

Table 5-12

Allowances for Senators, 1977 - 2016

Category	1977	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987	1989	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001
Clerk-hire <sup>a</sup>	\$311,577- 588,145	\$508,221- 1,021,167	\$592,608- 1,190,724	\$645,897- 1,297,795	\$695,244- 1,396,947	\$716,102- 1,438,856	\$754,000- 1,636,000	\$814,000- 1,760,000	\$1,540,000- 1,914,000	\$1,660,000- 1,935,000	\$1,087,597- 1,974,051	\$1,210,467- 2,157,222	\$1,347,851- 2,360,512
Legislative assistance <sup>b</sup>	n.a.	\$157,626	\$183,801	\$200,328	\$215,634	\$243,543	\$248,000	\$269,000	\$374,000	\$377,400	\$385,050	\$396,477	\$410,277
District and state offices rental <sup>c</sup>	n.a.	4,800-8,000 sq. ft.	4,800-8,000 sq. ft.	4,800-8,000 sq. ft.	4,800-8,000 sq. ft.	5,000-8,200 sq. ft.							
Furnishings, state offices <sup>d</sup>	n.a.	\$22,550- 31,350	\$22,550- 31,350	\$22,550- 31,350	\$22,550- 31,350	\$30,000- 41,744	\$30,000- 41,744	\$30,000- 41,744	\$30,000- 41,744	\$30,000- 41,744	\$30,000- 41,744	\$30,000- 41,744	\$42,000- 58,000 <sup>f</sup>
Official office expense account <sup>e</sup>	n.a.	\$33,000 - 143,000	\$33,000- 143,000	\$36,000- 156,000	\$36,000- 156,000	\$36,000- 156,000	\$33,000- 156,000	\$47,000- 122,000	\$44,000- 200,000	\$90,000- 250,000	\$95,825- 245,000	\$127,384- 470,272	\$128,178- 474,282

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Category	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Clerk-hire <sup>a</sup>	\$1,568,333- 2,669,720	\$1,809,792- 3,008,969	\$1,926,936- 3,170,602	\$1,926,936 - 3,170,602	\$2,147,165 - 3,467,575	\$2,147,665 - 3,467,575	\$2,453,206 - 3,898,853	\$2,512,574 - 3,993,206	\$2,361,820 - 3,753,614	\$2,361,820 - 3,753,614	\$2,361,820 - 3,753,614	\$2,361,820 - 3,753,614	\$2,385,439 - \$3,791,151
Legislative assistance <sup>b</sup>	\$436,377	\$460,677	\$472,677	\$472,677	\$481,977	\$481,977	\$508,377	\$508,377	\$477,874	\$ 477,784	\$ 477,874	\$ 477,874	\$ 477,874
District and state offices rental <sup>c</sup>	5,000-8,200 sq. ft.	5,000-8,200 sq. ft.	5,000-8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.	5,000 - 8,200 sq. ft.
Furnishings, state offices <sup>d</sup>	\$43,000- 60,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$43,000- 60,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$45,000- 63,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$45,000- \$63,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$48,000- 67,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$48,000- 67,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$50,000- 70,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$50,000- 70,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$51,000- 72,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$51,000- 72,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$53,000- 74,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$53,000- 74,000 <sup>f</sup>	\$55,000- 77,000 <sup>f</sup>
Official office expense account <sup>e</sup>	\$128,525- 468,377	\$128,553- 466,908	\$128,580- 468,102	\$128,580 - 468,102	\$128,601 - 467,441	\$128,601 - 467,441	\$128,585 - 465,919	\$128,585 - 465,922	\$121,032 - 453,791	\$121,032 - 453,791	\$121,022 - 454,144	\$121,049 - 453,828	\$121,120 - 453,274

Note: Before January 1, 1973, senators were authorized individually controlled allowances for six expense categories as follows: transportation expenses for the senator and his staff; stationery; air mail and special delivery postage; long-distance telephone calls; telegram charges; and home state expenses, which include home state office expenses; telephone service charges incurred outside Washington, DC; subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, periodicals, and clipping or similar services; and home state office rent (repealed effective July 1, 1974). Effective January 1, 1973, the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1973, provided for the consolidation of those same allowances to give senators flexibility in the management of the same dollars allocated for their expense allowances. That authorization imposed no limit on any expense category. The allowance was designated as the consolidated office expense allowance. Effective January 1, 1977, the Legislative Branch Appropriation Act redesignated the consolidated office expense allowance as the official office expense account.

