

2026

SALARY & BENEFITS REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Benchmarking Nonprofit Compensation
in Alaska*

the**foraker**group

© MAY 2026

SUPPORTED BY:

BRIGHT ROAD
WEALTH MANAGEMENT

MAY 2026

Hello Alaska Nonprofits:

Thank you for your interest in assessing your organization's compensation and for learning more on how to best compensate your staff to stay competitive in the marketplace. Only 20% of Alaska's nonprofits have paid staff but the economic impact of these teams, along with our all-volunteer organizations, makes an important difference in our communities.

Before you dive into the results, know that we appreciate each Alaska nonprofit that participated in the survey and the time they devoted to this effort. Also, please help us thank **Bright Road Wealth Management** for their sponsorship of this report. We are grateful for their work with nonprofits across Alaska.

This year, we have partnered with six other nonprofit state associations in our region – Idaho Nonprofit Center, Montana Nonprofit Association, Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Nonprofit Association of Washington, Utah Nonprofit Association, and the Hawaii Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations – to provide you with more data than in past reports.

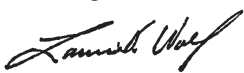
The Alaska dataset can be found in this report, however, you will have access to all the data through an online Tableau dashboard, which allows for customized filtering and provides more ways to see the information. The data in the Tableau is segmented by state (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Utah, and Hawaii), regions within Alaska, annual operating budget size, number of hours worked, and an organization's primary focus. Once you purchase the product, you will be provided with a link to the dashboard. **Please do not share this link with others, as the modest revenue from your purchase allows us to provide quality data.**

As you are thinking about the right salary and benefits package to retain and attract employees, we encourage you to also check out our report on the gender pay gap found on the Foraker website. This report includes current data on Alaska's nonprofit pay gaps and actions that every employer can take, regardless of existing pay gaps, to ensure a fair and equitable workplace.

We hope you will encourage your peers to purchase the full salary and benefits report and to take part in the survey next time. The more participation we have, the better our data will be to move our organizations and our economy forward.

We welcome the opportunity to partner with you on your next steps, whether that is a full compensation study or a quiet conversation. Please don't hesitate to ask for the support that you need.

With gratitude,



Laurie B. Wolf, CFRE, MNPL
President and CEO

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION
2	ABOUT THIS REPORT
3	DATA HIGHLIGHTS
10	USING THIS REPORT – OPTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT STEPS
14	DEFINITIONS
16	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO DATA HIGHLIGHTS
17	COMPENSATION RATES
20	BENEFITS
22	EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

INTRODUCTION

As nonprofit leaders, we need the right tools to make informed decisions. One of those tools is the Foraker Salary and Benefits Report, which provides context and a benchmark for compensation across Alaska's nonprofit sector. This matters because our sector is a major employer in the state—accounting for an average of 12% of the workforce in each community and up to 40% in some. Nonprofits play a critical role in Alaska's economy and in the health, safety, and well-being of our communities.

Alaska is in the midst of a shifting—and still competitive—job market. While hiring has slowed in some areas, competition for talent, especially for mission-critical roles, remains strong. In this environment, access to current data is essential. It helps us understand how our compensation practices compare and ensures we can attract and retain the people our missions depend on.

The 2026 Salary and Benefits Report & Dashboard features:

- Salary data for 54 positions including CEO/executive director, CFO/finance director, development/fundraising director, administrative support, accountants, clinical support, and program staff
- Data from over 1,500 Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Washington, Utah, and Hawaii nonprofit organizations
- Regional breakdown of Alaska data from Southcentral, Interior, Southeast, Southwest, and the Arctic
- Data from organizations with budgets ranging from less than \$100,000 to over \$20 million
- Data from 15 types of nonprofits, including youth development, education, human services, health care, environmental, recreation/sports, and arts, culture, and humanities groups
- Benefit data on medical, dental, vision, holidays and leave, retirement plans, life insurance, disability benefits, remote/telework options, and more

While survey data is important, using it is essential. We have included a section **Using This Report – Options for Your Next Steps** where we suggest how to use the information in this report for maximum impact.

