Info Sheet



Since 2008, the pay for district court judges has increased nearly every year and is currently set at \$173,248.00 per year.

There has been no increase in the DA minimum salary since 2012.

The underlying premise of HB 07-1170 was that elected district attorneys should be paid at an amount very similar to district court judges. Operating under this same premise, it is the position of CDAC that it is appropriate for this committee to review and recommend an increase in the DA salary that reflects the intent of HB 07-1170 and keeps pace with the compensation of the district court judges.

As noted, the Colorado Constitution (Art XII Sect 11) prohibits the increase of an elected official's salary during the term of office for which he or she was elected. So, any such recommendation by this committee could not take effect until the next election cycle for the DA in 2020 and would not impact the general fund until January of 2021.

Accordingly, CDAC respectfully requests that this committee consider a recommendation similar to the legislation of 2007 and provide for incremental increases in the minimum salary of the state's elected DAs beginning in January of 2021 as follows:

Year	DA Min. Salary
2021	\$140,000
2022	\$150,000
2023	\$160,000
2024	\$170,000

**2020 District Court Judge Salary: \$173,248.00**