



G W Y Ꭰ D B Ꭰ
CHEROKEE NATION®

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Chuck Hoskin Jr.
Principal Chief
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Bryan Warner
Deputy Principal Chief
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June 22, 2026

Chuck Hoskin, Jr.
Principal Chief, Cherokee Nation
W.W. Keeler Complex 17675 S. Muskogee Avenue
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Johnny Jack Kidwell
Speaker, Council of the Cherokee Nation
W.W. Keeler Complex 17675 S. Muskogee Avenue
Tahlequah, OK 74464

***Re: Final Report of the Citizens Committee on Compensation for Elected
Officials of the Cherokee Nation, 2026.***

I. Overview

As discussed more fully herein, the Citizens Committee on Compensation (“Citizens Committee”) concludes that **no adjustment in elected official compensation is warranted at this time.**

II. Determinations

A. Compensation

As mandated by the Council of the Cherokee Nation in LA 18-24, the Citizens Committee on Compensation has reconvened to study and set compensation

and benefits for elected officials of the Cherokee Nation. Accordingly, the Citizens Committee has reviewed its 2022 and 2024 actions, considered relevant information and reached unanimous conclusions by all members of the Committee. By operation of law, any adjustments of compensation and benefits, if any were to be set forth herein, shall become effective immediately. The Committee does not set forth any adjustments to compensation and benefits. The Citizens Committee has determined that elected official compensation will remain status quo, pursuant to the Citizens Committee's Final 2024 and 2022 reports.

B. Committee Convening

The committee further shares observations as to the reporting periods required of this committee by Cherokee Nation law and reconfirms the committee shall reconvene biennially, prior to the filing period for elected offices during the general election in the election year of the Principal Chief and prior to the filing period for elected offices in the midterm election to make its findings and issue a report. The Committee offers to the Principal Chief and Council to take under advisement proposals to further clarify these observations by matter of amendment to the statute. The committee shall submit their report prior to July 1st. The committee shall notify the Office of the Principal Chief and Speaker of the Council of the Cherokee Nation of its findings by written memorandum. This memorandum shall be signed by all members of the committee to affirm consensus.

III. Findings

A. Implementation and Reiterating 2022 and 2024 Final Reports

The Committee received a report on implementation¹ of the 2022 and 2024 reports from the Executive Director of Cherokee Nation Human Resources who is authorized by statute to implement the Final Reports issued by the

¹ See Exhibit A.

Committee. The Committee reports that all findings were implemented by the Executive Director of Cherokee Nation Human Resources as intended by the Committee. The Committee hereby reaffirms its final reports of the Citizens Committee on Compensation of January 27, 2022² and of March 30, 2024³ as valid and effective law.

The Citizens Committee reiterates herein our basic findings in 2022: Cherokee Nation elected official compensation remains lagging, particularly when size, scope and trajectory of governmental and business operations are considered. We further find, in view of the responsibilities of the executive branch of Cherokee Nation government which runs the range of day-to-day basic operations, to long term planning, to engagement with business and government officials across the country and even internationally, to crisis situations, the jobs of Principal Chief and Deputy Principal Chief are effectively 24 /7, 365 days per year positions. Likewise, the legislative, government and budgetary oversight and constituent service functions exercised by members of the Council of the Cherokee Nation have long made those positions full time jobs, well beyond, for example, typical state legislative offices⁴. Yet, these elected officials remain behind their peers in governmental and private sectors, as it relates to compensation⁵. We find that it is appropriate to defer adjustments substantially to our next reporting period of 2028.

The Citizens Committee will review all these subjects again and undertake a market compensation analysis when it reconvenes in 2028 per the underlying statute⁶

² <https://www.cherokee.org/media/nrxis2qn/final-report-of-the-citizens-committee-clarification-ltrs-1.pdf>

³ <https://www.cherokee.org/media/0r3mosmc/citizens-compensation-committee-final-report-of-2024.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.ncsl.org/about-state-legislatures/full-and-part-time-legislatures>

⁵ As noted in our 2022 Report, for example, the Chickasaw Nation Governor is paid a minimum of \$600,000 plus \$50,000 for each elected term.

⁶ <https://cherokee.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6693893&GUID=E96F75DF-C34E-4FCE-BAC2-F42DBC2004C7&Options=ID|Text|&Search=18-24>

IV. Effective Date

This Final Report is effective June 22, 2026.

