

Introduction

Since 1950 the Institute of Government and, later, the School of Government have published information on salaries and working conditions in North Carolina counties to meet the needs of elected and appointed officials in reviewing current personnel practices. The report is based on survey information provided by individual counties. Ninety-three of North Carolina's 100 counties completed and submitted surveys in the fall of 2011 about 126 appointed classes/positions and 4 elected positions that are typically a part of county government in this state.

This report contains salary and wage profiles by position and information about fringe benefits that participating counties are offering for the 2011–2012 fiscal year (based on our request to provide salary levels as of September 1, 2011). The job titles that the counties used to provide the salary and compensation data are included. Salary amounts have been rounded to the nearest dollar except for hourly salaries. Salaries, travel allowances, and employee benefits are expressed in annual amounts unless otherwise noted.

Estimated populations and approximated assessed property valuations for each county appear in Table 1 (Population, Valuation, County Commissioner, and County Manager). Both population estimates and property valuations were provided by the individual counties in survey responses. For this reason, information presented here may vary from that available from other sources.

All counties responding to the survey participate in the North Carolina Local Government Employees' Retirement System (NCLGERS).

Ten reporting counties (up from seven the previous year) awarded performance pay increases for 2011–2012. The percentage of performance increases ranged from a low of 1.0 percent to a high of 4.0 percent of base salary. The average performance increase was 2.0 percent.

Fourteen counties (up from eleven the previous year) reported awarding their employees an across-the-board cost of living adjustment (COLA). The COLAs ranged from a low of 1.0 percent to a high of 4.0 percent. The average COLA was 2.4 percent (down from 2.5 percent last year). Only two counties (down from three the previous year) reported awarding their employees both a COLA and the opportunity for performance pay increases.

The School of Government is grateful for the cooperation of the county officials who reported information for this publication. We also thank Larry Kerr and the MAPS Group, who do the surveying, data collection, and compilation that make this report possible.

Thomas H. Thornburg
Senior Associate Dean
School of Government
CB# 3330
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3330
thornburg@sog.unc.edu