GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Salaries and Allowances Tribunal

2026 Judicial Recommendation Report

Remuneration of Judges, District Court Judges, Masters of the Supreme Court, Magistrates and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission

No. 1 of 2026

Preamble

Executive summary

1. The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal has recommended the remuneration for judicial officers be increased by 3.5%, with effect from 1 December 2026. The recommended changes are summarised below.

Base Data		3.5% increase	
Position	Current Salary	$ Impact	New Salary
Chief Justice	$608,134	$21,285	$629,419
President of the Court of Appeal	$569,254	$19,924	$589,178
Senior Puisne Judge	$543,596	$19,026	$562,622
Senior Judge of the Court of Appeal	$543,596	$19,026	$562,622
Puisne Judge	$527,541	$18,464	$546,005
Senior Master of the Supreme Court	$488,956	$17,113	$506,069
Master of the Supreme Court	$474,906	$16,622	$491,528
Chief Judge District Court	$527,541	$18,464	$546,005
Senior Judge District Court	$488,956	$17,113	$506,069
Judge District Court	$474,906	$16,622	$491,528
Chief Magistrate	$474,906	$16,622	$491,528
Deputy Chief Magistrate	$416,431	$14,575	$431,006
Principal Registrar / Magistrate Supreme Court	$416,431	$14,575	$431,006
Principal Registrar / Magistrate Family Court	$416,431	$14,575	$431,006
Magistrates	$392,006	$13,720	$405,726
Registrars / Magistrates Family Court	$392,006	$13,720	$405,726
Parliamentary Inspector, Corruption and Crime Commission	$316,524	$11,078	$327,602

Background

2. Section 7 of the *Salaries and Allowances Act 1975* (the Act) requires the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal to inquire into and report to the Minister for Public Sector Management in relation to possible changes in the remuneration paid or provided to:
   - Judges
   - District Court Judges
   - Masters of the Supreme Court
   - Magistrates
   - the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission.

3. The Act states that the Tribunal must recommend the nature and extent of any changes to remuneration, if considered necessary.

4. Section 7(4) states that any changes recommended in this report are to come into effect on the date specified in this report unless either House of Parliament passes a resolution disapproving a recommendation made by the Tribunal.

Current inquiry

5. In discharging its statutory requirements with respect to the remuneration of the Judiciary, the Tribunal has:
   - considered submissions from judicial officers and key stakeholders
   - consulted with the Chief Justice and the Director General of the Department of Justice
   - noted key economic indicators, the financial strategy and Budget of the WA State Government and had regard to the State Wages Policy Statement in view of the fact that, although not members of the public sector, the judiciary are nonetheless paid from the public purse
   - examined the historical and current salary relativities between judicial offices and with other jurisdictions to ensure that Western Australian salaries and conditions remain competitive
   - factored the impact on the State Budget of any potential increase, including the flow-on effect to the judicial pension.

Submissions and consultations

6. In summary, submissions requested the Tribunal provide an increase in salary for judicial officers to:
   - restore pre-2016 relativities with the Federal Court, which requires a 5.51% increase
   - change the internal relativities of positions, arguing that some positions have experienced work value and workload increases in comparison to other judicial positions
   - improve relativities compared to interjurisdictional comparators.

7. With respect to motor vehicles, some submissions requested a significant increase to the value of the motor vehicle allowance due to rising motor vehicle costs.

8. Submissions also requested the provision of additional allowances to Magistrates.

Economic considerations

9. Table 1 sets out key economic indicators for the Western Australian and National economies.

Table 1: WA State and National Selected Economic Indicators 2026

Indicator	Percentage Change	Annual Average % Increase
Perth - Consumer Price Index – July 2026[1]	1.1%	3.8%
National - Consumer Price Index – July 2026[2]	1.0%	3.5%
WA - Wage Price Index – June 2026[3]	0.5%	3.3%
National - Wage Price Index – June 2026	0.8%	3.2%
WA Total Unemployment Rate – July 2026[4]	0%	4.3%
National Total Unemployment Rate – July 2026	0%	4.5%

10. The principles from the State Wages Policy Statement are relevant and applicable to the Tribunal's operations. The underlying principles, such as ensuring wage increases are reasonable in light of the State's economic conditions and budget, are applied across all of the Tribunal's jurisdictions. Uniquely to this Report, the Tribunal is conscious of the impact that salary increases would have upon the Judge's Pension Scheme and, consequently, the State's budget.