V. Affirmed Consensus

The foregoing has been reviewed and approved unanimously by members of the Citizens Committee on Elected Official Compensation, as evidenced by the signatures of each member below:

X

DocuSigned by:

Deacon Turner

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Deacon Turner
Committee Chair

X

DocuSigned by:

Suzanne Gilstrap

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Suzanne Gilstrap

X

Signed by:

Curtis Bruehl

C637E0BCE6E74C7...

Curtis Bruehl

X

DocuSigned by:

Lyndon Emberton

106702706AF6487...

Lyndon Emberton

X

Signed by:

Teresa Adair

0120C210E73E402...

Teresa Adair

EXHIBIT A:



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Office of the Chief

Chuck Hoskin Jr.
Principal Chief

Bryan Warner
Deputy Principal Chief

MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee Chair Deacon Turner
FROM: Samantha Hendricks, Executive Director Human Resources
DATE: May 14, 2026
RE: Implementation Report on 2022 and 2024 Citizens Compensation Committee Recommendations

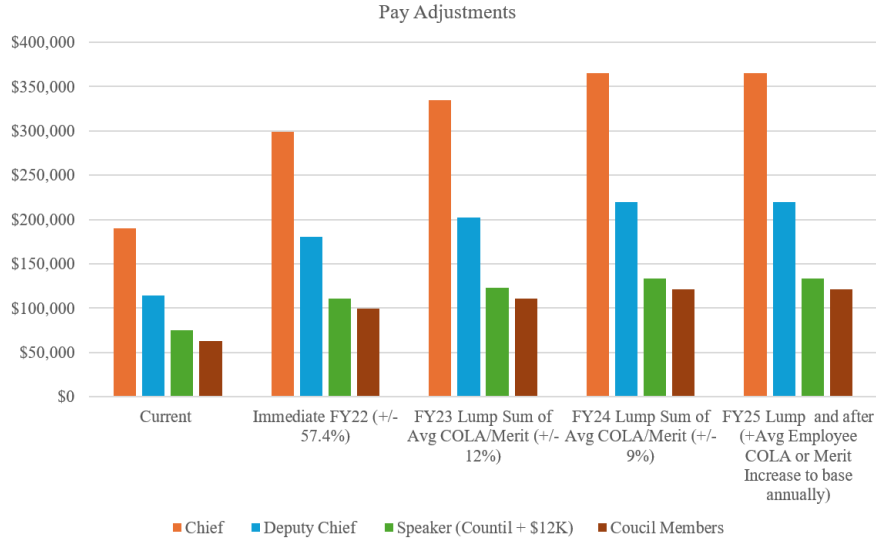
The Cherokee Nation reservation consists of over 7,000 square miles encompassing all or part of fourteen (14) counties in northeastern Oklahoma, making it one of the largest tribal jurisdictions in the United States. As of March 2026, the Cherokee Nation is comprised of approximately 480,000 citizens, representing the largest tribal nation in the country. With a government structure of over 6400 employees, that includes elected executive leadership and a legislative council, the Cherokee Nation is responsible for delivering a broad range of services and programs to its citizens across this expansive territory. Given the scale and complexity of the Nation's operations, ensuring that elected officials are compensated fairly and competitively is essential to attracting and retaining qualified leadership committed to serving the Cherokee people.

As a result of the recommendations set forth in the 2022 and 2024 Compensation Committee Reports^{1,2}, all requested measures have been successfully implemented. Council members are now compensated annually at a level that reflects an increase designed to align with current market rates and remain consistent with the compensation levels of comparable tribes. The following is a summary of each implemented measure and its current status.

Pay Adjustments. In accordance with the January 22, 2022, report¹, all seated elected officials received an immediate salary adjustment from \$63,000 to a new base of \$99,000. Following this initial adjustment, the compensation structure for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 integrated adjustments of +/-12% and +/-9%, respectively, into the base salary. These increases were calculated based on the average employee COLA and Merit rates, effectively raising the base pay to \$111,000 in FY23 and \$121,000 in FY24. This adjustment process was formalized in Fiscal Year 2023 to ensure that, moving forward, officials receive a 3% annual increase to the base salary at the start of each fiscal year. Alongside these salary milestones, officials receive the full suite of standard employee benefits and annual enhancements consistent with the general workforce, ensuring long-term alignment with the organization's compensation standards.