Some data from earlier years/previous versions of Vital Statistics have been updated. See errata for more detail.

a. There is no limit on the number of employees a senator may hire. He or she must, however, use only the clerk-hire or legislative assistance allowance to pay staff salaries. The clerk-hire allowance varies according to state population.

b. In addition to clerk-hire, each senator has a legislative assistance allowance worth \$385,050 in 1997. That allowance is reduced for any committee chairman or ranking minority member of a committee. It is also reduced for any other senator authorized by a committee chairman to recommend or approve any individuals for appointment to the committee staff who will assist that senator "solely and directly" in his duties as a member of the committee. The reduction requirements were waived for the 99th and 100th Congresses.

d. Effective July 1, 1974, the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1975, provided a formula for the allowable aggregate square feet of office space in the home state of a senator. There is no limit on the number of offices that a senator may establish in his home state, but the designated square footage may not be exceeded. The cost of office space in the home state is not chargeable to the official office expense account.

e. An aggregate furniture and furnishings allowance is provided through the General Services Administration for one or more state offices in either federal or privately owned buildings. Before 1987, the \$22,550 minimum allowance for office space not greater than 4,800 square feet was increased by \$550 for each authorized increase of 200 square feet of space. From 1987 through 1999, the \$30,000 minimum allowance for office space not greater than 4,800 square feet was increased by \$734 for each authorized increase of 200 square feet of space. In 2001, the \$40,000 minimum allowance for office space not greater than 5,000 square feet is increased by \$1,000 for each authorized increase of 200 square feet of space.

f. The expense account may be used for the following expenses (2 U.S.C. 58[a], as amended):

- (1) official telegrams and long-distance phone calls and related services;
- (2) stationery and other office supplies purchased through the stationery room for official business;
- (3) costs incurred in the mailing or delivery of matters relating to official business;
- (4) official office expenses in home state, other than equipment or furniture (purchase of office equipment beyond stated allocations may be made through 10 percent of the funds listed under item 9 below);
- (5) official telephone charges incurred outside Washington, D.C.;
- (6) subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, periodicals, or clipping or similar services;
- (7) travel expenses incurred by a senator or staff member, subject to certain limitations;
- (8) expenses incurred by individuals selected by a senator to serve on panels or other bodies making recommendations for nominees to service academies or federal judgeships; and
- (9) other official expenses as the senator determines are necessary, including (a) additional office equipment for Washington, D.C., or state offices; (b) actual transportation expenses incurred by the senator and employees for official business in the Washington metropolitan area (this is also allowed to employees assigned to a state office for actual transportation expenses in the general vicinity of the office to which assigned but is not available for a change of assignment within the state or for commuting between home and office).

The total reimbursement expense for the calendar year may not exceed 10 percent of the total official office expense account.

Beginning with FY1981, each senator was also allowed to transfer funds from the administrative, clerical, and legislative assistance allowances to the official office expense account.  
g. Beginning in 2001, the amount for state office furnishings was indexed for inflation at the start of each congress. Numbers here are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Previous Update Sources: Paul E. Dwyer, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, RL30512: Appropriations for FY2001: Legislative Branch; Legislative Branch Appropriations Bills, various years.

Most Recent Update Source: Congressional Research Service, "Congressional Salaries and Allowances," various years. Senate Report 113-70, Legislative Branch Appropriations, 2014.