Introduction

Since 1950 the Institute of Government and, then, 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 information provided by individual counties via a survey. Ninety-one of North Carolina’s 100 counties completed and submitted surveys in the fall of 2012, answering questions about 126 appointed classes/positions and four elected positions that are typically a part of county government in this state. Newly reported this year is information about benefits provided to county commissioners (see Table XXXIX; read in conjunction with Table I information about commissioner pay).

This report contains salary and wage profiles by position and information about fringe benefits that participating counties are offering for the 2012–2013 fiscal year (based on our request to provide salary levels as of September 1, 2012). 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 when hourly rates are reported. 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 differ from projections available from other sources.

Nineteen reporting counties (up from ten the previous year) awarded performance pay increases for 2012–2013. The percentage of performance increases ranged from a low of 1.08 percent to a high of 3.75 percent of base salary. The average performance increase was 2.4 percent.

Twenty-seven counties (up from fourteen 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 5.0 percent. The average COLA was 2.3 percent (down from 2.4 percent last year). Only three counties (up from two the previous year) reported awarding their employees both a COLA and the opportunity for performance pay increases.

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