

A SLIGHTLY LESS SORRY STATE OF DISCLOSURE

A NEW REPORT ON JUDICIAL
FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE IN
THE STATES



JULY 2025

02

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Fix the Court thanks Logan Hartman, who obtained and transcribed the information on the Missouri chief justice's 2023 and 2024 disclosures, as they wouldn't let him leave the building with copies. Logan, a college student who freelances for local papers in southwestern Missouri, was put in touch with Fix the Court by E.J. Haas, a Chicago-based journalist who viewed and transcribed the Missouri disclosures on our behalf last year.

Finally, Fix the Court thanks Steve Cavendish, the editor-in-chief of the *Nashville Banner*, for help in obtaining a disclosure from Tennessee, just as he did last year, after a court official said he'd only release the report to a state resident.

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RUNNING IT BACK



In March of last year, Fix the Court issued a report titled “**A Sorry State of Disclosure**,” which explained how to obtain the annual financial disclosures of state supreme court justices across the country and rated the disclosures based on how long it took for us to get them and on the amount of content useful for oversight they contained.

We did this because **more Americans are becoming interested in the entanglements of their state and federal jurists**, especially as these men and women are wielding, both federally and in many states, a growing amount of power. This year, we’ve recreated the report by once again compiling the disclosures and rating their contents. We’re calling it “**A Slightly Less Sorry State of Disclosure**.” (See the database with links to all the disclosures: TinyURL.com/StateFDRs2025.)

That’s mainly because, first off, **things didn’t get worse in the intervening 16 months** — really two years, since last year’s “Sorry State” compiled the 2022 disclosures and this year’s reviewed the 2023s and the 2024s. No states reduced the number of disclosure categories (gifts, reimbursements, spousal income and the like) in their reports, and as many states (12) gained points in our ratings for sending in their disclosures more quickly this time as lost points (also 12) for taking longer to send us their disclosures.

Two victories in particular made this year’s tally slightly less sorry. The first is that New Jersey — and this is a result of last year’s report — no longer requires requesters to send their judicial disclosure requests in writing to Trenton. “There’s no need to do snail mail in 2025,” an N.J. Courts spokesman told us.

The second is that in June 2024, Colorado passed a law requiring the secretary of state to post judges’ and justices’ Personal Financial Disclosure Statements online. That law also ended lawmakers’ and jurists’ ability to check a “**NO CHANGE**” box on their forms and leave the rest blank. Now when the filing deadline comes, they have to fill out a complete report, even if they believe their financial situation didn’t change during the prior 12 months, which is better for oversight purposes (i.e., you might think there were no changes, but maybe that wasn’t actually the case).

If we do this again next year, it may become **A Somewhat Less Sorry State of Disclosure**, as two states — Michigan and Vermont, both thanks to our reports — are considering expanding the amount of information judges and justices are required to disclose, and one state, Hawaii, has already committed to doing that in 2026, which should vault them into the top spot in the tally. (A spokesperson for Hawaii’s judiciary “respectfully decline[d] to comment” when we asked it if was our report that induced the change.)

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MOTIFS AND MORSELS



Beyond the victories mentioned on the prior page, we noticed some common themes and interesting (read: frustrating) tidbits as we put together this report. Many of these applied last year, but they're worth reiterating or expanding upon.

Four states' disclosures remain limited to a single page (Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming), which is not enough space to cover a judge's entanglements. In six states — Alabama, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma and Oregon — there's no section for reporting gifts. That should probably be job no. 1 of a disclosure. (Alabama and Oregon have gift bans for public officials, but there are exceptions.) Illinois still requires requesters to fill out and mail in a form to obtain one of the reports judges file.

Three states that post their disclosures online do not keep them online for long; we were not able to locate 2023 and earlier versions of Minnesota's and Montana's primary disclosures or of New Mexico's secondary reports. (Once we or the state officials locate them, we'll post them in the database.) At least a Minnesota official told us that as soon as next year, the state plans "to modify the website so that prior reports [...] are available."

Speaking of Minnesota, our inquiry apparently helped the chief justice there recall that "she had inadvertently "not filed" the Reports of Compensation for Extra-Judicial Activities, i.e. the secondary reports, for 2023 and 2024. "When she discovered that the reports had not been filed, she filed them promptly," the State Court Administrator's Office told us. (She received no gifts and no outside compensation in either year, per those reports.) That raises this question: are local reporters not regularly asking for these reports? One would have thought that the Minnesota issues, and several others we mention beginning on page 9, would have been sorted earlier in the year (disclosures are generally due mid- to late spring) when a local journalist requested a report or a clarification.