11. The Tribunal has also reviewed the WA State Government 2026-27 Budget and associated Economic and Fiscal Outlook published by the State Government in May 2026.

Interjurisdictional relativities

12. Within remuneration bodies across Australia, the remuneration provided to a Judge of the Federal Court has traditionally been the benchmark for setting the remuneration of Puisne Judges of state supreme courts. Internal relativities within each jurisdiction's judicial levels are set from that starting point. The actual relativities between the Federal Court and state supreme courts have varied over the last decade, notably due to wage freezes in WA (2017-2021) and NSW (2023-2025).

13. On 11 June 2026, the Federal Remuneration Tribunal announced it will not provide any increases to the remuneration of holders of public offices in their jurisdiction, which includes Federal Court and High Court Judges, from 1 July 2026 until comprehensive reviews of arrangements for departmental secretaries and full-time public offices are completed.

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[1] West Australian Treasury Corporation (26 August 2026). *CPI* July 2026. Percentage change Month-on-Month.
[2] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (26 August 2026). *Consumer Price Index, Australia*. Headline figures
[3] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (19 August 2026). *Wage Price Index, Australia*. Percentage change quarterly.
[4] Australian Bureau of Statistics. (20 August 2026). Labour Force, Australia. Percentage change monthly. Based on Seasonally adjusted data.

14. Where there is no legislative link in remuneration, interstate Tribunals have increasingly provided remuneration increases based on local circumstances. Over the last 12 months, increases have ranged from 2% in the ACT[5] (November 2025), 2.4% in Victoria (October 2025) and South Australia (December 2025), and 3% in NSW (July 2026). The remuneration of Queensland and Tasmanian judicial officers is legislatively linked to the Federal Court. The remuneration for Tasmanian judicial officers is calculated based upon the mid-point of WA and SA judicial officer salaries.

Remuneration setting and Tribunal recommendations

Judicial salaries

15. The Tribunal recommends a remuneration increase of 3.5% for judicial offices within this report, with an effective date of 1 December 2026.

16. Key considerations in making this recommendation included WPI and CPI data, as well as the impact that any increase to judicial salaries has on judicial pensions and subsequently the state budget. The Tribunal is also aware of ongoing attraction and retention issues within the judiciary.

17. Due to the federal freeze on salary increases for public office holders, this increase will increase the relativity for a Puisne Judge in WA compared to a Federal Court Judge from 99.5% to 103%.

18. With respect to requests that the Tribunal arbitrarily restore the 105% relativity which existed prior to the WA wage freeze, it must be noted that the Tribunal's legislation prohibits the granting of 'catch-up' increase.

19. The Tribunal has again considered requests by some levels of the judiciary to modify the relativities between the levels that are currently in place in Western Australia. The basis for these requests is mostly centred around both an increase in work volume as well as in work value or the lack of a judicial pension provided to Magistrates. The Tribunal has been advised that the changes in work volume are reflected across the judiciary and are accommodated within the existing relativities. The Tribunal is very hesitant to alter the internal relativities of certain judicial officers without the support of the full judiciary.

[5] Specifically for the Magistrates group. Supreme Court Judges in the ACT are linked to Federal Court wages.

Motor Vehicles

20. The Tribunal received several requests for substantial increases to the motor vehicle entitlement. The Tribunal has monitored the lease costs associated with motor vehicles throughout the year and has decided to recommend a $500 increase to the motor vehicle entitlement for all judicial officers.

21. The Tribunal also recommends that Magistrates be given the option to take the cash value in lieu of their motor vehicle benefit if they elect not to be provided with a motor vehicle through State Fleet. This option will not be provided to other members of the judiciary as the Tribunal has received advice that to do so would have unintended impacts upon the judicial pension.

