



# Putting The Price on County Personnel Services

WRITTEN BY  
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According to the Cascade County FY 2025 budget document found on the County website, the total budgeted expense for FY 2025 is set at \$109,146,002. About \$38 million has been allocated for **Personnel Services**, which is about 41% of the budgeted expenses. (Keep in mind, since 2022, your County budget was infused with over \$17 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money, so this percentage would be higher in prior years.) The average number of Cascade County employees hovers around 485. **Personnel Services is an accounting term defined as, “expenditures for services rendered by officers and employees of the governmental unit, including related benefits and employer’s contributions”.**

In the early part of the County budgeting process, your County Compensation Board must convene to make a recommendation to set the annual base

salary for Elected Officials. This Board’s function is outlined in MCA 7-4-2503 and is comprised of the 3 County Commissioners, the County Attorney and 2-4 resident taxpayers appointed initially by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Their recommendation is made, of course, to the County Commissioners. The recommendation is based upon the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) reported by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research for the Elected Officials, and a recommendation made by the Montana Association of Counties (MACo). The BOCC must then approve a resolution setting salaries of your Elected County Officials. The BOCC may or may not approve the full increase, or decrease, recommended by the Compensation Board, and there are additional statutory considerations when computing the Sheriff and County Attorney salary increases.

Up until recently, the County Sheriff’s salary was the same as all the Elected Officials but in 2021, statute was changed. Since then, the BOCC may determine additional salary for the County Sheriff only. This statute is found in MCA 7-4-2503 (2)

(c).

Once the Elected Officials’ base salary is approved, non-elected, non-union positions typically will receive the same (COLA) increase as the Elected Officials. However, the Commissioners have granted additional “above COLA” increases for certain individuals as they deemed appropriate. In FY 2025, these additional salary increases cost the taxpayer over \$25,000. Union employees are granted increases accordingly with their Union Bargaining Agreements.

On September 5, 2024 Resolution #24-25 was approved allowing a 4.1% increase to your Elected Officials base salary for FY 2025, except for the County Attorney which was capped by statute, at the District Court Judges’ salary.

Salaries of some key County positions are provided in the following charts.

## Recent Compensation Board Decisions



Fiscal Year <i>(Decisions are usually made in Spring of the previous year, as FY begins on July 1)</i>	Compensation Board Recommendation	Compensation Board Members
FY 2024 <i>(meeting held on August 29, 2023)</i>	8.0% COLA increase 35% Increase for Sheriff effective on 01/01/24 for elected. 8.0% CPI	Rae Grulkowski, (Commission Chair), Jim Larson, Joe Briggs, Josh Racki, Diane Heikkila, Tina Henry, Jerry Boland, Ted Lewis, Neil Dubois, Margaret Mitchell
FY 2023 <i>(meeting held on June 9, 2022)</i>	4.5% COLA Increase 4.7% CPI	Joe Briggs, (Commission Chair), Jim Larson, Don Ryan, Josh Racki, Diane Heikkila, Tina Henry, Dave Phillips, Ted Lewis, Jason Holden, Evelyn Forsyth
FY 2022 <i>(meeting held on June 10, 2021)</i>	2.0% COLA Increase 1.2% CPI	Jim Larson (Commission Chair), Jane Weber, Joe Briggs, Josh Racki, Mary Jolley, Jesse Slaughter, Diane Heikkila, Ted Lewis, Jason Holden, Anne Martinez
FY 2021 <i>(meeting held on May 28, 2020)</i>	1.0% COLA Increase 1.8% CPI	Jim Larson (Commission Chair), Jane Weber, Joe Briggs, Josh Racki, Mary Jolley, Jesse Slaughter, Diane Heikkila, Ted Lewis, Jason Holden, Anne Martinez
FY 2020 <i>(meeting held on May 29, 2019)</i>	2.4% COLA Increase 2.4% CPI	Joe Briggs (Commission Chair), Jane Weber, Jim Larson, Josh Racki, Faye McWilliams, Jesse Slaughter, Diane Heikkila, Ted Lewis, Jean Faure, Anne Martinez

## Example Calculation



- County Commissioners**

FY 2023/2024 Base Salary	\$75,086.30
FY 2024/2025 4.1% Increase	\$ 3,078.54
FY 2024/2025 Base Salary	\$78,164.84
Commissioner Add-On pursuant to MCA section 7-4-2107(1)	\$ 2,000.00
<b>FY 2023/2024 Complete Salary Total</b>	<b>\$80,164.84</b>

- County Clerk and Recorder**

FY 2023/2024 Base Salary	\$75,086.30
FY 2024/2025 4.1% Increase	\$ 3,078.54
FY 2024/2025 Base Salary	\$78,164.84

- Optional Add-On pursuant to MCA section 7-4-2503(2d)

Optional Add-On pursuant to MCA section 7-4-2503(2d)	\$ 2,000.00
Combined position-Auditor/Surveyor	\$ 3,032.00
<b>FY 2024/2025 Complete Salary Total</b>	<b>\$83,196.84</b>