Sadly, the bottom in our report is still the bottom. Missouri still requires you to show up in person to review a disclosure, Tennessee still requires you to be a state resident and Maine still requires cash (which, thankfully, they waived again this year, though FTC should, "in the future [...] be ready to pay the usual fee," the clerk told us). And Idaho and Utah still have no annual disclosure requirement for their judges and justices.

Ending on a positive note: we found some justices are voluntarily demonstrating greater transparency than what's required. Chief justices in Nevada, South Carolina and Wyoming disclosed gifts or reimbursements below their states' reporting thresholds, and Virginia's chief justice disclosed "complimentary" tickets to sporting events a concert and a reception, though the reporting requirement only covers gifts given by lobbyists.

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OBTAINING THE REPORTS

Fix the Court began requesting state chief justices' 2023 and 2024 financial disclosure reports, i.e., the two most recent ones, by simultaneously sending out dozens of emails at noon on June 11, 2025. By July 21, 2025, we had received reports from 47 of 50 states. (Pennsylvania hasn't gotten back to us, despite trying half a dozen times, though we've confirmed their reports' existence; Idaho and Utah justices aren't required to file annual disclosures; and though North Dakota justices don't need to file a report if they've received no extra-judicial income or gifts during the prior year, we spoke to N.D. Courts about this – Chief Justice Jensen didn't need to file a 2023 or a 2024 report – count the Peace Garden State among the 47.)

Thirteen of the 48 states require justices to file a second disclosure – generally ones that include extra-judicial compensation, gifts and reimbursements – so there are 61 reports in total. **Of the 61, less than half are posted online; only 27 are, up from 26 last year.** Counted another way, 24 states post one or both of their reports online, and 24 states do not.

The first number 24 is generous since 10 of the 24 “online” states make their judges fill out a second disclosure report that's not posted online. (The second disclosures derive from Rules 3.12-3.15 of the ABA's Model Code of Judicial Conduct, which most state court systems have adopted and which say that judges should report their outside income, reimbursements and gifts annually. For unknown reasons, 13 states have not merged the secondary disclosures with the primary ones.)

Of the 13 secondary reports, four states post them online: Colorado, Georgia, Kentucky and New Mexico. But in Kentucky, what we call the primary one is not posted online.

To obtain the other 34 reports, and similar to last year, one must either fill out an online form; call the state supreme court or state ethics commission; snail-mail the supreme court clerk; or email the supreme court clerk, assistant to the clerk, state courts administrator, the supreme court's community relations or public information officer or law library staff, the commission on judicial qualifications, state ethics commission, the registry of election finance, the secretary of state's help desk, or the state board of professional conduct. Or you have to show up in person and jot down the information in the disclosure since you can't leave with a copy. Or you can't get the disclosure unless you happen to know the current editor-in-chief of one of your hometown newspapers.¹

¹The Tennessee Courts still require requesters to prove they're Tennessee residents before they're sent a disclosure. The *Nashville Banner* editor-in-chief, Steve Cavendish, once again requested the reports and forwarded them to us, though not before having to send a copy of his license to the state courts.

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GRADING THE STATES: ACCESS TO DISCLOSURES (10 POINTS)

Like last year, states were first graded on public access to the reports: If a report is online, a state received **10 points**. If it's not online, but we were able to obtain it in under two hours, a state received **8 points**. If it took more than two hours and up to one business day, **6 points**. If it took more than one business day and up to five business days, **4 points**; more than five business days and up to a month, **2 points**. More than a month, **1 point**. If we had to show up in person to obtain the report or the report is only released to state residents, **0.5 points**. There is no report (either at all or by press time on July 23, 2025), **0 points**. If justices file two reports, the points awarded are an average of two scores.

GRADING THE STATES: CONTENT OF DISCLOSURES (20 POINTS)

Content was graded on a curve: we based these grades on the information contained in the reports filed by federal judges and U.S. Supreme Court justices each year. Then we doubled the score since we feel that content is roughly twice as important as access.

Federal reports include the following sections: (1) Positions, (2) Agreements, (3) Non-Investment Income Filer, (4) Non-Investment Income Spouse, (5) Reimbursements, (6) Gifts, (7) Liabilities, (8) Investments and Trusts, (9) Additional Information and (10) Certification.

For grading state reports, we awarded one point for each of eight sections – all of the above minus agreements (often redundant) and additional information (often vague).