If you need further assistance, consider our personalized facilitation and educational programming to ensure you have the information, resources, and support to turn data into action.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report and accompanying Tableau Dashboard were prepared based on the results of our Salary and Benefits Survey conducted in November 2025. The information relates to and analyzes the information shared by 126 organizations. Participants shared information covering 750 full-time employees and 112 part-time employees across 54 distinct employed positions. The data collected was anonymized for reporting purposes, and organizational identifiers required on the survey were kept separate from sensitive data.

As a companion to this report, detailed survey data can be accessed online via the Tableau dashboard. Tableau is a data visualization tool that presents data in an interactive and dynamic form, providing the opportunity to compare a variety of data sets across selected types simultaneously. The Tableau dashboard created for this report allows filtering data by several options, including comparisons to six other states and by annual operating budget, number of full-time employees, primary focus (subsector), and Alaska region. You will receive access to the Tableau dashboard when you purchase the report.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS

In this section, we chose a few areas within the larger data set to highlight. **The full report and Dashboard have more reporting sections and many more ways to view the data.** For the most part, the numbers are similar to other participating states. However, a few differences have emerged.

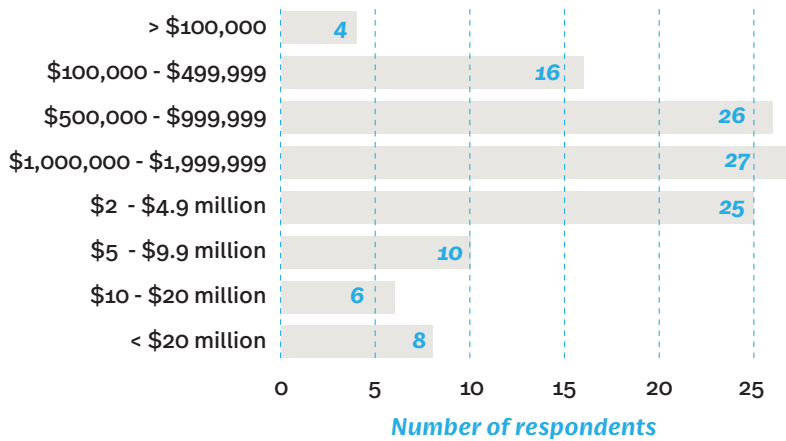
PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The survey received responses from 126 Alaska organizations; 104 completed the entire survey. Both complete and incomplete survey data are included in dashboard visualizations when responses are present.

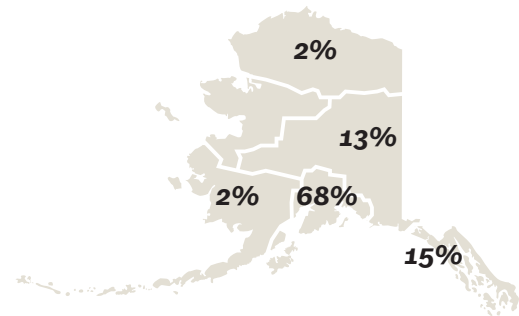
Human Services was the most common focus (NTEE code) among respondent organizations (18%), followed by Education (14%), and Arts, Culture, and Humanities (11%), with all other options following distantly.

Nearly two-thirds (60%) of responding organizations had annual budgets over \$1 million, while 37% had annual budgets under \$1 million.

RESPONDENTS BY BUDGET SIZE



RESPONDENTS BY REGIONS



PRIMARY AREAS OF FOCUS

Charitable nonprofits are required to submit an NTEE (National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities) code to the Internal Revenue Service, which classifies the organization's primary programs, services and activities. These classifications are sometimes also referred to as 'subsector' and were used for the survey question requesting the primary area of focus.

Alaska respondents represented a broad range of nonprofit service types across 20 different subsectors. The top five are human services, mental health and crisis intervention, education, arts, culture and humanities, and environmental quality, protection, and beautification.

