



# North Dakota Legislative Council

Prepared for the Legislative Procedure and Arrangements Committee  
 LC# 21.9404.01000  
 September 2020

## LEGISLATIVE COMPENSATION INCREASES COMPARED TO INFLATION AND STATE EMPLOYEE SALARY INCREASES - 1981 THROUGH 2020

This memorandum compares actual legislative compensation rates and legislative compensation rates adjusted for inflation and state employee salary increases for the period 1981 through 2020.

### LEGISLATIVE COMPENSATION RATES

North Dakota Century Code Section 54-03-20 provides that each member of the Legislative Assembly is entitled to receive compensation per calendar day during each regular, special, or organizational session. In addition each legislator is entitled to receive monthly compensation during each legislators' term of office. The following is a schedule of daily legislative session compensation and monthly compensation rates:

	Rate Effective July 1, 2019	Rate Effective July 1, 2020
Daily legislative session compensation	\$181	\$186
Monthly compensation	\$505	\$518

Section 54-35-10 provides that legislators are also entitled to receive compensation for attending interim meetings of the Legislative Management and its committees. The following is a schedule of interim meeting daily compensation rates:

	Rate Effective July 1, 2019	Rate Effective July 1, 2020
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$181	\$186

### CHANGES IN LEGISLATIVE COMPENSATION SINCE 1981

Year of Change	Compensation for Each Calendar Day During Session	Expense Reimbursement During Session		Expense Reimbursement or Compensation for Each Month During Term of Office	Compensation for Each Day Attending Interim Meetings
		For Each Day During Session	For Each Month During Session		
1981	\$5 <sup>1</sup>	\$85 <sup>1</sup>		\$180	\$62.50
1983	\$40 <sup>2</sup>	\$50 <sup>2</sup>		\$180	\$62.50
1985	\$90 <sup>3</sup>		\$600 <sup>3</sup>	\$180 <sup>3</sup>	\$62.50
1997	\$111		\$650	\$250 <sup>4</sup>	\$62.50
1999	\$111		\$650	\$250	\$75.00
2001	\$125		\$650	\$250	\$100.00
2005	\$125		\$900 <sup>5</sup>	\$350 <sup>5</sup>	\$100.00
2007	\$130 <sup>6</sup>		\$900	\$364 <sup>6</sup>	\$104.00 <sup>6</sup>
2008	\$135 <sup>6</sup>		\$900	\$378 <sup>6</sup>	\$108.00 <sup>6</sup>
2009	\$141 <sup>7</sup>		\$1,040 <sup>8</sup>	\$396	\$141.00 <sup>6,7</sup>
2010	\$148 <sup>7</sup>		\$1,040 <sup>8</sup>	\$415	\$148.00 <sup>7</sup>
2011	\$152 <sup>9</sup>		\$1,351 <sup>10</sup>	\$427	\$152.00 <sup>9</sup>
2012	\$157 <sup>9</sup>		\$1,351 <sup>10</sup>	\$440	\$157.00 <sup>9</sup>
2013	\$162 <sup>11</sup>		\$1,455 <sup>12</sup>	\$453	\$162.00 <sup>11</sup>
2014	\$167 <sup>11</sup>		\$1,569 <sup>12</sup>	\$467	\$167.00 <sup>11</sup>
2015	\$172 <sup>13</sup>		\$1,569 <sup>12</sup>	\$481	\$172.00 <sup>13</sup>
2016	\$177 <sup>13</sup>		\$1,682 <sup>12</sup>	\$495	\$177.00 <sup>13</sup>
2017	\$177 <sup>14</sup>		\$1,682 <sup>12</sup>	\$495	\$177.00 <sup>14</sup>
2018	\$177 <sup>14</sup>		\$1,758 <sup>12</sup>	\$495	\$177.00 <sup>14</sup>
2019	\$181 <sup>15</sup>		\$1,758 <sup>12</sup>	\$505	\$181.00 <sup>15</sup>
2020	\$186 <sup>15</sup>		\$1,814 <sup>12</sup>	\$518	\$186.00 <sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Legislative session compensation was constitutionally limited to \$5 per calendar day, and the level of expense reimbursement during legislative sessions was set by statute at \$85 per calendar day for a total of \$90 per day.

<sup>2</sup>The constitutional provision limiting legislative compensation was repealed on June 8, 1982, by voter approval of Measure No. 4, which created Article XI, Section 26, of the Constitution of North Dakota, and provides that:

The legislative, executive, and judicial branches are coequal branches of government. Elected members and officials of each branch shall receive as compensation for their services only such amounts as may be specifically set by law. Payment for necessary expenses shall not exceed those allowed for other state employees.

After the adoption of the 1982 constitutional amendment, the subsequent 1983 Legislative Assembly amended Section 54-03-20 to set the levels of legislative session compensation and expense reimbursement at \$40 per day and \$50 per day, respectively. As an exception to the compensation and expense reimbursement rates provided to other legislators, legislators from Bismarck received \$90 per day as compensation and no expense reimbursement. Consequently, the total of legislative session expense reimbursement and compensation for all legislators remained unchanged at \$90 per day.

<sup>3</sup>The 1995 Legislative Assembly amended Section 54-03-20 to provide that legislators receive compensation of \$90 per calendar day during the legislative session plus reimbursement for lodging up to \$600 per month. Section 54-03-20 was also amended to provide that the \$180 per month payment to legislators during their terms of office was compensation rather than reimbursement for expenses.

