



www.lsc.ohio.gov

# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

H.B. 413  
135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

## Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 413's Bill Analysis](#)

**Version:** As Introduced

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Fowler Arthur

**Local Impact Statement Procedure Required:** No

Robert Meeker, Senior Budget Analyst

### Highlights

- The state will see a reduction in GRF-supported judicial salary of \$17,441 beginning in CY 2031 with the replacement of two part-time judges in the Ashtabula County County Court with one full-time judge.
- Ashtabula County will see a reduction in locally supported judicial salary of \$10,545 beginning in CY 2031 with the replacement of two part-time judges in the Ashtabula County County Court with one full-time judge. The county will also see a reduction in court administrative costs, estimated to be at least \$100,000 per year.
- The village of North Kingsville and the townships of Kingsville, Monroe, and Sheffield may see a minimal at most increase in annual operating expenses to support Conneaut Municipal Court.

### Detailed Analysis

The bill makes the following changes to the Ashtabula County County Court and the Conneaut Municipal Court:

- Beginning on January 1, 2031, the bill replaces the two part-time judges of the Ashtabula County County Court with one full-time judge to be compensated as a municipal court judge. Ahead of this change, the bill sets the terms for the judges to be elected in 2028 to two-year terms: January 1, 2029 through December 31, 2030.
- Related to the jurisdiction of the Ashtabula County County Court and the Conneaut Municipal Court, the bill (1) transfers jurisdiction for cases originating in the village of North Kingsville and the townships of Kingsville, Monroe, and Sheffield from the

Ashtabula County County Court to the Conneaut Municipal Court beginning on January 1, 2025.

## Ashtabula County County Court

### Judicial salary

Under continuing Ohio law, a judge of a county court receives compensation from the state and the county:

- The county pays an amount equal to \$35,500 per year for each county court judge, and under the bill will pay \$61,750 per year for the full-time county court judge starting in 2031 – an amount equal to the local portion of a full-time municipal court judge salary.
- The state pays the remaining portion of the statutorily set judge’s salary through GRF appropriation to the Supreme Court. Barring any intervention by the General Assembly:
  - the full salary for a county court judge is set at \$93,403 of which the state is responsible for \$57,903 (after deducting the local portion of \$35,500); and
  - the full salary for a municipal court judge and the full-time judge of the Ashtabula County County Court beginning in 2031 is \$162,257 of which the state is responsible for \$100,507 (after deducting the local portion of \$61,750).

As the table below shows, the replacement of two part-time judges with one full-time judge saves the county \$9,250 annually and saves the state \$15,299 annually in base salary costs. The table also reflects a contribution to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) which results in additional savings of 14% per year: \$2,142 to the state and \$1,295 to the county.

Cost Comparison of Ashtabula County County Court Judgeship(s) Part-time versus Full-time (2031)				
Compensation Cost	Compensation for Part-Time Judge	Compensation for (2) Part-Time Judges	Compensation for Full-Time Judge	Savings*
Local base salary	\$35,500	\$71,000	\$61,750	\$9,250
14% OPERS contribution	\$4,970	\$9,940	\$8,645	\$1,295
<b>Local Total</b>	<b>\$40,470</b>	<b>\$80,940</b>	<b>\$70,395</b>	<b>\$10,545</b>
State base salary	\$57,903	\$115,806	\$100,507	\$15,299
14% OPERS contribution	\$8,106	\$16,213	\$14,071	\$2,142
<b>State Total</b>	<b>\$66,009</b>	<b>\$132,019</b>	<b>\$114,578</b>	<b>\$17,441</b>
<b>Compensation Total</b>	<b>\$106,479</b>	<b>\$212,959</b>	<b>\$184,973</b>	<b>\$27,986</b>

Note: 1.75% annual pay increases under S.B. 296 of the 132<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly end in 2028

\*Reflects the savings generated from converting part-time judgeships to a single full-time judgeship

The county may also incur additional benefit costs, like health insurance, as well as other administrative costs.

### **Court operating costs**

County officials suggest that there will be additional savings for the county because the county will no longer need to maintain two courts for two part-time judges. Currently, the Ashtabula County County Court maintains two divisions, one in Jefferson and one in Geneva. The county court reports that the county currently pays \$108,000 annually to maintain the court in Geneva. It is likely that the court can expect to save at least this amount annually, but the actual amount of any savings will depend on actions taken by the county and the court to consolidate judgeships leading up to CY 2031.

### **Conneaut Municipal Court**

Under continuing law, each municipal corporation and each township within the territory of the municipal court shall be assigned a proportionate share of the current operating costs of the municipal court that is equal to the percentage of the total criminal and civil caseload of the municipal court that arose in that municipal corporation or township. County court costs are paid by the relevant county commissioners.

As described above, the village and townships moving from county court to the municipal court jurisdiction will be directly responsible for covering the costs of the Conneaut Municipal Court whereas currently relevant county court costs are paid by the county. However, the total number of cases arising from the relevant village and townships is likely to be relatively small annually. As reported by county officials, the number of cases originating from those locations totaled 31 in 2023. The loss of court cost revenue for the county court will be negligible as will the potential additional expenses for the village and townships, and resulting revenue for the Conneaut Municipal Court.

FNHB0413IN-135/lb