DATA HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

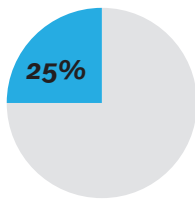
HIRING SHORTAGES

Approximately 36% of organizations reported having positions they have been unable to fill. Alaska job opening rates overall are higher than those in other parts of the country. These organizations most commonly reported having trouble hiring mid-level employees (70%) and entry-level employees (57%). Hiring executive level positions was much less a problem (25%). Alaska organizations were more likely to report challenges in hiring for positions than northwest regional respondents overall (36% in Alaska vs 21% in the region).

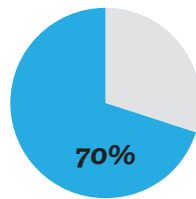
Some organizations modified benefit packages in response to hiring and retention challenges. The most common reported change was more flexible work schedules, followed by retirement, medical, dental, vision, and life and disability benefits respectively. Many of these same organizations also reported adding or enhancing professional development opportunities (55%), modified/flexible scheduling (47%), and vacation/leave benefits (44%). Importantly, many of the areas that changed are easier to implement and cost less than those like providing health insurance, which has always been difficult for nonprofits to provide and is only getting harder to access.

Of the organizations reporting hiring challenges, 86% have increased their compensation rates. The average increase was 8% for executive positions, 8% for management positions, 7% for program positions, and 7% for operational support positions.

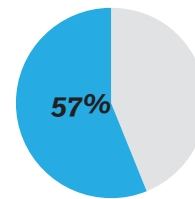
OPEN POSITION CHALLENGES



Executive level



Mid-level



Entry level

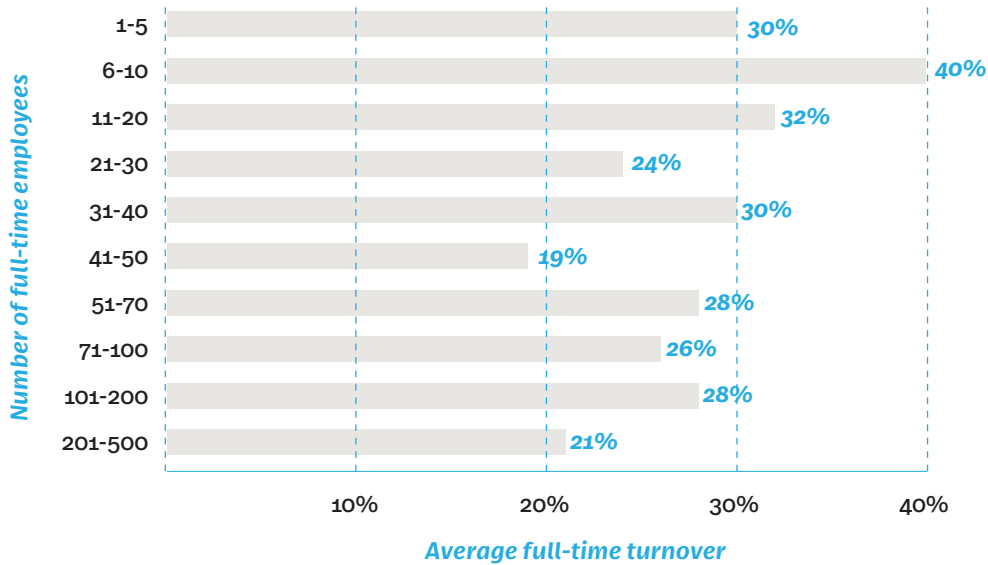
DATA HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

POSITIONS AND WAGES

Every Alaska respondent indicated that their organization employs an Executive Director/CEO. Program/project management staff were the second most likely to be employed (among 72% of organizations), followed by finance/bookkeeping staff (51% of organizations), and administrative assistants (45% of organizations) respectively. Almost two-thirds (62% of organizations) reported using agency/contract workers, with IT (44%) and bookkeeping (44%) ranking as the most commonly contracted positions by a wide margin.