Allowances for Magistrates

22. The Tribunal has declined to provide any additional allowances to Magistrates.

23. The Tribunal has also consulted with the Department of Justice, who have provided assurance that there is no intention to reduce allowances currently provided to Magistrates.

Superannuation

24. The Tribunal does not support the proposal to increase the rate of superannuation payments for Magistrates above the superannuation guarantee.

25. The proposal that Magistrates should be compensated for not receiving the judicial pension is not supported. This entitlement does not extend to other members of the community, and its absence does not justify supplementary remuneration. While Magistrates are part of the judiciary, this alone does not constitute a sufficient rationale for altering superannuation arrangements.

26. The Tribunal does not support the claims that, as Magistrates are subject to Division 293 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997,* they should therefore receive a higher superannuation entitlement. Taxation is outside the remit of the Tribunal and incurring additional taxation due to a high salary is not sufficient justification for further remuneration increases.

Tabling of the Report

27. The Act requires this report to be tabled in each House of Parliament within five sitting days of the Minister for Public Sector Management receiving it. Changes to remuneration will come into force from the date specified in this report unless either House of Parliament, within 15 sitting days of the report being tabled in that House, passes a resolution disapproving the Tribunal's recommendation.

28. **The report will now issue.**

Report

This report may be cited as the Judicial Report No. 1 of 2026

Part 1: Salary

1.1. The annual salaries specified in table 2 shall be payable to Judges, Masters and Magistrates with effect from 1 December 2026, and are inclusive of leave loading.

Table 2: Annual salaries

Position	Annual Salary
Chief Justice	$629,419
President of the Court of Appeal	$589,178
Senior Puisne Judge	$562,622
Senior Judge of the Court of Appeal	$562,622
Puisne Judge	$546,005
Senior Master of the Supreme Court	$506,069
Master of the Supreme Court	$491,528
Chief Judge District Court	$546,005
Senior Judge District Court	$506,069
Judge District Court	$491,528
Chief Magistrate	$491,528
Deputy Chief Magistrate	$431,006
Principal Registrar/Magistrate Supreme Court *	$431,006
Principal Registrar/Magistrate Family Court *	$431,006
Magistrate	$405,726
Registrar/Magistrate Family Court*	$405,726
Parliamentary Inspector, Corruption and Crime Commission	$327,602

* *The relevant office holders remunerated under this Part hold commissions to be Magistrates while having been given leave to hold the offices of Registrar or Principal Registrar as the case may be.*

Part 2: Travelling and Accommodation Allowance

2.1. When an overnight stay away from home is involved, a travelling and accommodation allowance (inclusive of accommodation, meals and incidentals) shall be payable in accordance with the relevant Australian Taxation Office reasonable benefit limit applicable from time to time and when accompanied by certification that the expense was appropriately incurred.

2.2. If reasonably and properly incurred travelling and accommodation expenses exceed the rate specified in 2.1, then actual costs should be reimbursed. Receipts or vouchers must be provided in support of any claim for reimbursement in excess of the specified rate.

2.3. Claims for overnight stays in the Perth metropolitan area should be subject in each case to the approval of the relevant chief judicial officer.

2.4. Part payment of travelling and accommodation allowances shall apply in the following circumstances:

a. when the Judge, Master or Magistrate is accommodated in private, non-commercial accommodation, such as the home of a family member or friend, a rate of one third of the specified rate shall be payable

b. when the cost of commercial accommodation is met by an entity other than the Judge, Master or Magistrate, an allowance shall be payable in accordance with the relevant Australian Taxation Office reasonable benefit limit for meals and incidentals applicable from time to time and when accompanied by certification that the expense was appropriately incurred

c. when in the case of commercial accommodation referred to in 2.4.b above, the cost of a meal or meals is met by an entity other than the Judge, Master or Magistrate, the amount of travelling allowance shall be reduced by the relevant amount(s) referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Part 3: Motor Vehicles

3.1. The following arrangements apply or continue to apply, as the case may be, to each Judge, Master and full-time Magistrate for the provision of a fully maintained motor vehicle for business and private use.

