

# **Town of Pelham**

## **Labor Market Survey**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Town of Pelham (the Town) engaged the services of the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center (Collins Center) for Public Management, to conduct a market salary survey for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the existing compensation for a variety of positions. (List Attached)

## PURPOSE

The purpose of a survey is to measure where an organization is with respect to wages at a point in time relative to other municipalities in the labor market or region. A survey provides insight into how a compensation system compares to other organizations. While a survey is a useful tool and is helpful to measure or evaluate one organization against others, it is not an exact science. Many factors contribute to compensation plans including finances, region, demographics, organizational design and size, and staffing levels. It is important to view a survey as a snapshot in time and an overview to gain insight into trends, averages, and similarities, not to find “exact” data points and comparisons.

## MARKET SALARY SURVEY

A market salary survey was conducted to compare the Town’s compensation levels against other area municipalities. A summary of the results is attached to this report. Obtaining survey data is one of the most challenging aspects of a classification and compensation study. Not all municipalities have the same titles or definitions of duties under a specific title, which can make exact comparisons difficult. The municipalities that responded to the survey are Amherst, Belchertown, Easthampton, Granby, Hatfield, Leverett, New Salem, Northampton, Palmer, Shutesbury, South Hadley, Ware, and Whately.

The Project Team evaluates both the average and the median pay in order to obtain accurate information. The analysis of median pay removes the outlying data points. It is also worth noting that there are instances where positions may not be an exact comparison.

The following Table highlights some of the challenges when reviewing survey data and should be taken into consideration when making evaluative determinations.

FACTOR	DISCUSSION
Title Comparison	A survey of titles can be challenging. Oftentimes, the same title may have different levels of responsibility, which can skew the

FACTOR	DISCUSSION
	results.
Data Points	The Center provided analysis with three data points of greater. Only three data points can have a skewed average and median if there is an outlier.
Organizational/Staffing Structure	Staffing levels and classification structures can impact salary survey results. For example, a large municipality may have more positions, which may be specialized, or have narrow responsibilities, whereas a smaller municipality, with fewer staff, may have broader responsibility.
Elected and Appointed Officials	It is common for appointed officials with the same title as elected officials to be compensated at a higher level because of the professional education and experience required to be hired into the job. Elected officials have no such minimum requirements and as such are oftentimes paid differently than their counterpart in other municipalities.
Reporting Relationship	Depending on the municipality and organizational structure, titles may not be truly comparable. In larger municipalities, the same title can be department head, division head, or professional staff.
Stipends	In small towns, employees are often paid by stipend, either for a set amount monthly, quarterly, or annually. Oftentimes, stipends are treated as salary and do not align with hours worked or relative classification.
Single Rate of Pay	A single rate of pay, without a range, can skew analysis in that a single rate can represent a minimum or maximum, or somewhere in between.
Salary Ranges	It is common for salary ranges to be outdated, which contributes to data being skewed. Even though many municipalities report minimum salary ranges, it is not known if they actually hire or compensate employees at the minimum.

## DISCUSSION OF THE SURVEY

In comparing the current pay to the survey maximum, all of the Pelham titles are below the maximum. However, this does not mean the positions are “underpaid,” only that the single pay rate is below the survey maximum. In most instances, the current pay is well within the market standard of a 30% range. However, many titles in the department head group are below the survey minimum. Pelham does not have pay ranges and such a structure can skew results. With only one rate of pay, it is difficult to see if that is a minimum or maximum pay rate. In many of these cases true comparisons are difficult to obtain, as described in the table above.

As mentioned above, the purpose of a survey is to evaluate an organization against other similarly situated organizations within a labor market or region. While none of the towns surveyed are exactly the same as

Pelham, there is sufficient common purpose, responsibilities, and structure to make accurate assessments on matters of compensation. A summary of the survey is attached to this report.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Project Team recommends the Town use the data herein to adjust and adopt the industry standard 30% pay ranges to the existing compensation plan.