The average reported full-time turnover rate was 31%. The average reported part-time turnover rate was 55%.

FULL-TIME TURNOVER RATE



DATA HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

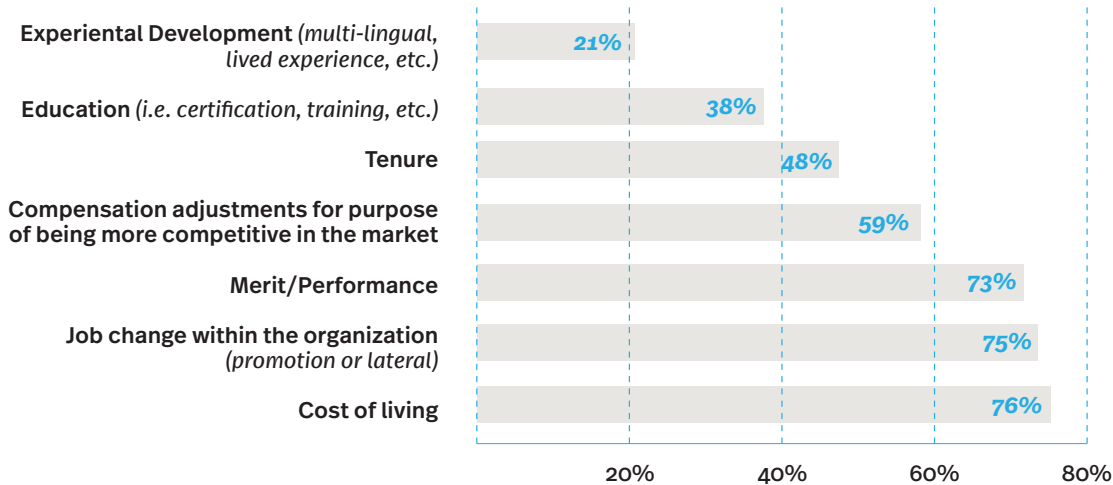
BONUSES AND SALARY INCREASES

Some organizations (18%) reported having an established bonus program. Among organizations that had a bonus program, supervisor/management discretion (65%) and individual performance (45%) were the most common criteria used to award bonuses, followed by operating goals (40%). Organizations with a bonus program most commonly reported giving annual bonuses (68%).

More than half of organizations (55%) reported having a formal compensation policy in place. Cost of living was the most common criteria (76%) for awarding salary increases, followed by a job change within the organization (75%), and merit/performance (73%). Educational (certification, training, etc.), experiential development (multi-lingual, lived experience, etc.) and tenure were the least common criteria for awarding salary increase.

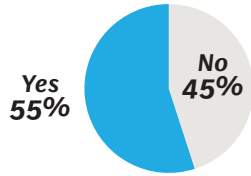
A small share of organizations (2%) offer additional compensation for specific skills used in day-to-day work. Lived experience was the most likely to receive additional compensation, most commonly through a salary differential (average of \$3,000).

