

**§ 174. Assignment of judges; decisions**

(a) The judicial power of the United States Court of Federal Claims with respect to any action, suit, or proceeding, except congressional reference cases, shall be exercised by a single judge, who may preside alone and hold a regular or special session of court at the same time other sessions are held by other judges.

(b) All decisions of the Court of Federal Claims shall be preserved and open to inspection.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 898; Pub. L. 97-164, title I, §105(a), Apr. 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 27; Pub. L. 102-572, title IX, §902(a), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4516.)

**HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES**

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §243 (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §138, 36 Stat. 1136).

This section is based on the first sentence of section 243 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed. The remainder of said section is incorporated in section 175 of this title.

Words “the seat of government” were substituted for “the city of Washington” to conform to similar language respecting the Supreme Court. (See section 2 of this title.)

Words “to be fixed by rule of court” were added to provide greater flexibility in administering the business of the court. For similar provisions covering the district courts, see section 138 of this title.

Word “term” was substituted for “session” for uniformity.

Minor changes were made in phraseology.

**AMENDMENTS**

1992—Pub. L. 102-572 substituted “United States Court of Federal Claims” for “United States Claims Court” in subsec. (a) and “Court of Federal Claims” for “Claims Court” in subsec. (b).

1982—Pub. L. 97-164 amended section generally, substituting provisions relating to assignment of judges (formerly contained in section 175) for provisions relating to terms of court. See section 173 of this title.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT**

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-572 effective Oct. 29, 1992, see section 911 of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 171 of this title.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1982 AMENDMENT**

Amendment by Pub. L. 97-164 effective Oct. 1, 1982, see section 402 of Pub. L. 97-164, set out as a note under section 171 of this title.

**§ 175. Official duty station; residence**

(a) The official duty station of each judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims is the District of Columbia.

(b) After appointment and while in active service, each judge shall reside within fifty miles of the District of Columbia.

(c) Retired judges of the Court of Federal Claims are not subject to restrictions as to residence. The place where a retired judge maintains the actual abode in which such judge customarily lives shall be deemed to be the judge’s official duty station for the purposes of section 456 of this title.

(Added Pub. L. 89-425, §2, May 11, 1966, 80 Stat. 140; amended Pub. L. 97-164, title I, §105(a), Apr. 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 27; Pub. L. 102-572, title IX, §902(a)(1), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4516; Pub. L. 106-518, title III, §307, Nov. 13, 2000, 114 Stat. 2419.)

**PRIOR PROVISIONS**

A prior section 175, act June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 898, required three judges of the Court of Claims to constitute a quorum and the concurrence of three judges for any decision, prior to repeal by section 2 of Pub. L. 89-425.

**AMENDMENTS**

2000—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 106-518 added subsec. (c).

1992—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-572 substituted “United States Court of Federal Claims” for “United States Claims Court”.

1982—Pub. L. 97-164 amended section generally, substituting provisions relating to the official duty station and residence of Claims Court judges for provisions relating to assignment of judges, divisions, hearings, quorums and decisions. See section 174 of this title.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT**

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-572 effective Oct. 29, 1992, see section 911 of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 171 of this title.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1982 AMENDMENT**

Amendment by Pub. L. 97-164 effective Oct. 1, 1982, see section 402 of Pub. L. 97-164, set out as a note under section 171 of this title.

**§ 176. Removal from office**

(a) Removal of a judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims during the term for which he is appointed shall be only for incompetency, misconduct, neglect of duty, engaging in the practice of law, or physical or mental disability. Removal shall be by the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, but removal may not occur unless a majority of all the judges of such court of appeals concur in the order of removal.

(b) Before any order of removal may be entered, a full specification of the charges shall be furnished to the judge involved, and such judge shall be accorded an opportunity to be heard on the charges.

(c) Any cause for removal of any judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims coming to the knowledge of the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts shall be reported by him to the chief judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, and a copy of the report shall at the same time be transmitted to the judge.

(Added Pub. L. 97-164, title I, §105(a), Apr. 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 28; amended Pub. L. 102-572, title IX, §902(a)(1), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4516.)

**AMENDMENTS**

1992—Subsecs. (a), (c). Pub. L. 102-572 substituted “United States Court of Federal Claims” for “United States Claims Court”.

**EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT**

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-572 effective Oct. 29, 1992, see section 911 of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 171 of this title.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

Section effective Oct. 1, 1982, see section 402 of Pub. L. 97-164, set out as an Effective Date of 1982 Amendment note under section 171 of this title.