3.2. All vehicles (being part of the Government-owned State Fleet) should be managed in accordance with the policies and conditions established and amended from time to time by the Department of Housing and Works (the agency responsible for the State Fleet). Applicable terms and conditions are currently set out in the document "State Fleet - General Agreement".

3.3. If a Magistrate elects not to be provided with a motor vehicle through State Fleet, they are entitled to the cash value of their respective motor vehicle benefit in lieu.

3.4. Should a Magistrate choose to take the cash in lieu of a motor vehicle supplied through State Fleet, it is not the Tribunal's intent that this should result in additional government expense or an increase in the government fleet to provide transport for the Magistrate during business hours. A Magistrate is not entitled to claim a mileage allowance for use of their private vehicle for work purposes. Neither are they entitled to access another government vehicle for business or personal use, including transport to and from work.

3.5. Selection of appropriate vehicles should be subject to consultation between the Department of Justice (as the administering agency responsible for managing the leasing arrangements for vehicles provided to Judges, Masters and full-time Magistrates) and the relevant Court. Although the cost of vehicles is centrally funded, as a consequence of it being a benefit recommended under the Act, the area remains an administrative responsibility of the department to manage in a cost-effective manner.

3.6. In providing for the use of a motor vehicle under this arrangement, the Tribunal requires that judicial officers, and the department will take account of the following principles established by the Tribunal. The provision of a motor vehicle should:

a. meet the operational conveyance needs of the Judiciary
b. provide for adequate safety and security of judicial officers
c. be representative of fair value and benefit
d. be supportive of the efficient, effective and ethical use of State resources
e. be consistent with current principles of environmental sustainability, in particular, fuel efficiency and government emissions targets
f. although private use of a vehicle is permitted, personal preference in choice of a motor vehicle should be consistent with the above principles.

3.7. For the purposes of determining the annual whole of life cost of the motor vehicle lease relative to the value of the relevant benefit set out in this report, the lease value shall be based on the whole of life lease over a minimum of two years/40,000 kilometres. The annual whole of life costs and term will be determined at the time of ordering the motor vehicle and will be inclusive of the cost and installation of accessories, as well as removal costs if required, before disposal of the vehicle.

3.8. The notional whole of life cost must include the lease cost (based on nominated lifespan and kilometres), Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and all other operating costs. The formula to be adopted in valuing the motor vehicle is outlined in table 3.

Table 3: Whole of life cost of a motor vehicle formula

L + R + aD + FBT + I + LCT, where		
L	=	Lease payments
R	=	Registration costs
a	=	Running cost per kilometre
D	=	Nominated annual kilometres
FBT	=	Fringe Benefits Tax
I	=	Insurance
LCT	=	Luxury car tax

3.9. FBT is costed at applicable Australian Taxation Office rates. FBT is costed at purchase price (including GST) x statutory fraction x gross up (2.0802) x FBT rate (0.470).

3.10. FBT Exempt Agencies: Where an organisation is exempt from FBT in accordance with Commonwealth legislation, a notional amount equal to the standard FBT must be added to the cost of the benefit.

3.11. Motor vehicles leased for judicial officers shall not be changed prior to the expiration of the lease unless it is for operational reasons approved by the relevant chief judicial officer in consultation with the department. The same principle shall apply to Magistrates taking the cash in lieu prior to the end of the lease.

3.12. Judicial officers are encouraged to consider leasing electric vehicles (EVs) as part of their commitment to sustainable transport where the option suits their personal needs. While EVs contribute to environmental objectives and align with broader government commitments to reducing emissions, the preferred recharging method for EVs is at home, overnight charging. The cost of at home charging is significantly lower than that of refuelling an internal combustion vehicle and is not included in the whole of life lease costs of the vehicle.