States were awarded half-points for the following information, which is not in the federal reports but should be:

- Value/amount of gifts received
- Value/amount of reimbursements received
- A separate real estate section
- A confirmation of attendance at ethics training

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THE GRADES

First quartile: Passable, >24 points

1. California (29 points)
2. Colorado (29) (+2 from last year)
3. Arkansas (28)
4. Arizona (27.5)
5. (tie) Georgia (27)
Hawaii (27)
Massachusetts (27, +2)
New Mexico (27)
Washington (27)
Wisconsin (27)
11. Virginia (25.5)
12. (tie) Rhode Island (25)
West Virginia (25)
14. Texas (24.5, +2)

Second quartile: Average, 21-24 points

15. (tie) Illinois (24)
Louisiana (24, -1)
Oregon (24)
18. North Carolina (23.5, -1)
19. (tie) Alaska (23, +2)
New Hampshire (23, +2)
21. (tie) Delaware (22, +2)
Florida (22)

Note: We didn't include federal judges' reports in the grades this year since they're posted in the online database on a rolling basis, which makes the "access" portion difficult to rate.

Third quartile: Poor, 17-20 points

23. (tie) Indiana (20, -2)
Kansas (20, -2)
Maine (20, -4)
Nevada (20)
New York (20 (+2)
Ohio (20 (-4)
Wyoming (20)
30. (tie) Connecticut (19, +4)
Maryland (19)
Montana (19)
Nebraska (19)
New Jersey (19, +7)
Pennsylvania (19, -2)
36. Tennessee (17.25)
37. (tie) Kentucky (17, +2.5)
Minnesota (17)

Fourth quartile: Failing, <17 points

39. Missouri (16.5)
40. Mississippi (16)
41. (tie) Iowa (15, +2)
Michigan (15, +2)
43. (tie) Alabama (14)
Oklahoma (14, -2)
South Carolina (14)
South Dakota (14, -4)
47. Vermont (13, -6)
48. North Dakota (10, -6)
49. (tie) Idaho (0)
Utah (0)

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HOW TO OBTAIN THE DISCLOSURES IN EVERY STATE, PLUS ONE OR TWO INTERESTING FACTS FROM EVERY STATE

Alabama (14 points; failing; *same as last year*):

Alabama justices' Statements of Economic Interest can be found by searching on the Ethics Commission's website. Alabama is the one of 12 states that requires its justices to file a second report, but it's the only state where that disclosure, per the state's Canons of Judicial Ethics, "shall be sealed and kept confidential by the Clerk of the Supreme Court."

Like last year, we were unable to access the secondary reports.

Alaska (23 points, average; +2 from last year due to faster response):

To obtain Alaska justices' Personal Financial Disclosures, email the Alaska Department of Administration at doa.apoc@alaska.gov. "**Mr. Cooper**," to whom Chief Justice Carney's husband is indebted, is not a person but a mortgage company.

Arizona (27.5 points, passable; *same as last year*):

Arizona justices' Financial Disclosure Statements can be found under a dropdown on the Secretary of State's website. Arizona's disclosures feature **clear instructions**, and unlike most states, they require an incredibly detailed listing of business interests held by justices and their spouses.

Arkansas (28 points, passable; *same as last year*):

Arkansas justices' Statements of Financial Interest can be found via search on the Secretary of State's website. The state includes a section titled "Past-Due Amounts Owed to Government," to **hold officials accountable for late taxes** and the like. Arkansas is one of just a few states that requires its judicial financial disclosures to be notarized, which adds another layer of certainty and seriousness when it comes to the accuracy of the information judges include.

California (29 points, passable [tied for **highest score**]; *same as last year*):

California justices' Statements of Economic Interests can be found by searching on the Fair Political Practices Commission website. The gift/outside income section of the reports includes instructions saying that acceptance of such items "may result in a disqualifying conflict of interest." **We'd like to see more of that from the states – and from the federal judiciary.**

Colorado (29 points, passable [tied for **highest score**]; +2 from last year due to posting main disclosure online):

Colorado justices file two reports: Personal Financial Disclosure Statements (filed annually) and Gifts and Honoraria Reports (filed quarterly), both of which can be found via search on

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the Secretary of State's website. That wasn't the case last year; **the online posting of PFDs is new**. What's more, Colorado no longer allows judges simply to check a box on their report saying there was "NO CHANGE" in their financial situation in the prior 12 months and be done with it. Both changes occurred thanks to a bill Gov. Jared Polis signed in June 2024, just months after our "Sorry State" report came out. FTC reached out to one of the bill's lead sponsors, former Sen. Steve Fenberg, and it turns out that the similar timing of the report and the bill, which he introduced last April, was merely a coincidence. **"The primary driver on this for me," he told us, "was related to elected officials and the tendency for them to simply check the box and move on.** Still a lot more work to do, in my opinion, but it's an improvement!" **Absolutely.**

Connecticut (19 points, poor; +4 from last year due to faster response):

To obtain Connecticut justices' Financial Disclosure Statements, email the Law Library Services of the Connecticut Judicial Branch at lawlibrarians@jud.ct.gov. Connecticut is the only state in which **one must email a law librarian** to get a disclosure.