<sup>4</sup>The 1997 Legislative Assembly amended Section 54-03-20 to provide that compensation may be paid monthly, rather than every 6 months, at the option of each legislator.

<sup>5</sup>The 2005 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' monthly compensation from \$250 to \$350 per month effective July 1, 2005, and increased the maximum lodging expense reimbursement allowed during legislative sessions from \$650 to \$900 per month effective January 1, 2005.

<sup>6</sup>The 2007 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation by 4 percent for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 2007-09 biennium and by 3.85 percent for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the biennium. In addition Section 11 of 2007 House Bill No. 1001 increased legislators' interim meeting pay to \$135 per day beginning July 1, 2009.

	Rate Effective August 1, 2007	Rate Effective July 1, 2008	Rate Effective July 1, 2009
Daily legislative session compensation	\$130	\$135	
Monthly compensation	\$364	\$378	
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$104	\$108	\$135

<sup>7</sup>The 2009 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation by 5 percent for each year of the 2009-11 biennium.

	Rate Effective Prior to August 1, 2009	Rate Effective August 1, 2009	Rate Effective July 1, 2010
Daily legislative session compensation	\$135	\$141	\$148
Monthly compensation	\$378	\$396	\$415
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$135	\$141	\$148

<sup>8</sup>The 2009 Legislative Assembly increased the maximum monthly lodging expenses reimbursement allowed during legislative sessions from \$900 per month to 30 times 55 percent of the state daily lodging expense reimbursement rate. This increase was effective August 1, 2009. Based on the state daily lodging reimbursement rate of \$63 per night, the maximum monthly lodging expense reimbursement was \$1,040 per month for the 2011 legislative session.

<sup>9</sup>The 2011 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation by 3 percent for each year of the 2011-13 biennium.

	Rate Effective Prior to July 1, 2011	Rate Effective July 1, 2011	Rate Effective July 1, 2012
Daily legislative session compensation	\$148	\$152	\$157
Monthly compensation	\$415	\$427	\$440
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$148	\$152	\$157

<sup>10</sup>The 2011 Legislative Assembly, in Senate Bill No. 2015, increased the maximum lodging expenses reimbursement allowed during legislative sessions from 30 times 55 percent of the state daily lodging reimbursement rate to 30 times 65 percent of the state daily lodging expense reimbursement rate. This increase was effective August 1, 2011. Based on the state daily lodging reimbursement rate of \$69.30 per night, the maximum monthly lodging expense reimbursement was \$1,351 per month for the 2013 legislative session.

<sup>11</sup>The 2013 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation by 3 percent for each year of the 2013-15 biennium.

	Rate Effective Prior to July 1, 2013	Rate Effective July 1, 2013	Rate Effective July 1, 2014
Daily legislative session compensation	\$157	\$162	\$167
Monthly compensation	\$440	\$453	\$467
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$157	\$162	\$167

<sup>12</sup>The 2013 Legislative Assembly, in Senate Bill No. 2001, increased the maximum lodging expenses reimbursement allowed during legislative sessions from 30 times 65 percent of the state daily lodging expense reimbursement rate to 30 times

70 percent of the state daily lodging expense reimbursement rate. This increase was effective July 1, 2013. The North Dakota lodging rates are as follows:

	Rate Effective January 1, 2013	Rate Effective October 1, 2013 (2015 Session Rate)	Rate Effective October 1, 2015 (2017 Session Rate)	Rate Effective October 1, 2017 (2019 Session Rate)	Rate Effective October 1, 2019 (2021 Session Rate)
In-state lodging rate	\$69.30	\$74.70	\$80.10	\$83.70	\$86.40
Lodging expense reimbursement estimate	\$1,455.00	\$1,569.00	\$1,682.00	\$1,758.00	\$1,814.00

<sup>13</sup>The 2015 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation by 3 percent for each year of the 2015-17 biennium.

	Rate Effective Prior to July 1, 2015	Rate Effective July 1, 2015	Rate Effective July 1, 2016
Daily legislative session compensation	\$167	\$172	\$177
Monthly compensation	\$467	\$481	\$495
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$167	\$172	\$177

<sup>14</sup>The 2017 Legislative Assembly did not increase legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation for the 2017-19 biennium.

	Rate Effective Prior to July 1, 2017	Rate Effective July 1, 2017	Rate Effective July 1, 2018
Daily legislative session compensation	\$177	\$177	\$177
Monthly compensation	\$495	\$495	\$495
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$177	\$177	\$177

<sup>15</sup>The 2019 Legislative Assembly increased legislators' daily pay during legislative sessions, monthly compensation, and interim meeting compensation 2.5 percent for the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the biennium and 2.0 percent for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the biennium.

	Rate Effective Prior to July 1, 2019	Rate Effective July 1, 2019	Rate Effective July 1, 2020
Daily legislative session compensation	\$177	\$181	\$186
Monthly compensation	\$495	\$505	\$518
Interim meeting daily compensation	\$177	\$181	\$186

The schedule attached as an [appendix](#) provides a comparison of actual legislative compensation rates and legislative compensation rates adjusted for inflation and state employee salary increases for the period 1981 through 2020.

ATTACH:1