

PSMJ 2026 Staff Compensation Survey: Instructions

A Few Important Notes

Unless otherwise noted, answers should reflect your firm's compensation practices/policies in effect as of January/February 2026.

IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE PERSON IN A POSITION

If you have more than one individual in a position, please select a MEDIAN (mid-point) individual as representative of the group rather than using the mathematical average.

IF AN INDIVIDUAL HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MORE THAN ONE TITLE

Classify them into *ONE* position that is their primary responsibility or commitment of effort for the firm – pick the function on which they spend the most time (more than 50%). Please **DO NOT** include the same employee in both Management and Staff sections or in multiple roles, unless they are a Project Manager as noted below.

PROJECT MANAGERS WHO SPEND LESS THAN HALF THEIR TIME MANAGING PROJECTS

If PMs spend less than 50% of their time managing projects, include their data in **BOTH** the Management and Staff Surveys. For example, if the employee is a PM who spends 40% of their time managing projects and an Architect who charges 60% to projects, enter the entire salary/all data in **BOTH** the Management and Staff sections.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

If you are including any part-time employees' base salary data, please convert to full-time equivalents. To convert part-time staff to full-time equivalents, multiply their hourly salary rate by 2,080 hours for U.S. or 1,950 hours for Canada.

CANADIAN FIRMS

Canadian firms should report results in Canadian dollars.

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Measure relevant experience from the first applicable bachelor-level degree. Years in graduate school should be counted one-for-one as if the employee were working. Relevant experience gained prior to achieving a bachelor-level degree should also be counted one-for-one. Approximation is acceptable.

Metrics

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WITH THIS TITLE

Please enter the number of individuals in your firm with this title.

SALARY \$ PER YEAR

Enter the amount of annual base salary paid to the individual with this title, or the MEDIAN if there is more than one employee. Please do not include overtime pay.

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PERFORMANCE BONUS \$

The most recent annual performance bonus paid to the individual reflecting their performance during last year (even if paid in the current year). Exclude owner distributions based on share ownership. We are asking for only performance-based, discretionary bonuses. If a salaried employee is rewarded/paid for extra hours worked, please include here. For BD Representatives, this includes commissions.

Please enter the MEDIAN if there is more than one employee.
If no bonus, input \$0; If you choose not to answer, leave blank.

BILLING RATE/HOUR

The typical billing rate for individuals in this category. This should be your quoted current rates for hourly work, before negotiations with client, including overhead and profit. Please note we are asking for dollars per hour, not the actual multiplier.

% CHARGEABLE TO PROJECTS

Indicate the approximate percentage of total hours (not \$) chargeable to projects during the past year by each individual.

LICENSURE - Indicate if staff in this position are generally licensed. Leave Blank if not applicable.

OVERTIME

YES/NO: Indicate if employees in this position typically work overtime (not necessarily recorded or paid). Based on a 40-hour week during the past year by each individual for U.S. firms, 36-hour weeks for Canadian firms.

% OVERTIME: indicate the approximate actual overtime (not necessarily recorded or paid overtime), based on a 40-hour week during the past year by each individual in this position. Examples: a 44-hour week would be 10% overtime; 50 hours would be 25% overtime. Canadian firms, please use a 36-hour week.

PAID OVERTIME? Overtime for which the employee receives immediate compensation, not deferred compensation.

Staff Positions

ARCHITECT

The position of Architect includes those that apply architectural principles and technology to the built environment.

INTERIOR DESIGNER

The position of Interior Designer includes those that apply interior design principles and technology to the built environment.

CIVIL ENGINEER

The position of Civil Engineer includes those that apply civil engineering principles and technology to the built environment.

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ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

The position of Electrical Engineer includes those that apply electrical engineering principles and technology to the built environment.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

The position of Mechanical Engineer includes those that apply mechanical engineering and technology to the built environment.

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

The position of Structural Engineer includes those that apply structural engineering principles and technology to the built environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

The position of Environmental Engineer includes those that apply environmental engineering principles and technology to the built environment. Please note, this position does not include scientists.

SCIENTIST

The position of Scientist includes biologists, chemists, geologists, and environmental scientists.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

The position of Landscape Architect includes those that apply landscape architecture principles and technology to the built environment.

LAND SURVEYOR (NON-LICENSED)

Member of a survey crew which applies surveying principles and technology to the built environment (e.g., determining property boundaries, providing data relevant to the shape, contour, gravitation, location, elevation, or dimension of land or land features for engineering, mapmaking, mining, land evaluation, construction, and other purposes). This position is for non-licensed surveyors.

BIM/CAD TECHNICIAN, (0-5, 6-9 years of experience)

Entry and mid-level BIM Technician/Drafters use Revit and other relevant software for modeling required to execute designs utilizing BIM.

Entry and mid-level CAD Technician/Drafters use software and modeling programs to design and produce project documents.