GRADE	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM	RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM
A *	\$38.46	\$50.00
B	\$34.62	\$45.00
C	\$24.62	\$32.00
D	\$22.31	\$29.00
E	\$17.69	\$23.00
E	\$17.69	\$23.00
* Includes A-F1 and A-P1 Chief titles		

GRADE	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM	RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM
P2	\$34.62	\$45.00
P3	\$28.46	\$37.00
P4	\$23.08	\$30.00
P5	\$19.23	\$25.00
PS	\$21.54	\$28.00

GRADE	RECOMMENDED MINIMUM	RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM
FS2	\$30.77	\$40.00
FS3	\$27.69	\$36.00
FS4	\$19.23	\$25.00
FS5	\$19.23	\$25.00

## CLOSING

The Collins Center would like to thank the Town for inviting us to work on this project. The support from Susannah Carey received in the gathering of information and access to information is appreciated.

## SUMMARY OF SALARY SURVEY

DEPARTMENT	EXISTING TITLE	GRADE	PELHAM MAXIMUM HOURLY RATE	MARKET SURVEY AVERAGE MINIMUM	MARKET SURVEY MEDIAN MINIMUM	MARKET SURVEY AVERAGE MAXIMUM	MARKET SURVEY MEDIAN MAXIMUM
Assessor	Assistant Assessor	B	\$29.50			\$34.00	\$30.47
Council on Aging	Outreach Worker	D		\$28.41	\$28.84	\$33.77	\$31.47
Finance	Town Accountant	B	\$27.00	\$41.74	\$41.17	\$50.21	\$49.67
Finance	Treasurer/Collector	B	\$31.71	\$40.85	\$38.90	\$43.62	\$42.83
Fire	Captain	FS3		\$32.54	\$32.74	\$38.32	\$38.54
Fire	Deputy Fire Chief	FS2				\$42.81	\$48.75
Fire	Fire Chief	A-F1	\$32.56			\$51.14	\$52.05
Fire	Firefighter	FS5		\$24.03	\$24.40	\$26.41	\$27.73
Fire	Lieutenant	FS4					
Highway	Foreman	C	\$27.52	\$29.29	\$28.32	\$35.03	\$34.78
Highway	Laborer-seasonal	E	\$18.00	\$17.44	\$17.19	\$20.50	\$20.95
Highway	Mechanic	C	\$27.03	\$25.16	\$24.89	\$30.87	\$30.91
Highway	Superintendent (Director) Hwy/Bldg. & Grnds	A	\$41.72	\$45.57	\$48.70	\$50.18	\$48.58
Highway	Truck Driver	D	\$25.56	\$21.25	\$20.77	\$26.09	\$26.00
Highway/Bldg.	Custodian	E	\$18.29	\$20.17	\$19.00	\$22.91	\$22.62
Library	Library Assistant	E	\$19.00	\$18.44	\$17.26	\$21.14	\$19.68
Library	Library Director	B	\$34.78			\$38.69	\$35.93
Police	Dog Officer/Animal Inspector	PS		\$24.79	\$23.52	\$30.77	\$30.47
Police	Lieutenant	P2				\$48.00	\$48.91
Police	Part-Time Officers	P5	\$24.62			\$28.48	\$23.60
Police	Police Chief	A-P1	\$31.41			\$60.50	\$65.04
Police	Police Officer	P4	\$26.44	\$26.80	\$26.54	\$32.42	\$33.93
Police	Sergeant	P3	\$27.40	\$36.82	\$36.88	\$37.99	\$41.26
Select Board	Executive Assistant	C	\$24.99	\$26.34	\$25.90	\$30.66	\$30.47
Town Clerk	Records Officer	E	\$17.91	\$23.57	\$24.16	\$27.92	\$27.30
Town Clerk	Town Clerk	B	\$26.48	\$40.65	\$38.35	\$41.79	\$40.12

*Note: Survey data for titles that did not have at least three data points for both minimum and maximum for comparison are not included.  
Pelham Maximum rates cells that are blank are stipend positions.*