Delaware (22 points, average; +2 from last year due to faster response):

To obtain Delaware justices' Public Officer Financial Disclosures, one must file an open records request on the Public Integrity Commission's website. Chief Justice Seitz listed nine 2024 reimbursements: from the ABA, the Berkeley Center for Law and Business, the federal judiciary, the National Center for State Courts, NYU School of Law, the Practicing Law Institute, the state of Delaware, the Tulane Corporate Law Institute and the University of Texas Law School. Delaware is one of the few states that requires listing reimbursement sources but not the where, the when, the what or the value, **meaning this disclosure category has diminished use for oversight.**

Florida (22 points, average; same as last year):

Florida justices file two reports. Disclosures of Financial Interests are searchable on the Commission on Ethics website, and gift and reimbursement disclosures, called Form 6A, can be obtained by emailing the Commission at DisclosureRecordsRequest@leg.state.fl.us. The latter is due at the end of June. Chief Justice Muniz filed his on June 30, and **Florida sent it over on July 1.**

Georgia (27 points, passable; same as last year):

Georgia justices file two reports. Financial Disclosure Statements are searchable on the Government Transparency & Campaign Finance Commission website, and Rule 3.15 Reports, searchable on a supreme court webpage. Georgia is one of only three states, Colorado and New Mexico being the others, that requires two reports *and* post both reports online. Unlike the other two states, you can find some of **Georgia's pre-2023 judicial disclosures online.**

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Hawaii (27 points, passable; *same as last year*):

Hawaii justices' Financial Disclosure Statements are posted on a State Judiciary webpage. Hawaii is the only state that requires its judges to attest to the fact that they've completed at least three hours of continuing judicial education classes during the reporting year. (Teaching a one-hour class is equivalent to taking three hours of CJE.) **Every state and the federal judiciary should require both the CJE hours and the attestation on their disclosures.** Additionally, this past March Hawaii justices amended the reporting requirements in the state's Revised Code of Judicial Conduct to include "reimbursements over \$200" as an additional reportable category. **Next year, we expect Hawaii to earn the full 30 points.** (We asked if it was our 2024 report that compelled the change; a courts spokesman "decline[d] to comment.")

Idaho (0 points, failing [tied for **lowest score**]; *same as last year*):

Idaho is one of two states, Utah being the other, that does not require its state supreme court justices to file annual financial disclosure reports, **which is ridiculous.**

Illinois (24 points, average; *same as last year*):

Illinois justices file two Statements of Economic Interests. One can be found by searching the Secretary of State's website, and to obtain the other, you must fill out and sign a form by hand — there's a "wet ink" requirement — and then snail-mail it to the supreme court clerk. Illinois is the only state of the 13 that require a second form where **the second form is called the same thing as the first**, which is confusing.

Indiana (20 points, poor; *-2 from last year due to slower response*):

To obtain Indiana justices' Statements of Economic Interests, one must fill out a request through the Indiana Judicial Branch's Public Record Request portal. A major benefit of Hoosier State disclosures: **clear, succinct instructions on how to complete them are on the report**, rather than being in a separate document, which is more common across the country.

Iowa (15 points, failing; *+2 from last year due to faster response*):

To obtain Iowa justices' Statements of Personal Financial Disclosure, email the State Courts Administrator at foia.appellate@iowacourts.gov. While in the past, Chief Justice Christensen filled out her reports with a Sharpie, **she now fills out them digitally**, which makes reading and reviewing them somewhat easier.

Kansas (20 points, poor; *-2 from last year due to slower response*):

To obtain Kansas justices' Financial Disclosure Reports, email the Judicial Branch at financialdisc@kscourts.org. Kansas has its judges break down investment ownership into **four categories, unique among the states**: "I" (individual), "S" (spouse), "DP" (domestic partner) or "DC" (dependent child or stepchild).

