



Ministry
of Justice

Lea Paterson CBE
Senior Salaries Review Body

The Right Honourable
Shabana Mahmood MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary
of State for Justice

MoJ ref: SUB125875

22 July 2025

Dear Lea,

JUDICIAL PAY REVIEW 2026/27

I would like to thank you for your work over the last year, both for your recommendation on the 2025/26 judicial pay award and in the commencement of the Major Review of the Judicial Salary Structure. The decision to apply a 4% pay uplift to all judicial office holders required difficult trade-offs as this is above the 2.8% budgeted as set out in written evidence.

Although rejecting your recommendation of 4.75% was necessary to manage overall affordability to my department, I value the expert and independent advice of the SSRB highly. I share the concerns which were behind your recommendation that the judiciary receive a higher pay award than other SSRB remit groups. However, as I set out in my evidence I believe that fully assessing the role of pay in addressing such issues requires the extensive evidence and focused consideration provided as part of the Major Review process. I can assure you that my decision to reject the 2025/26 annual pay recommendation was not taken lightly.

I write to you now to formally commence the 2026/27 pay round for all salaried judicial office holders. The details of this commission are outlined below.

Context for 2026/27

During this pay round, you will receive evidence from my department, HM Treasury and the judiciary. My department's evidence will, as usual, cover the recruitment and retention context for the judiciary, earnings data and our approach to judicial resourcing. It will also set out funds available to the Ministry of Justice for 2026 to 2027, following the Spending Review. As the Spending Review confirmed, all funding for pay must be found from departmental budgets and there will be no additional funding available for pay settlements.

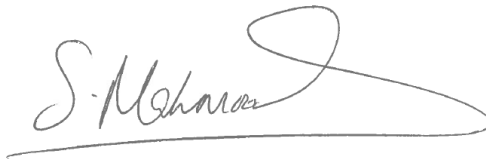
We know that people working in the public sector, delivering our vital public services, deserve timely pay awards. We announced the 2025-26 pay awards two months earlier than last year's and remain committed to bringing the 2026-27 pay announcements further forward. This is why we are launching this pay round two months earlier than in previous pay round.

I would be grateful if you could support an earlier pay announcement by submitting your report at the earliest point following due consideration of the relevant evidence. To enable this, my department will also submit our written evidence earlier than last year. My officials will be in touch with the Office for the Pay Review Bodies to discuss this timeline.

It will of course be necessary for you to consider the role of the Major Review in coming to your recommendation on this annual pay award. The MoJ written evidence for the annual review will provide a foundation for your initial considerations as part of the Major Review. You will no doubt require more specific evidence to understand the core of the issues set out in the Terms of Reference. I look forward to your Major Review evidence request and would be grateful for clarity on timings.

I am thankful for the work of the SSRB and all it does to support the maintenance of a high quality and independent judiciary.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. Mahmood', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

RT HON SHABANA MAHMOOD MP

LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE