

# National Compensation Survey:

## A Guide for Respondents

### What is the National Compensation Survey (NCS)?

NCS is a survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) designed to produce data on employer-provided wages and benefits for America's workforce.

### NCS produces data on the following:

- Wage levels
- Rates of change in wages
- Employer costs for benefits
- Rates of change in benefit costs
- Availability of benefits
- Detailed benefit provisions

### How was my establishment selected for NCS?

A sample of 154 areas throughout the United States is selected to represent the entire nonfarm economy. The list of establishments from which a sample is randomly chosen is generated from State unemployment insurance records. The sample represents all industries and all establishments in your local area.

### How are data collected?

The initial collection is by personal visit. Subsequent collections are usually conducted by mail, telephone, or fax and require only minutes of your time.

### What information will BLS request from my establishment?

A BLS economist will discuss the process of collection with you. The following are helpful in the collection process:

- A list of all employees (payroll or phone listings)
- Job titles for all employees
- Most recent payroll data (wages, hours, job codes, and dates of hire)
- Union contracts
- Employee handbooks or benefits descriptions
- Benefit costs summaries or insurance bills

For a detailed listing of information that BLS economists typically request, visit the National Compensation Survey Web site: <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/home.htm>

### Will my establishment's data be shared with the public?

No. Any data you supply will be held in confidence and used for aggregate statistical purposes only.

### Can I provide data electronically?

Yes. BLS encourages you to provide data in electronic format. Data can be accepted in a variety of different formats.

Your BLS representative will tell you more.

### Can I access data online?

Yes. Published and modeled estimates are available to view at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/home.htm#data> online. Select from among the most requested statistics or create customized tables from BLS databases. By clicking a few buttons, users can obtain compensation data in seconds.

BLS hopes you will find the published results of use in developing your establishment's compensation and benefits practices. If you have any further questions, contact the closest BLS Information Office (listed on the back of this brochure).

## Did you know that BLS uses your company's data to produce statistics like these?

This is only a small representation of the vast amount of data that we are able to provide to the public with your help.

### Wage Data

- **Average hourly wages for 480 occupations**  
Aggregated to the local, regional, and national levels
- **Earnings by work level and percentile**  
For wage comparisons
- **Average hourly wages by characteristic**  
Industry, occupational group, part- and full-time status, union or nonunion status, and time and incentive status

### Benefits Data

- **Incidence data**  
Percentages and counts of employees who have access to or participate in benefit plans such as life insurance and vacation time
- **Provisions data**  
Detailed features of key benefits like health insurance and retirement
- **Data on access to benefits**  
Percentages and counts of employees who are offered employer-sponsored programs (such as employee assistance and wellness) and emerging benefits, such as subsidized commuting and adoption assistance

### Trends Data

- **Changes in wage and benefit costs**
- **Average hourly cost for total compensation and its components**

## BLS Information Offices

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Information Offices are available to help you with questions regarding the National Compensation Survey and other BLS surveys.

### Boston

JFK Federal Building, Room E-310  
15 New Sudbury Street  
Boston, MA 02203-1603  
Phone: (617) 565-2327 Fax: (617) 565-4182

### New York

201 Varick Street, Room 808  
New York, NY 10014-4811  
Phone: (212) 337-2400 Fax: (212) 337-2532

### Philadelphia

Suite 610 East, The Curtis Center  
170 South Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3305  
Phone: (215) 597-3282 Fax: (215) 861-5720

### Atlanta

61 Forsyth Street, SW, Room 7T50  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8930  
Phone: (404) 331-3415 Fax: (404) 331-3445

### Chicago

Federal Office Building, 9th Floor  
230 S. Dearborn Street  
Chicago, IL 60604-1595  
Phone: (312) 353-1880 Fax: (312) 353-1886

### Dallas

Federal Building  
525 Griffith Street, Room 221  
Dallas, TX 75202-5028  
Phone: (214) 767-6970 Fax: (214) 767-3720

### Kansas City

City Center Square  
1100 Main, Suite 600  
Kansas City, MO 64105-2112  
Phone: (816) 426-2481 Fax: (816) 426-6537

### San Francisco

71 Stevenson Street  
P. O. Box 193766  
San Francisco, CA 94119-3766  
Phone: (415) 975-4350 Fax: (415) 975-4371

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