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Kentucky (17 points, poor; +2.5 from last year due to faster response):

Kentucky justices file two reports. To obtain their Financial Disclosure Reports, email the Registry of Election Finance, John.Steffen@ky.gov. Justices' quarterly Public Reports of Reimbursement are found in an online drop-down menu: go to KYCourts.gov, → "About the Courts," → "Circuit Court," → "Judicial Reimbursements." Kentucky, like Colorado, has a quarterly reimbursement reporting requirement, but rather than providing individual reports by judge, **Kentucky publishes a single PDF online listing all judges' and justices' reimbursements** during the previous quarter.

Louisiana (24 points, average; -1 from last year due to slower response):

Louisiana justices file two reports. Personal Financial Disclosure Statements can be found via search on the supreme court website, and an extra-judicial income report can be obtained by emailing LASC Community Relations at rgunn@lasc.org or dbecker@lasc.org. If a judge hasn't accepted any "gifts, loans, bequests, benefits, favors or other things" worth over \$350 in the prior year, they simply don't file the second report, though **we'd prefer that they sign and submit a blank report**, as is done in Minnesota.

Maine (20 points, poor; -4 from last year due to slower response):

To obtain Maine justices' Financial Disclosure Reports, call the clerk's office at the Supreme Judicial Court at 207-822-4151 or email matt.pollack@courts.maine.gov. Maine Courts are permitted to charge \$2 for the first page of the report and \$1 for each additional page. Last year, the fee was immediately waived. This year, the clerk told us: "If you'd like us to email you the disclosures, there is a fee for it. [...] The fee is \$2 for the first page and \$1 for each additional page for each disclosure. They are each four pages long, so it would be \$10 for both [2023 and 2024]." After some back and forth, the fee was again waived, but we were told: **"In the future, however, please be ready to pay the usual fee."** We don't believe that any state should request a fee for obtaining judicial financial disclosures. In fact, the only other state that asked for money last year, New Jersey, adopted a new rule after our report came out permanently waiving their fee.

Maryland (19 points, poor; same as last year):

To obtain Maryland justices' Financial Disclosure Statements, email the Government Relations and Public Affairs Office at communications@mdcourts.gov. While not reflected in the score, Maryland seems to be moving in the right direction. Newer reports have contrasting colors (red and white), so they're easier to read, as compared to the all-yellow reports in 2022 and prior years. Additionally, Chief Justice Fader's disclosure went from 71 pages in 2022; to 56 pages in 2023; to 34 pages in 2024, so although the state still permits judges to upload full bank statements and investment statements, **the more recent disclosures have been streamlined to make them more user-friendly** without reducing the amount of useful information.

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Massachusetts (27 points, passable; +2 *from last year due to faster response*)

To obtain Massachusetts justices' Statements of Financial Interest, requesters must log in to their system via username and password. To get a username and password, you must fill out an online form, upload a picture of your ID, and wait for approval. The Bay State is the only state to require logging in to a secure online system to obtain justices' disclosures. And as much as FTC is notoriously pro-disclosure, we'll say it: the report, **clocking in at 42 pages**, leans slightly more these days toward "bury us in paper" vs. "being useful for oversight."

Michigan (15 points, failing; +2 *from last year due to faster response*):

To obtain Michigan justices' Financial Reports, email any of the contacts listed on the Courts Public Information Office website. Michigan's reports require justices to list outside income, campaign contributions (if a justice is running in a retention election) and gifts over \$375. That's it — all on a single page. Last March, we made a plea to a state judiciary official to expand the categories of disclosure and were told the Court "is always looking at ways to make our justice system more transparent." In July (a year ago), Michigan released a comprehensive proposed amendment to their disclosure form, adding sections on **spousal income, board positions, passive income, debts, stocks and bonds and real estate and adding more detail on gifts**. FTC's Gabe Roth testified before the Michigan Supreme Court earlier this year strongly in favor of the proposal, and it remains under consideration by the justices.

Minnesota (17 points, poor; *same as last year*):

Minnesota justices file two reports. Justices' Statements of Economic Interest can be found via search on the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board website, and to obtain their reports on Compensation for Extra-Judicial Activities, email any of the contacts listed on the Court Information Office website. **There was some intrigue this year**. First, it appears that Chief Justice Hudson forgot to file a 2023 Compensation report, but luckily, here comes FTC. "Due to your recent inquiry," a Minnesota Courts source told us, **"the Chief Justice discovered that she had inadvertently not filed the reports for those two years. When she discovered that the reports had not been filed, she filed them promptly,"** which were then sent to us. In both years, the justice received no gifts or outside income. But unlike in Louisiana, a Minnesota judge must still file and sign a blank report. In terms of prior year's SEIs, it turns out, per the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board staff, that those "available online are limited to the most recent filing. The Board does plan to modify the website so that prior reports for active public officials are available" — a project the Board expects to begin working on "in 2026."