SENIOR BIM/CAD TECHNICIAN, (10-14, 15+ years of experience)

Senior-level BIM Technician/Drafters use Revit and other relevant software for model management and BIM planning, collaboration, and coordination to execute designs utilizing BIM.

Senior-level CAD Technician/Drafters use software and modeling programs to design and produce project documents.

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MARKETING/PROPOSAL COORDINATOR (0-3 YEARS; SENIOR 4+ YEARS)

Marketing Coordinators provide general marketing support for business development activities and report to the Marketing Manager, Business Development Manager, or firm Principal/Partner. Typical activities of a Marketing Coordinator may include but are not limited to developing marketing collateral, monitoring relevant industry sources for project leads, maintaining CRM data, maintaining project and employee resume data, developing proposal materials and qualification packages, and providing word processing, publishing, and graphic design support to all marketing efforts.

Proposal Coordinators provide administrative support for the proposal process and report to the Marketing Manager, Business Development Manager, or firm Principal/Partner. Typical activities of a Proposal Coordinator may include but are not limited to collection of proposal content and providing word processing, publishing, and graphic design support to produce well-organized proposal presentations.

TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER

Establishes plans for roadway construction and maintenance, as well as for the design of airports, subways, and metro transit systems. Work is often performed outdoors at construction sites to monitor progress and troubleshoot any problems that arise. Requires a professional degree in Civil Engineering with related experience in transportation engineering.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER (NON-LICENSED ARCHITECTURAL STAFF)

Fully competent in all conventional aspects of architecture. Independently performs a variety of assignments requiring skills in all conventional aspects of architectural designs for projects of moderate size and complexity. Requires a professional degree in architecture and at least 3+ years of related experience. More experienced Architectural Designers are able to perform more complex work on larger projects.

These employees have 4 or 5-year Architectural degrees but are non-licensed. The AIA refers to them as Architectural Staff to distinguish them from licensed Architects.

SENIOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER (NON-LICENSED ARCHITECTURAL STAFF)

Participates in the conceptual design and represents the lead technical viewpoint on projects. May serve as subject matter expert on specialized systems and presents technical and design solutions directly to the client. Provides full support through the entire project and works closely with the Project Manager to execute project plans. Requires a professional degree in architecture, plus 10+ years of related experience.

These employees have 4 or 5-year Architectural degrees but are non-licensed. The AIA refers to them as Architectural Staff to distinguish them from licensed Architects.

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ENGINEERING DESIGNER

Under the direction of a senior designer or registered engineer, prepares layouts and other preliminary designs for engineer approval. Works semi-independently on design projects to support a registered engineer. Often coordinates drafting/BIM efforts for assigned projects. An entry-level Designer typically has at least 5 years of experience as a CAD/BIM Drafter. More experienced Designers are able to perform work of moderate complexity under general supervision. (NOTE: This position does not require a 4-year degree in engineering, but work must be approved by a licensed Engineer.)

SENIOR ENGINEERING DESIGNER

Under the direction of a registered engineer, prepares layouts and other preliminary designs for engineer approval. Works independently on design projects to support a registered engineer and coordinates drafting/BIM efforts for assigned projects. Typically has at least 5 years of experience as a lower-level Designer and is capable of performing diversified and complex design assignments with minimal supervision. (NOTE: This position does not require a 4-year degree in engineering or architecture, but work must be approved by a licensed Engineer.)

PLANNER

Develops plans for utilization of land and physical facilities of cities, counties, and metropolitan areas. Applies knowledge of urban and environmental planning principles and practices related to physical, economic, and social factors affecting land use. Requires a professional degree in Urban/Environmental Planning or related field and at least 2 years of related work experience. More experienced Planners are able to perform more complex work on larger projects.

SENIOR PLANNER

Serves in a leadership role for the development of plans for utilization of land and physical facilities of cities, counties, and metropolitan areas. Confers with local authorities, civic leaders, and land planning and development specialists to devise and recommend arrangements of land and physical facilities for residential, commercial, transportation, industrial, and community uses. Facilitates public involvement and consensus-building meetings and workshops. Requires a professional degree in Urban/Environmental Planning or related field and at least 8 years of related work experience. American Institute of Certified Planners Certification is preferred at this level.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Makes initial contacts with strategic clients identified by senior principals. Once initial contact has been made, qualifies any leads and sets up meetings with the appropriate principals and/or PMs for preproposal visitations. Assists with the proposal preparation process and arranges subsequent meetings to close the sale. Maintains ongoing relationships with these clients after initial assignment has been won to identify future business opportunities. Requires at least a bachelor-level degree and 2+ years of related business development or marketing experience.

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SENIOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVE

Responsible for identifying new strategic clients and managing the entire business development process for these clients, from initial contact to closing. Maintains ongoing relationships with these clients after initial assignment has been won to identify future business opportunities. Generally has a degree in engineering, architecture or a related field plus at least 6 years of business development experience.

