

# 2016 State Salary Survey Frequently Asked Questions

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## 1. Why does the Office of Financial Management, State Human Resources (State HR) conduct a salary survey?

RCW 41.06.160 and WAC 357-28-325 require State HR to conduct a salary survey to determine the prevailing pay rates for jobs that are comparable to those state jobs in classified service. (The survey does not cover management jobs.)

State leaders use tools such as the salary survey to help find the appropriate balance between containing the cost of government operations, compensating state employees fairly, and competing in the job market for employees with the specialized skills and knowledge required to perform the work of state government.

The salary survey is one source of data and should be used in conjunction with other workforce factors when informing potential changes to employee pay, benefits or working conditions.

## 2. When does State HR conduct the salary survey?

Generally, State HR conducts the survey every two years. The last survey was conducted in 2014.

## 3. How does State HR conduct the survey?

For 2016, State HR contracted with a third party, [Segal Waters Consulting](#) to conduct the survey. Segal is a national survey firm with more than 70 years of industry surveying experience. This vendor conducted the survey in 2010 and 2014.

## 4. Who participated in the survey?

Invitations were sent to 132 employers, of which 62 participated in the survey. Of those, 37 percent are from the private sector and 63 percent are from the public sector. Public sector employers included 13 states that provided data for jobs that are unique to state government: Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin.

## 5. If the salary survey results show a job receives less pay than the prevailing market rate, does it automatically get a pay increase?

No. The collective bargaining process, the Legislature and the Governor determine what impact, if any, the salary survey findings will have on state employee compensation. The salary survey is just one of several factors considered by decision makers.

## 6. Why are only certain jobs included?

Establishing benchmark classes is industry practice when conducting compensation surveys. State HR, in consultation with its contractor, chose the most populated and representative state job classifications that are also similar to jobs commonly found in the public and private sectors for the survey. Although not every state job is included, the survey covers a sufficient number of benchmark classes to cover the state's classification plan.

**7. What is the method for requesting additional information on the salary survey results?**

Basic questions about the survey may be directed to [classandcomp@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:classandcomp@ofm.wa.gov). To request more detail on the survey results, please follow the instructions on the [How to request public records](#) webpage.