Mississippi (16 points, failing; *same as last year*):

Mississippi justices' Statements of Economic Interest can be found via search on the Ethics Commission website. Whether or not the address that's on Chief Justice Randolph's report, which is for a gated, \$1.4 million house, 87 miles from the Court building, is his primary

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residence, **it should probably be redacted from the report or generalized** (e.g., “12 acres of land with residence in Forrest Co.”) given the rising concern these days over judges’ safety.

Missouri (16.5 points, failing; *same as last year*):

Last year, we had to send a Missouri J-School student, E.J. Haas, to the Supreme Court building to copy down the disclosures by hand, and this year was no different, though we asked a different student, Logan Hartman, to do it since E.J. was not available. Logan put the data into a spreadsheet which is linked to in our database. Missouri remains the one state with this in-person requirement, and **it’s nothing short of a major embarrassment** that cries out for a legislative fix.

Montana (19 points, poor; *same as last year*):

Montana justices’ Business Disclosure Statements can be found via search on the Commission on Political Practices website. Unfortunately, the chief justice’s 2023 and 2024 disclosures (we’ve posted what’s called the 2025, which is for calendar year 2024) are no longer on the CPP website, **though state officials tell us they’re looking for them.**

Nebraska (19 points, poor; *same as last year*):

To obtain Nebraska justices’ Financial Interest Statements, email the Clerk of the Supreme Court at nsc.clerksoffice@nejudicial.gov. Chief Justice Bergevin doesn’t list his current home address on his report but he does include the address of what he calls his “**future personal residential.**” For the personal safety reasons mentioned above, that address should be redacted or generalized.

Nevada (20 points, poor; *same as last year*):

Nevada justices’ Financial Disclosure Statements can be found via search on the Nevada Judiciary website. Nevada does not require judges to list their spouses’ income (rare among the states) or gifts given to spouses (more common but still pretty rare), but they do require an accounting of any reimbursements given to spouses for accompanying the judge on a free or reimbursed trip. What’s more, Chief Justice Herndon in 2024 listed a \$195 reimbursement, even though the reporting threshold is \$200. **We appreciate going the extra mile transparency-wise.**

New Hampshire (21 points, average; *same as last year*):

To obtain New Hampshire justices’ Financial Disclosure Statement, call the Supreme Court clerk’s office at 603-271-2646 or email them at lclark@courts.state.nh.us. One mostly positive thing about these reports is that judges must first answer *if* they’ve received a reimbursement, and then, if they answered “yes,” they fill out a subsequent section “identify[ing] all entities [the judge] received reimbursement from.” **It’s a small thing, but it’s a helpful heuristic to ensure accuracy on the reports.** That said, it’d be better if they were also required to include the amount or value of the reimbursement.

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New Jersey (19 points, poor; +7 from last year due to faster response):

To obtain the New Jersey justices' Financial Reporting Statements, email peter.mcaleer@njcourts.gov or stephanie.corbopecht@njcourts.gov in the N.J. Courts Office of Communications and Community Relations. Last year, FTC was asked to fill out, print and mail a request to Trenton to obtain Chief Justice Rabner's report. In the end, his report was emailed to FTC after about a month. This year, spokesman Pete McAleer told us that thanks to our 2024 "Sorry State" report, the N.J. Courts decided to **"eliminate the whole idea of going through the mail"** for requesting and distributing judicial disclosure. **"There's no need to do snail mail in 2025,"** McAleer said. We couldn't agree more, and we hope they move to online posting in the near future.

New Mexico (27 points, passable; same as last year):

Like Colorado and Georgia, both of New Mexico's judicial disclosures are online. Justices' Financial Disclosure Reports can be found via search on the Secretary of State's website, and their Reports of Extra-Judicial Compensation can be found on a Supreme Court website. New Mexico directs requesters to a single PDF containing the extrajudicial compensation reports for every justice on their supreme court, yet **prior years' reports have disappeared**, and we're only left with the 2024. We reached out to N.M. Courts to see where the document went and **hope to be able to add it to our database soon**.