SALARY INCREASE CRITERIA

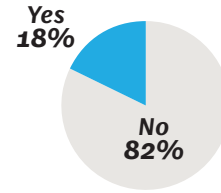


DATA HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

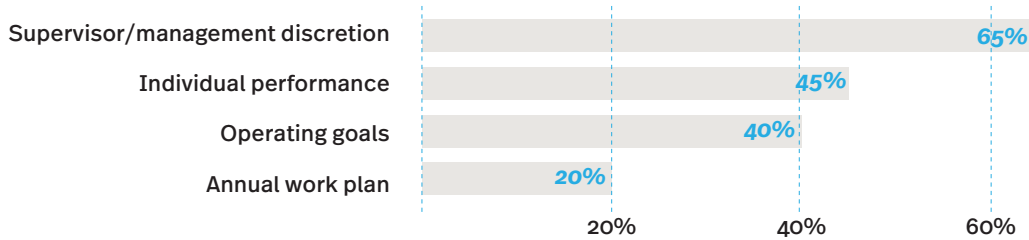
FORMAL COMPENSATION POLICY IN PLACE



ESTABLISHED BONUS PROGRAM

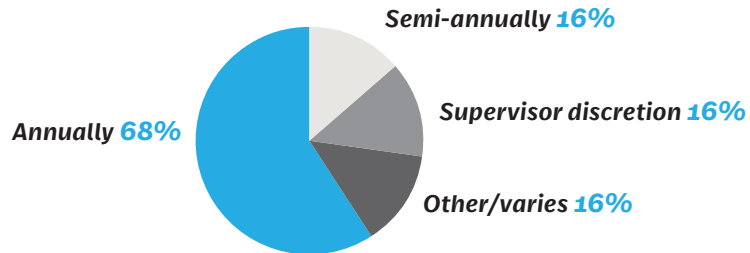


BONUS PROGRAM CRITERIA



TIMING OF BONUSES

Organizations selected all that applied



DATA HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

BENEFITS

The average reported cost for total employee benefits as a percentage of total payroll was 19.28%.

Over three-fourths (77%) of respondents offer medical benefits to their employees, 60% provide dental benefits, 58% provide vision benefits, and 51% offer life insurance/disability benefits. Respondent organizations that offered benefits reported paying an average 83% of medical insurance premiums, 82% of dental premiums, 92% of life/disability premiums, and 83% of vision premiums for full-time employees.

Among organizations that reported offering medical benefits, a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan was most commonly offered (43%), followed by High-Deductible Health Plans (HDHP, 29%), Taxable Stipends for Insurance (16%), Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (ICHRA, 9%), and Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO, 4%) respectively. Twenty three percent of respondents offered employees the option to opt out of health coverage. Of those, few offered a cash benefit in lieu of benefits.

Basic Life Insurance (86%) and Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance (80%) were the two most common life/disability benefit plans offered, followed by long- (55%) and short-term (45%) disability.

Most organizations (81%) did not offer Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs). A similar proportion (73%) did not offer Health Spending Accounts (HSAs). About 12% of organizations offered FSAs for both health savings and dependent care, while 6% offered an FSA solely for health savings. None of the organizations that offer FSAs reported contributing funds, while 76% of organizations that offer HSAs reported contributing funds. The average HSA contribution was \$2,092 per year.

More than three-quarters (77%) of organizations offer a retirement plan. Those that offer a retirement plan were most likely to offer a 403b plan (51%), followed by a 401k (35%), then a SIMPLE IRA (14%), respectively.

Half (50%) of organizations offer some benefits to part-time employees. Those who did most commonly reported offering paid sick leave (89%), paid vacation (74%), and retirement. Note that Alaska law, effective July 1, 2025, requires at least one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked, regardless of scheduling, and with only a few minor exceptions. This rule applies to all full and part-time employees. **These survey results indicate that some nonprofits are out of compliance.** Please consult the new rules from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development before determining benefit options for paid sick leave.