3.13. There is currently no single recharging card solution for all commercially available EV recharging points. If a judicial officer chooses to recharge the vehicle at a commercial recharger, the cost is to be borne by the judicial officer. Office based rechargers are being rolled out for other State Fleet vehicles. Office based rechargers must be prioritised for fleet vehicles above personal EVs (including SAT vehicles). If a department introduces a policy, consistent with State Fleet guidelines, the judicial officer may participate in that policy and be responsible for any costs that it may incur.

3.14. Judges, Masters, and full-time Magistrates may choose any vehicle and accessories in the Common Use Arrangement or an “off contract” vehicle and accessories available under Government leasing arrangements, the total cost of which does not exceed the relevant benefit determined in this report. Where the annual whole of life cost of a vehicle and accessories is greater than the relevant benefit, the difference in cost is to be subtracted fortnightly from the judicial officer’s salary.

3.15. For Magistrates, if the annual whole of life cost, calculated in accordance with this Report, is less than the relevant motor vehicle benefit determined in this section, the difference in the cost to Government is to be paid fortnightly as part of the Magistrate’s remuneration.

3.16. Salary adjustments are fixed once the judicial officer commits to a vehicle model and accessory package – regardless of any fluctuations in whole of life costs occurring up to, and post delivery. However, in the event the judicial officer elects to amend the vehicle lease term (including lease extensions or increased lease kilometres), a salary adjustment review (taking into account the revised whole of life costs) must be undertaken and applied. Vehicle leases must be aligned to actual usage.

3.17. In the event a judicial officer's motor vehicle requires modifications to cater for a disability, resulting in total vehicle costs higher than the notional lease values specified in table 4, then the reasonable additional cost may be approved by the relevant chief judicial officer in consultation with the department.

3.18. In order to contain additional administrative costs associated with "off contract" leases, judicial officers may request cost quotations for not more than three vehicles outside the Government's Common Use Arrangement for motor vehicles, in the process of selecting a vehicle under this arrangement.

3.19. Each actual lease should be tailored to achieve the most cost-effective arrangement based on individual usage patterns.

3.20. Use of an off-road vehicle must be substantiated by operational need and must be approved by the chief judicial officer. Off-road vehicles shall be of a standard, the cost of which does not exceed the whole of life notional lease cost of the Toyota Prado GXL fitted with "roo" bar (air bag compliant) or the relevant benefit specified in table 4, whichever is higher. This includes the purchase cost of other essential accessories approved by the relevant chief judicial officer.

3.21. While the vehicle may be used anywhere in Western Australia at no cost to the judicial officer, if the vehicle is driven interstate, the judicial officer is liable for the cost of fuel and oil or recharging while interstate. Furthermore, if used outside of Western Australia, the custodian must be in the vehicle at all times that it is being used. However, for the Magistrate residing in Kununurra, use of the government-provided vehicle is permitted to and from the Northern Territory for periods of usage up to seven days under the same conditions as if the vehicle were in Western Australia. Under the State Fleet – General Agreement, other judicial officers are required to seek approval from State Fleet for travel outside Western Australia for periods of seven days or more.

3.22. Judicial officers are entitled to the provision of a vehicle with an annual whole of life cost for the vehicle (including accessories) as stated in table 4.

Table 4: Motor vehicle benefit

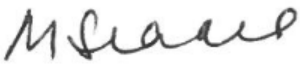
Position	Annual Benefit
Chief Justice	$29,500
Judges, Masters and the Chief Magistrate	$29,000
Full time Magistrates	$28,400

3.23. When a Magistrate is employed on a part time basis, or an Acting Magistrate is employed for less than two years, the pro rata amount as stated in table 5 should be added to their remuneration in lieu of a motor vehicle.

Table 5: Pro-rata motor vehicle annual benefit

Position	Pro rata Annual Benefit
Part time Magistrates	$28,400
Acting Magistrates	$28,400

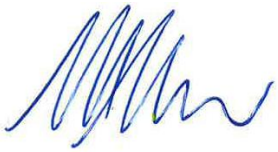
Signed on 02 October 2026



E Prof M Seares AO
Chairperson



Mr O Whittle
Member



Ms M McCracken
Member

Salaries and Allowances Tribunal