New York (20 points, poor; +2 from last year due to faster response):

To obtain New York justices' Statements of Financial Disclosure, requesters must fill out a form located on the New York Courts website and attach that to an email sent to the state Ethics Commission for the Unified Court System at ethicscomm@nycourts.gov. New York remains one of just a handful of states that **unnecessarily requires individuals to fill out a formal document**, kind of like a FOIA request, to obtain judges' primary disclosures.

North Carolina (23.5 points, passable; -1 from last year due to slower response):

North Carolina justices file two reports. Their Statements of Economic Interest can be found via search on the State Ethics Commission website, and their Reports of Gifts and Quasi-Judicial or Extra-Judicial Income Sources can be obtained by emailing the Supreme Court clerk at geb@sc.nccourts.org. Per Chief Justice Newby's report, his wife's investment company, NewTuck LLC, maintains at least a \$10,000 stake in Plasma Games, **a scandal-ridden educational gaming company that has had millions in contracts with the state**, despite no data showing its games improve educational outcomes.

North Dakota (10 points, failing; -6 from last year due to slower response):

To obtain North Dakota justices' Reports on Compensation for Extra-Judicial Activities, email the Supreme Court clerk at supclerkofcourt@ndcourts.gov. North Dakota doesn't have a true financial disclosure, just a secondary report, which, on a single sheet of paper, lists outside income greater than \$500 and gifts and reimbursements greater than \$250. If

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a judge earns no outside income and receives no gifts or reimbursements, he or she doesn't have to file a report the whole year, **which is why you'll see no reports from Chief Justice Jensen in our database**. In addition to this lack of accountability, North Dakota tied Vermont for the largest point deduction, since its disclosures took more than a week to get to us, as compared to just an hour in 2024.

Ohio (20 points, poor; -4 from last year due to slower response):

To obtain Ohio justices' Financial Disclosure Statements, contact the Ohio Board of Professional Conduct at faith.long@bpc.ohio.gov. Chief Justice Kennedy is a prolific receiver of gifts, **having received gifts valued at more than \$75 from (mostly) the same half dozen couples for years**. Unfortunately, the report requires neither a description of the gifts (just the source) nor a dollar amount, so the **lavishness and propriety of the gifts remains in question**. This would be an easy fix for the Ohio court or its legislature to make.

Oklahoma (14 points, failing; -2 from last year due to slower response):

To obtain Oklahoma justices' Financial Disclosure Statements, email the Ethics Commission at ethics@ethics.ok.gov. It's unknown whether Chief Justice Rowe still lives in the house in Tishomingo that he lists on his disclosures, but either way, **it should be redacted or generalized**.

Oregon (24 points, average; same as last year):

Oregon justices' Statements of Economic Interest can be found via search on the Government Ethics Commission website. Oregon is one of the few states that requires **listing the corporate headquarters address of a company whose stock is owned by a judge**, which is unnecessary.

Pennsylvania (19 points, average; -2 from last year due to slower response):

To obtain Pennsylvania justices' Statements of Financial Interest, email the administrator of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts at nicholene.dipasquale@pacourts.us. Last year, it took a little over three weeks to receive the chief justice's report, and it's unclear **why it we still don't have this year's**, six weeks after making our request. That said, the Keystone State's content points — which, at 9.5 points, **was tied with California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Wisconsin as the top figure nationally** — appears to be same as last year's.

Rhode Island (25 points, passable; same as last year):

Rhode Island justices file two reports. Their Yearly Financial Statements can be found via search on an Ethics Commission website, and to obtain their gift reports, email the State Court Administrator's office at akriss@courts.ri.gov. Rhode Island's category of reimbursement is called **"out of state travel,"** which makes sense when you hail from the smallest of the 50 states.

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South Carolina (14 points, failing; *same as last year*):

To obtain South Carolina justices Disclosure Statements, email the South Carolina Judicial Branch at media@sccourts.org. Chief Justice Kittredge included a reimbursement in his disclosure, a \$97 meal from the South Carolina Solicitors' Association, that was below the reporting threshold of \$150. **We appreciate the extra transparency.**

South Dakota (14 points, failing; *-4 from last year due to slower response*):

To obtain South Dakota justices' Compensation Reports, email the Unified Judicial System at alisa.bousa@uj.s.state.sd.us. The reports are not really reports; they are one-page letters in which the chief justice states he earned no outside income in 2023 and again in 2024. And this is not a typo: **both Dakotas have a Chief Justice Jensen.**

Tennessee (17.25 points, poor; *same as last year*):

Tennessee justices file two reports. Their Statements of Disclosure Interests can be found via search on the Ethics Commission website, but their Public Report of Compensation is harder to obtain, since the Tennessee Courts require one to be a state resident to obtain the report, **which is ridiculous**. Once again, we asked Steve Cavendish, the editor-in-chief of the *Nashville Banner*, for help, and he was able to obtain the report and forward it on to us. Thank you, Steve! Relatedly, in June, UCLA Law Prof. Gene Volokh filed a lawsuit against Williamson County, just south of Nashville, for **not sending him public records he requested since he's not a state resident**, which Volokh says violates the First Amendment. We wish him success in the suit.

