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New York Judges Leave Bench for Practice – And More Money

In the 70s, New York judges were among the best paid across the country. Now, their salaries barely make the Top 50 list when compared to cost of living, a recent study by the National Center for State Courts [reports](#).

In New York, judges have not seen a raise in 12 years, which many say is contributing to the accelerating rate of judicial turnover in recent years, or about 1 in 10 judges annually, according to the [New York Times](#).

Last week, intermediate state appeals court judge James McGuire quit to take on a partner position at Dechert LLP, where average partner salary – \$1.4 million – is nearly ten times his pay as a judge.

Across the country, judges' salaries have dropped behind those of top lawyers, law school deans, professors and elected officials, creating a pay gap that U.S. Supreme Court chief justice John Roberts Jr. has said could detract from the strength of federal courts.

Last year, 110 New York state judges left their jobs, reflecting increased judicial attrition over the past five years, according to New York's Office of Court Administration.

A state commission on judicial salaries created last year is scheduled to decide on a pay increase for judges – if any at all – by September.



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By Patrick J. Lee