### Cascade County Elected Officials Salary Benefits Costs FY 2025

Title	Budgeted			* Salary per Resolution 24-35
	Salary	Benefits	Total	
County Attorney	\$ 154,976.00	\$ 37,099.00	\$ 192,075.00	\$ 148,872.00
County Sheriff/Coroner	\$ 107,934.00	\$ 33,127.00	\$ 141,061.00	\$ 108,221.53
County Clerk & Recorder/Assessor/Auditor/Surveyor	\$ 83,404.00	\$ 24,738.00	\$ 108,142.00	\$ 81,196.84
County Treasurer/Superintendent of Schools	\$ 83,404.00	\$ 24,740.00	\$ 108,144.00	\$ 83,196.84
County Clerk of District Court	\$ 80,247.00	\$ 24,193.00	\$ 104,440.00	\$ 80,164.84
County Commissioner District 1	\$ 80,247.00	\$ 24,193.00	\$ 104,440.00	\$ 80,164.84
County Commissioner District 2	\$ 80,247.00	\$ 24,193.00	\$ 104,440.00	\$ 80,164.84
County Commissioner District 3	\$ 80,247.00	\$ 24,193.00	\$ 104,440.00	\$ 80,164.84
County Justice of the Peace	\$ 80,247.00	\$ 24,193.00	\$ 104,440.00	\$ 80,164.84
County Justice of the Peace	\$ 80,247.00	\$ 24,193.00	\$ 104,440.00	\$ 80,164.84
County Public Administrator	\$ 3,600.00	-	\$ 3,600.00	-
<b>Total Elected Officials</b>	<b>\$ 914,800.00</b>	<b>\$ 264,862.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,179,662.00</b>	<b>\$ 902,476.25</b>

\* These figures were approved at the September 5, 2024 Special Meeting. The resolution follows the recommendation of the County Compensation Board for a 4.1% increase, except for the County Attorney, which was capped at the District Court Judges' salary.

### Cascade County Other Highly Compensated Positions Salary Benefits Costs FY 2025

Title	Budgeted per Website Document		
	Salary	Benefits	Total
Chief Deputy County Attorney – Criminal	\$ 135,003	\$ 32,122	\$ 167,125
Chief Deputy County Attorney – Civil	\$ 135,003	\$ 32,122	\$ 167,125
Deputy County Attorneys – 15 total (average wage)	\$ 108,556	\$ 29,500	\$ 138,056
Undersheriff	\$ 126,770	\$ 38,739	\$ 165,509
Captain	\$ 117,173	\$ 36,558	\$ 153,731
Captain – Detention Center	\$ 113,549	\$ 35,736	\$ 149,285
Lieutenant	\$ 111,937	\$ 35,369	\$ 147,306
Lieutenant	\$ 106,769	\$ 34,239	\$ 141,008
Senior Deputy – Detention Center	\$ 100,967	\$ 33,057	\$ 134,024
Health Department Clinical Provider	\$ 107,217	\$ 29,226	\$ 136,443
Accounting Manager	\$ 96,785	\$ 27,068	\$ 123,853
<b>Total Other Positions</b>	<b>\$ 1,259,729</b>	<b>\$ 363,736</b>	<b>\$ 1,623,465</b>

NOTE: Non-elected, non-union positions typically receive the same Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase as the Elected Officials. However, the Commissioners have granted additional increases for certain individuals as they deemed appropriate.

Deputy Sheriff Officer's salary range for Recruits through Sergeant - \$ 74,127 to \$ 95,179  
 Detention Center Officers salary range for Recruits through Lieutenant - \$ 46,519 to \$79,274  
 Deputy County Attorney salary range - \$ 94,770 to \$ 126,139

### Cascade County Department Heads Salary Benefits Costs FY 2025

Title	Budgeted per Website Document		
	Salary	Benefits	Total
Chief Finance Officer	\$ 122,971	\$ 32,003	\$ 154,974
Juvenile Detention Center Administrator	\$ 108,832	\$ 29,562	\$ 138,394
Health Officer	\$ 108,483	\$ 29,448	\$ 137,931
Public Works Director	\$ 106,154	\$ 29,039	\$ 135,193
Human Resources Director	\$ 92,661	\$ 26,661	\$ 119,322
Information Technology Director	\$ 90,865	\$ 26,045	\$ 116,910
Planning Director	\$ 89,872	\$ 26,174	\$ 116,046
Aging Services Director	\$ 87,355	\$ 25,725	\$ 113,080
Expo Park Director	\$ 81,908	\$ 25,337	\$ 107,245
Elections Administrator	\$ 70,256	\$ 22,713	\$ 92,969
Disaster & Emergency Services Director	\$ 68,134	\$ 22,345	\$ 90,479
<b>Total Department Heads</b>	<b>\$ 1,027,491.00</b>	<b>\$ 295,052.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,322,543.00</b>

NOTE: Non-elected, non-union positions typically receive the same Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase as the Elected Officials. However, the Commissioners have granted additional increases for certain individuals as they deemed appropriate.