Texas (24.5 points, passable; *+2 from last year due to faster response*):

To obtain Texas justices' Personal Financial Statements, email the Ethics Commission at openrecords@ethics.state.tx.us. Chief Justice Blacklock isn't required to list the *name* of his wife's employer, but the employer's *address* and *line of work* is required, so it's not hard to find out where she works. This is a fairly important piece of information since she's an attorney, and for oversight purposes, **you'd want to be sure the chief justice isn't participating in cases she's involved in.**

Utah (0 points, failing [tied for **lowest score**]; *same as last year*):

Utah is one of two states, Idaho being the other, that does not require its state supreme court justices to file annual financial disclosure reports. That is pitiful. As we wrote last year, if a measure of good governance works in 48 states, **it's good enough for all 50.**

Vermont (13 points, failing; *-6 from last year due to slower response*):

To obtain Vermont justices' Annual Financial Disclosures, one must fill out and submit a form on the state's Judiciary's Data and Information Requests website or email the State Court Administrator general counsel's office at leda.moloff@vtcourts.gov. Vermont tied with North Dakota for the largest point deduction, since its disclosures took nearly three weeks to get to us, as compared to just two work hours in 2024. On the positive side, we've been told by a source that **Vermont is considering adding spousal income as a required field of disclosure** on its judges' 2025 reports.

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Virginia (25.5 points, passable; *same as last year*):

Virginia justices' Statements of Economic Interests can be found by searching the state's Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council website. Virginia requires the reporting of gifts received from a "lobbyist, lobbyist's principal or [government] contractor," which is an excellent way to begin to hold judges and other public officials accountable. The problem is that the state **doesn't require its judges to include gifts received from any other individuals**, though Chief Justice Goodwyn in both 2023 and 2024 volunteered several non-reportable gifts, like tickets to sporting events from Virginia universities.

Washington (27 points, passable; *same as last year*):

Washington justices' Financial Affairs Statements can be found by searching the Public Disclosure Commission website. According to the real estate section of the Washington disclosures, judges are "not required to disclose the address of a personal residence," which is good. Also positive: there's a box on each judge's disclosure page called "**Submission History**" that shows when the disclosure was submitted and if and when the judge amended it.

West Virginia (26 points, passable; *-X from last year due to slower response*):

West Virginia justices must file two reports. Financial Disclosure Statements can be found via search on the Ethics Commission website, and to obtain their Judicial Financial Disclosure Statements, which include data on extra-judicial compensation, gifts and reimbursements, email the Supreme Court of Appeals clerk at casey.forbes@courtsww.gov. Chief Justice Wooton reported no gifts or reimbursements in 2024 and just two reimbursements in 2023, totaling \$589.18 (should be \$598.19; the former number is a typo), from a nonprofit that supports personnel stationed at Camp Dawson, a West Virginia Army National Guard facility. Per his Supreme Court of Appeals bio, **Wooton served more than 30 years in the U.S. Army Reserve and the National Guard**.

Wisconsin (27 points, passable; *same as last year*):

To obtain Wisconsin justices' Statements of Economic Interests, one must fill out a form on the Ethics Commission website and email it to ethics@wi.gov. You'll note that we asked for Chief Justice Ann Bradley's disclosures, though **since July 1, Jill Karofsky has been chief justice**. We plan to ask for hers soon, and we'll update the database when we get them.

Wyoming (20 points, poor; *same as last year*):

Wyoming's Justice Compensation Reports can be found via link on the supreme court website, in the right-most column under "Reporting." Wyoming releases its five justices' disclosures in a single PDF that only requires outside income, gifts and reimbursement to be listed. It's typical that most if not all of them check the "no" box, and that's the only disclosure we get from the court all year, though in 2024, Chief Justice Fox did report receiving a \$14 bracelet as a gift at a Wyoming Association of County Officers meeting, well below the \$250 reporting threshold. **We appreciate the extra transparency.**