¹ "Final Report of the Citizens Committee on Compensation for Elected Officials of the Cherokee Nation," January 27, 2022, with addenda dated January 31, 2022, and February 1, 2022, <https://www.cherokee.org/media/nrxis2qn/final-report-of-the-citizens-committee-clarification-ltrs-1.pdf>

² "Final Report of the Citizens Committee on Compensation for Elected Officials of the Cherokee Nation," March 30, 2024, <https://www.cherokee.org/media/0r3mosmc/citizens-compensation-committee-final-report-of-2024.pdf>



Life Insurance Caps. Cherokee Nation Human Resources has reviewed the life insurance benefits plan and policies and has ensured that the coverage cap has kept pace with adjustments in compensation, not only for elected officials but across the workforce as a whole.

Documentation. The Executive Director of Human Resources has memorialized these annual salary adjustments in a memorandum to the Principal Chief and the Speaker of the Council, as requested.

Validation of Eligibility. Upon review, all officials who served at least two terms have been validated for eligibility upon application. No formerly elected official has relinquished tribal citizenship in the Cherokee Nation.

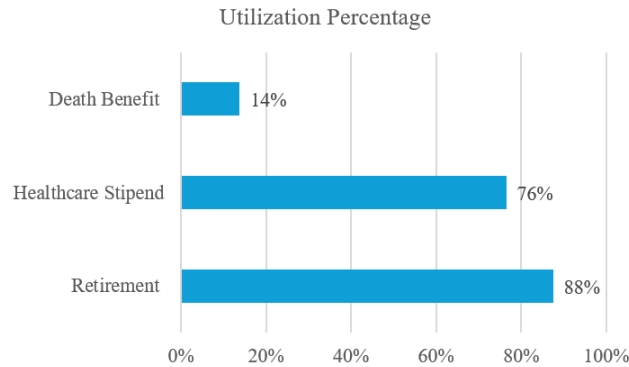
Post-Service Benefits

Retirement Benefits Eligibility. Retirement benefits have been extended to all living former Councilors, Deputy Chiefs, and Principal Chiefs who have served or been elected at least twice in any combination of the following capacities: Tribal Council, Deputy Chief, or Principal Chief.

Retirement (Lump Sum Net). The Cherokee Nation has provided a retirement amount to be deposited in the name of the former elected official upon application. The implementation of the Lump Sum Net (after tax) payment did not exceed the amount specified in the 2022 Report, and it was communicated to former elected officials that the payment was intended for use toward a retirement purpose or fund. The lump sum payment was grossed up to twenty percent (20%) in order to reasonably net the prescribed amount per the 2022 Report. All beneficiaries who received lump sum benefits prior to the issuance of the report were made whole through the provision of a supplemental payment. To date, twenty-eight (28) former tribal council members have participated in this benefit.

Healthcare Stipend. The Cherokee Nation has paid formerly elected officials who are at least sixty-two (62) years of age or older a \$500 per month reimbursement for health insurance upon application. The Committee further determined that this health benefit should extend to the surviving spouse of eligible former elected officials, in the event of death, and that extension has been implemented provided the spouse applies for the benefit. Currently, thirteen (13) former tribal council members have participated in the health stipend benefit, while no surviving spouses have applied.

Death Benefit. The Cherokee Nation has made available death benefits to the designated beneficiaries of former elected officials upon application. To date, five (5) former tribal council members have passed and were eligible to participate in this benefit, however only two (2) families applied and received benefits.



- **Healthcare Stipend:** Currently, 13 individuals receive this benefit. An additional 4 are eligible pending completion of required paperwork. Other staff remain ineligible at this time due to age requirements (under 62) or employment at a separate CN Entity.
- **Retirement:** Currently, 28 individuals have received this benefit. An additional 4 are identified as eligible pending completion of required application.
- **Death Benefits:** Currently, 5 individuals have received these benefits. An additional 28 are eligible to receive this benefit.

Unsolicited Judiciary Recommendations. It is understood that the Committee does not have authority over the judiciary; however, the District Court judges have pay ranges established through the Cherokee Nation Human Resources process. After reviewing the available information, all Supreme Court and District Court judges are within the designated salary ranges established.

In summary, all recommendations set forth in the 2022 and 2024 Citizens Compensation Committee Reports have been fully implemented. The Cherokee Nation remains committed to ensuring that the compensation and benefits provided to its elected officials and formerly elected officials are administered in accordance with the Committee's directives. Should the Committee require any additional information or supporting documentation in connection with the preparation of its upcoming report, we are prepared to provide such materials promptly.