CONSTRUCTION INSPECTOR

Through testing and observation, ensures that project construction complies with plans and specifications and that the contractor follows contract documents. Experience is typically limited to a given discipline of inspection work. Requires at least 2 years of related experience. More experienced Inspectors may be qualified to monitor several types of inspection activities and may be certified in specific disciplines.

DO NOT include Construction Inspectors whose pay levels are subject to State or Federal wage determinations. Only include fair market, negotiated rates.

SENIOR CONSTRUCTION INSPECTOR

Through testing and observation, ensures that project construction complies with plans and specifications and that the contractor follows contract documents. This level has significant inspection experience in multiple inspection disciplines with the capability of handling large projects of moderate complexity. May oversee the work of less experienced Inspectors. Requires at least 6 years of related experience plus certifications in specific disciplines.

DO NOT include Construction Inspectors whose pay levels are subject to State or Federal wage determinations. Only include fair market, negotiated rates.

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Evaluates and reviews contractual matters for the company. Fully competent in a specific aspect of legal staff work and is capable of taking the lead role on assignments of moderate complexity. May provide legal expertise for a specific area (e.g., employment law, contractual law, etc.). Requires a professional degree in law and at least 5 years of related experience.

CHIEF CORPORATE COUNSEL

Conducts and oversees contractual matters and other legal assignments of significant complexity for the company. Coordinates the efforts of internal and/or outside counsel for major cases. Requires a professional degree in law and at least 10 years of related experience and is bar approved.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT

This is the entry-level project support position. Assists project managers in performing clerical/administrative activities. Organizes and implements the firm's project policies and procedures. Analyzes project data and produce periodic progress reports. Requires an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in Business or related field.

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PROJECT ACCOUNTANT

Performs various specialized accounting functions of moderate complexity and ensures that procedures and practices are being followed in accordance with accounting principles and company policy. Serves as the interface between project managers and the firm's accounting system. Maintains and updates budgets as project progresses. Collaborates with project technical staff to ensure compliance with contractual requirements. Requires a bachelor-level degree in Accounting, Business Administration or related field plus at least 2 years of experience.

PROJECT CONTROL SPECIALIST

Establishes, maintains, and reports on cost controls and project schedule. This includes planning and establishing cost and schedule work breakdown structures (WBS) and metrics; collecting performance data (expended labor hours and other progress measurements); analyzing earned value, productivity, and risk; and reporting findings to Project Manager. Requires a professional degree in Engineering, Business, Construction Management, or a related field.

Firm Information

TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF - We want to establish the current size of your firm. Please indicate the current total number of employees, including all professional staff, technical staff, clerical and administrative staff, partners/principals, and the full-time equivalent for part-time staff, seasonal help, and paid interns. (To convert part-time staff, seasonal help, and paid interns to full-time equivalents, divide by 2,080 hours for U.S. or 1,950 hours for Canada.) Count full-time employees who work more than 2,080 hours as one employee.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OFFERED IN-HOUSE - We want you to identify your firm type, based on the services you provide in-house. You must choose only one of the types listed. Note: we are interested in your primary service type. If you are an engineering firm which does both prime and sub-consulting, please indicate the type that represents a majority of your work.

GEOGRAPHIC REGION - Indicate where you do the majority of your work (more than 50%).

All US: No one region represents more than 50% of your work.

Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

West: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington.

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.

South: Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

Mountain: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming, Utah.

Canada: Anywhere in Canada. Please use Canadian dollars for all dollar responses.

International: More than 50% of work is outside US or Canada. Including US and Canadian possessions.

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PORTION OF TOTAL REVENUES DERIVED BY CLIENT TYPE - We would like to know if you do most of your work for **private-sector owners** of projects, including commercial, industrial, housing and/or other private-sector facility owners. Precise accuracy is not needed — round to the nearest 5%. We would like to know if you do most of your work under the rules of **governmental agencies**. Please report state and local government work together with federal as government work. Precise accuracy is not needed — round to the nearest 5%.

ANNUAL NET REVENUES - Gross revenues after deducting subconsultants & direct expenses for FYE 2025.

ANNUAL GROSS PAYROLL - Total annual payroll before withholdings and/or bonuses for FYE 2025.

OPERATING PROFIT - Operating profit before taxes and all discretionary distributions (year-end bonuses) for FYE 2025.

RETIREMENT PAYMENTS - Total firm payments to qualified retirement plan(s) for fiscal year-end 2025. This includes firm payments for 401(k) matching, contributions to retirement profit sharing plans or firm-paid contributions to any other retirement or deferred compensation plan (including ESOP contribution). Include total dollar amount paid by the firm for all employees, firm-wide. Do not include any discretionary bonuses or owner distributions.

ESOP - Does your firm have an IRS Approved Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP)? ESOPs are not applicable in Canada.

WBE & MBE - Is your firm a Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) or Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) as certified by some government body?