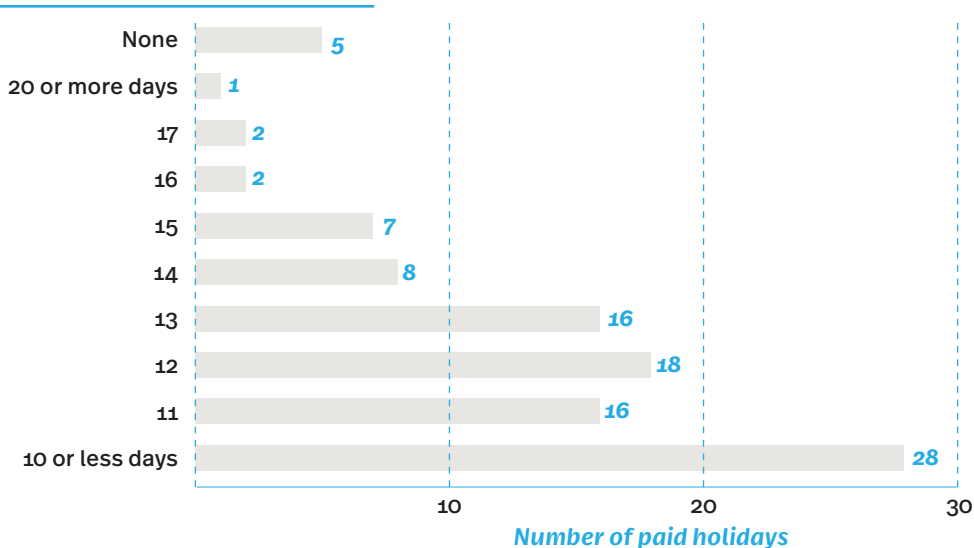
DATA HIGHLIGHTS *continued*

PAID TIME OFF & HOLIDAYS

The most common form of paid time off (PTO) that organizations reported offering was paid holidays (89%), followed by PTO for sick or vacation (76%). The average amount of paid time off for new employees was 19 days, while the average for long-tenured employees was 34 days. On average, respondents said they give their employees 18 days of sick leave per year.

On average, organizations reported giving 23 days of paid vacation time annually to new employees and 40 days to long-tenured employees. Those organizations that could not offer paid holidays much more commonly reported offering floating holidays (66%) than additional holiday pay (21%), (time and half for working on a holiday, for example). Organizations allow employees to carry over an average of 79 days of PTO annually.

NUMBER OF PAID HOLIDAYS



FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The majority of organizations (65%) are not required to offer job-protected leave for qualifying events under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Despite this, 64% of organizations offer leave for qualifying events. Of these 64%, slightly over half (54%) offer paid leave while the remaining offer only unpaid leave. The most common length of time allowed for paid leave among these organizations is 1-4 weeks (28%), while the most common option available for unpaid leave is 9-16 weeks (53%).

The most common qualifying events for which leave can be taken revolve around the birth of a child and care for a newborn child within one year of birth (40%), adoption or placement of a child for foster care (39%), and a serious health condition that prohibits an employee from doing their job (40%). Organizations were given the opportunity to select one or more qualifying events.

Overall, this data provides an overview of the similarities and differences between Alaska organizations and those across the region, highlighting key areas such as hiring challenges, positions and wages, bonuses, and benefits. While many trends are consistent, unique challenges and practices in Alaska have been identified, particularly in hiring difficulties and compensation strategies. The additional sections and visualizations in the dashboard offer further insights and enable a deeper understanding of the data. We encourage you to explore the dashboard (available upon purchase of the report) for a more detailed analysis and tailored benchmarking for your organization.

USING THIS REPORT – OPTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT STEPS

As a reminder, you will receive a link to access the full suite of data and comparisons upon payment. Please do not share your access.

We invite you to use this report in a variety of ways to strengthen your organization and the employee experience. Remember, if you get stuck, we are here for you. Please, reach out and let us know how we can help.

Here are four ways to use this data and turn it into an effective strategy for recruitment and retention of your team.

1. CREATE AN ORGANIZATIONAL SALARY STRUCTURE RATHER THAN A SINGLE DATA POINT FOR A SINGLE JOB

It is tempting to simply look at the data job by job. Instead, we strongly encourage you to look for overall organizational patterns and consider multiple sources for salary data. Salary data is often survey-driven, like this report, so drawing from multiple sources leads to a more comprehensive understanding for decision making. Likewise, understanding how one position is compensated within the larger context of the staffing structure helps develop a plan for implementing change or for maintaining the status quo based upon a larger number of factors than a single data point. While this process can be a complex undertaking that may require professional assistance, several key components are critical for a successful structure including:

- Understanding where your organization wants to be related to market competitiveness (see the next section)
- Having current position descriptions to make an accurate comparison of jobs
- Classifying all positions as exempt or non-exempt following the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

2. COMPARE SALARIES FOR COMPETITIVENESS IN THE MARKET

This report allows you to look for competitiveness in a variety of ways.