**§ 177. Disbarment of removed judges**

A judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims removed from office in accordance with

section 176 of this title shall not be permitted at any time to practice before the Court of Federal Claims.

(Added Pub. L. 97-164, title I, §105(a), Apr. 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 28; amended Pub. L. 102-572, title IX, §902(a), Oct. 29, 1992, 106 Stat. 4516.)

AMENDMENTS

1992—Pub. L. 102-572 substituted “United States Court of Federal Claims” for “United States Claims Court” and “Court of Federal Claims” for “Claims Court”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1992 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-572 effective Oct. 29, 1992, see section 911 of Pub. L. 102-572, set out as a note under section 171 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective Oct. 1, 1982, see section 402 of Pub. L. 97-164, set out as an Effective Date of 1982 Amendment note under section 171 of this title.

§ 178. Retirement of judges of the Court of Federal Claims

(a) A judge of the United States Court of Federal Claims who retires from office after attaining the age and meeting the service requirements, whether continuously or otherwise, of this subsection shall, subject to subsection (f), be entitled to receive, during the remainder of the judge’s lifetime, an annuity equal to the salary payable to Court of Federal Claims judges in regular active service. The age and service requirements for retirement under this subsection are as follows:

Attained Age:	Years of Service:
65 .....	15
66 .....	14
67 .....	13
68 .....	12
69 .....	11
70 .....	10.

(b) A judge of the Court of Federal Claims who is not reappointed following the expiration of the term of office of such judge, and who retires upon the completion of such term shall, subject to subsection (f), be entitled to receive, during the remainder of such judge’s lifetime, an annuity equal to the salary payable to Court of Federal Claims judges in regular active service, if—

(1) such judge has served at least 1 full term as judge of the Court of Federal Claims, and

(2) not earlier than 9 months before the date on which the term of office of such judge expired, and not later than 6 months before such date, such judge advised the President in writing that such judge was willing to accept reappointment as a judge of the Court of Federal Claims.

(c) A judge of the Court of Federal Claims who has served at least 5 years, whether continuously or otherwise, as such a judge, and who retires or is removed from office upon the sole ground of mental or physical disability shall, subject to subsection (f), be entitled to receive, during the remainder of the judge’s lifetime—

(1) an annuity equal to 50 percent of the salary payable to Court of Federal Claims judges

in regular active service, if before retirement such judge served less than 10 years, or

(2) an annuity equal to the salary payable to Court of Federal Claims judges in regular active service, if before retirement such judge served at least 10 years.

(d) A judge who retires under subsection (a) or (b) may, at or after such retirement, be called upon by the chief judge of the Court of Federal Claims to perform such judicial duties with the Court of Federal Claims as may be requested of the retired judge for any period or periods specified by the chief judge, except that in the case of any such judge—

(1) the aggregate of such periods in any one calendar year shall not (without his or her consent) exceed 90 calendar days; and

(2) he or she shall be relieved of performing such duties during any period in which illness or disability precludes the performance of such duties.

Any act, or failure to act, by an individual performing judicial duties pursuant to this subsection shall have the same force and effect as if it were the act (or failure to act) of a Court of Federal Claims judge in regular active service. Any individual performing judicial duties pursuant to this subsection shall receive the allowances for official travel and other expenses of a judge in regular active service.

(e)(1) Any judge who retires under the provisions of subsection (a) or (b) of this section shall be designated “senior judge”.

(2) Any judge who retires under this section shall not be counted as a judge of the Court of Federal Claims for purposes of the number of judgeships authorized by section 171 of this title.

(f)(1) A judge shall be entitled to an annuity under this section if the judge elects an annuity under this section by notifying the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts in writing. Such an election—

(A) may be made only while an individual is a judge of the Court of Federal Claims (except that in the case of an individual who fails to be reappointed as judge at the expiration of a term of office, such election may be made at any time before the day after the day on which his or her successor takes office); and

(B) once made, shall, subject to subsection (k), be irrevocable.

(2) A judge who elects to receive an annuity under this section shall not be entitled to receive—

(A) any annuity to which such judge would otherwise have been entitled under subchapter III of chapter 83, or under chapter 84 (except for subchapters III and VII), of title 5, for service performed as a judge or otherwise;

(B) an annuity or salary in senior status or retirement under section 371 or 372 of this title;

(C) retired pay under section 7447 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

(D) retired pay under section 7296 of title 38.

(g) For purposes of calculating the years of service of an individual under subsections (a) and (c), only those years of service as a judge of the Court of Federal Claims or a commissioner