



Snohomish County
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Salary Commission approves cost-of-living adjustments

The Snohomish County Citizens' Commission on Salaries of Elected Officials approved on Monday a schedule for granting cost-of-living adjustment or COLA salary increases for elected officials during 2009 and 2010.

The commission approved the cost-of-living adjustment for elected officials with no increase to their base salary.

Under the salary schedule, the five county council members, executive, assessor, auditor, clerk, sheriff and treasurer would see a cost-of-living adjustment each of the two years. The cost-of-living adjustment is calculated at 95 percent of the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the Seattle-Tacoma Bremerton area for the period ending in June of the previous year.

The cost-of-living adjustment approved for elected officials is the same as a non-represented county employee will receive. For 2009, the adjustment is estimated to be between 3 percent and 4 percent.

The commission also approved tying the prosecuting attorney's salary to superior court judges as set by the state salary commissions as it has been since 2002.

This is the first time in Snohomish County that a change in salaries for elected officials will go into effect without approval from the council or executive. A 2006 voter-approved amendment to the county charter eliminated the need for council and executive approval of the salary changes. By law, salary recommendations must be made by May 1 for the next two-year period.

The commission is an independent group that meets every two years to set the salaries of elected officials in Snohomish County. Elected officials whose salaries are determined by the commission are the members of the county council, the executive, assessor, auditor, clerk, prosecuting attorney, sheriff and treasurer.

The commission is made up of 10 members, nominated by the county executive and confirmed by the county council. Six of the commission members are selected by lot by the county auditor from among all registered voters in Snohomish County. The remaining four members are required to have experience in the field of personnel management and come from four sectors: business, professional personnel management, legal profession and organized labor.

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Snohomish County Salary Commission: www.snoco.org, search term "salary commission."