The first step is for the leadership team to establish a philosophical position with respect to market competitiveness. That decision generally involves salary alignment within three options:

- Being competitive with the market – being within 10% of the survey market (.90 and 1.10)
- Leading the market – being greater than 10% of the survey market (1.10 or greater)
- Lagging the market – being less than 95% of the market (.95 or lower)

Once this philosophical approach has been established, the next step is to determine the market ratio, which is defined as the ratio between the employee's rate of pay and the survey(s) average. For example, if the incumbent's salary is \$50,000/year and the data retrieved from the 2026 Foraker Salary and Benefits Survey and other sources using the 50th percentile for that position is \$55,000, then the market ratio is 91%. In this example, the employee's rate of pay would then be considered competitive since it falls within 10% of the median.

USING THIS REPORT – OPTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT STEPS *continued*

This survey reports five different salary data points. These are the salary market percentages used in compensation analysis to show how pay levels compare within a group of salaries surveyed.

- **5th percentile** – 5% of salaries are **below** this amount, and 95% are above it. (*Very low end of market pay.*)
- **25th percentile** – 25% of salaries are below this amount, and 75% are above it. (*Lower quartile / below market midpoint.*)
- **50th percentile** – 50% of salaries are below this amount, and 50% are above it. (*Median / market midpoint.*)
- **75th percentile** – 75% of salaries are below this amount, and 25% are above it. (*Upper quartile / above average market pay.*)
- **95th percentile** – 95% of salaries are below this amount, and 10% are above it. (*Top end of market pay.*)

Most organizations consider the 50th percentile as the principal survey data point when considering market competitiveness. Other considerations are:

- 25th percentile = budget-conscious or entry-level strategy
- 75th percentile = attract top talent/competitive markets
- 95th percentile = highly specialized or executive roles

Another important factor is the market your organization should be compared to. The dashboard is broken out by location, budget, and primary focus.

Employees are not just choosing which nonprofit to work for but also whether to work in the nonprofit sector or another sector. While our report only compares jobs within the nonprofit sector, we advise you to work with us or on your own to compare job categories that match other sectors. For example, bookkeepers can be found in nonprofits, governments, and companies, and with a shortage of staff with nonprofit financial acumen, our sector needs to do all it can to recruit and retain staff who might be attracted to other sectors. Understanding how a job classification compares to other sectors could mean leading a conversation not just with salary but with tangible and intangible benefits of mission-focused work.

3. FOCUS ON TOTAL COMPENSATION IN RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TO SHOWCASE YOUR BENEFITS NOT JUST THE WAGE

As just noted, people have many choices of where they want to work. Staying competitive means focusing not just on the rate of pay but also on the benefits your organization can provide. While some benefits are out of reach for nonprofits because of staff size or revenue streams, every organization can be creative in offering employees benefits at every price point. In this way, benefits are an important tool in recruiting and retaining staff. Look at the benefits section of this report – how does your organization compare?

Talk to your staff and potential new employees about total compensation, not just their base pay. Total compensation encompasses not just base pay, but also benefits, well-being, development, and recognition. Total compensation can also be a space to focus on workplace goals that address belonging, equity, and inclusion.

USING THIS REPORT – OPTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT STEPS *continued*

Ensuring your organization's commitment to your core values means expressing them in compensation for your team. Generally, there is room in every organization for small or large improvements that can make your workplace a solid choice for existing and new employees. Not all the improvements cost money, but all will take time and attention. For those with some financial flexibility, consider minor changes to benefits such as paid vacation/sick leave, or holiday schedules to match federal, school, or community celebrations. You might also consider how to enhance your workplace to become a more family-friendly environment. Or perhaps you can consider offering an Employee Assistance Program as an added wellness benefit. For more ideas on improving your workplace benefits, give us a call and check out the benefits list in the full report.

A total compensation approach also offers an opportunity to consider how your organization recognizes and celebrates employees for their workforce contributions. For example, is there something you can offer staff that allows them to develop their professional skills and competencies? These benefits often have minimal budget impact while offering greater retention and job satisfaction. Additionally, addressing total compensation can provide flexibility when pay is dictated by contracts or funding agreements, or by service rates that are slower to shift.

To show the value of benefits in addition to pay, many organizations will provide an itemized list of benefits and the dollar value to the employee. The list, while not inclusive, could include:

- The amount paid for a portion of the healthcare premium
- The amount paid to an employee's Health Savings Account (HSA) or a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA)
- The amount contributed or matched to the employee's retirement plan account
- The amount paid for all or a portion of the premiums for ancillary benefits such as Group Term Life Insurance, Short-term disability, or an Accidental Death & Dismemberment plan
- The cash value of annual holidays understanding that this will vary based on each employee's base pay
- The stipend payment or use of a work cell phone or internet

And don't forget the federal income tax the employer pays on the employee's behalf.

4. RAISE OR EXPAND THE DIALOG ABOUT THE GENDER PAY GAP AND THE IMPACT OF RACE AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR

Pay equity is a legal requirement that ensures employees receive equal pay for equal work. Federal and state laws, such as the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, prohibit wage discrimination and mandate fair compensation practices. Organizations that engage in practices supporting pay equity not only fulfill legal obligations, they are also more likely to sustain a motivated and productive workforce. Leaders who consciously focus on pay equity can attract and retain the best and brightest staff.

There are many conscious and unconscious barriers to complying with the law. Each of our teams start in a different place in our understanding and correction of pay gap discrepancies in our workplaces.

Closing the pay gap in our organizations and systemically may take longer than our tenure in an organization. Still, each organizational leader can take important steps. Foraker is committed to providing data and action steps to help end the gender pay gap in Alaska's nonprofits.

USING THIS REPORT – OPTIONS FOR YOUR NEXT STEPS *continued*

Alaska is in a unique position to understand the gender pay gap better than in other states. Here is how it works. Through careful and confidential efforts, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development compiles data on pay rates for various job classifications. Researchers then use employer identification numbers (EINs) to identify nonprofit employees. Finally, they apply gender information from permanent fund dividend data. As a result, Alaska has a more complete understanding of how Alaska women are paid in the workforce. Data relating to the gender pay gap can be nuanced. There are many different methods of measuring the pay gap, and even when controlling for education, industry, occupation, race and ethnicity, geography, work history, and work schedule, 60% of the total pay gap remains unexplained.

Importantly, as noted, our pay gap report uses a full set of data on Alaska’s workforce from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and this salary and benefits report uses survey data, so there is not a one-for-one comparison in job titles. Instead, we urge you to read the full report and note the fields where proven wage gaps exist and consider your own pay scales. When you see a position with a wage gap, we then recommend you consider using the higher end of the salary survey data reported for that position category to help mitigate the gap. If you have questions or are unsure if a pay gap exists, please call one of our human resource advisors for assistance.

Knowing that the pay gap is persistent across all sectors of our workplaces and exacerbated by the intersectionality of race, we invite you to have a larger conversation with your board and staff about this issue along with ways to create a diverse and equity-centered workplace.

Turning data into information into action is where the real work begins for each of our organizations. If we want to achieve the change we seek in the world, then we must understand what science and facts say about an issue and how we can put that information to its best and highest use.

Not sure how to start?

We put together nine actions and a series of generative questions to encourage conversation and keep it going.

NINE PROVEN PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE AN EQUITABLE PAY ENVIRONMENT

- ① Be strategic in your recruitment and retention strategies
- ② Evaluate your compensation structure for internal equality
- ③ Detach financial compensation from performance review
- ④ Mind the gap – don’t perpetuate it
- ⑤ Promote pay transparency
- ⑥ Create or enhance a family-friendly workplace
- ⑦ Evaluate board composition to position hiring and retention success for executives
- ⑧ Evaluate staff development programs for retention strategies
- ⑨ Advocate for laws that support policies to end the pay gap

To see suggested steps for each of these nine practices and to get the list of generative conversation starters, download our report the Gender Pay Gap – Ways You Can Take Action Today.