


DATE: October 10, 2023  
TO: Board of Trustees, BCRSD  
FROM: Wendy Wieggers, Manager, Finance & HR  
THROUGH:  Tom Ratermann, General Manager  
SUBJECT: Wage and Benefit Survey 2023

**Wage & Benefit Study Summary  
2023-2024**

**FINANCE MANAGER RESEARCH:**

Note: This will be an ongoing study that I keep up-to-date for future years. This will not be a static document but will be a document that keeps changing. The goal is to provide current information at any given time on where we stand in regards to salaries and benefits. I will be updating information and adding participants that I have not yet received information on.

Study Participants To-Date:

County of Boone  
City of Columbia  
Jefferson City  
Duckett Creek Public Sewer District  
Northeast Public Sewer District  
State of Missouri  
City of Wentzville  
City of O'Fallon  
Kansas City  
MSD  
Indeed  
Salary.com  
UMC  
HDR

Note: I sent a written request and follow-up to several of the smaller sewer districts (Pulaski County, Taney County, etc.) and have not had any response. I did get great information from Duckett and Northeast. I've gleaned what information I could from their websites and Indeed job postings. As I reach out to them and build relationships, I will update the information in this report.

- Our current salaries are competitive at current rates.
- 2023 COLA: 8.0%; 2024 COLA Projected: 4.7%

- Overall, I find that BCRSD is currently competitive and offers comparable employment opportunities as compared to other organizations. There is nothing that we offer that stands out from the competition but we are also not lower in benefit levels in most cases. Salaries may be a bit low and we could offer vision insurance at a low cost.
- We currently utilize Boone County pay grade but our titles do not match. The City of Columbia pay scale is more suitable for our needs.
- Noted that due to having only 13 employees, many employees fill more than one role.
- For consideration, step up pay to reach pay grade levels & merit increases.
- I am currently working on job descriptions and hope to have these all up-to-date by the end of October, 2023.

#### Current Trends:

- The majority of organizations are utilizing Anthem healthcare plans, with others utilizing UHC. Many offer more than one option but all offer a traditional plan like our current plan.
- A dependent care savings account is a good option for BCRSD if we can find a working option.
- All organizations offer dental, vision, AD&D, basic life, long term disability and short term disability. One of our options is to add vision and it's inexpensive.
- Retirement options have been pretty similar. 401k or another defined benefit plan is the majority with 457 plans and additional Roth options as an additional plan. Some organizations enforce a mandatory contribution from the employee and others do not, it's mixed in this area.
- Other plans offer Employee Wellness and Assistance options. This could range from gym membership discounts, bonuses for activities, counseling and drug/alcohol recovery programs. Leave for Disaster Relief is another being used by State of Missouri.
- Share Leave is a benefit offered by the State of Missouri where employees can donate leave to employees experiencing catastrophic illness/injury.

#### **SHRM BENEFIT SURVEY 2023:**

Per the 2023 SHRM Employee Benefit Survey, mental health coverage has been an area of increasing interest. Health and retirement benefits continue to be the most important to employees when deciding on employment positions. Other areas of importance, outside of wages, includes leave, flexible work, family care and professional development. Things to consider in the future: wellness programs/bonuses, dependent care pretax spending accounts.

PPO plans continue to be the most common, similar to the BCRSD current plan. It does provide the most protection for employees' health concerns. One thing we do not offer but can at minimal cost in the future is vision insurance. Most do offer this along with dental.

The SECURE Act 2.0 will mandate changes in retirement plan benefits and increase costs for employers by requiring employees to enroll and expanding eligibility to part-time workers.



Paid vacation and sick leave remain essentially the same. Unlimited PTO is another option being offered as are paid mental health days. Optional leave options for some employers include paid maternity and paternity leave, parental leave, family leave, adoption and foster child leave.

Flexible work hours are here to stay. 59% of employers subsidize at-home office equipment. Hybrid work opportunities remain constant as an important retention strategy, including working at home and in office and to allow employees to work from home during inclement weather, sick days, as needed. Four-day workweeks are not taking hold as expected.

Professional Development & Training: Not all employees can hold all certificates and education expected for every task. Upskilling and reskilling are very important to employees. They want to retain their education or increase their knowledge/skills but are too busy working. With the cost of tuition and credentialing so high, employees find employers who offer training and education assistance attractive options. The employer benefits with a satisfied, trained workforce.

#### **CITY OF COLUMBIA, MO, 2023 COMPENSATION STUDY**

I reviewed the City of Columbia 2023 Compensation Study and the major finding is that the City of Columbia starting salaries are lower than similar organizations in the market. The City offers a benefit package, it feels, offsets that lower minimum.

“Of particular note is the City’s implementation of a \$15 minimum wage. In addition to the implementation scenarios discussed above, Segal prepared a cost model that increases the proposed pay ranges by approximately 6.4%, the amount necessary to increase the pay range minimum of the lowest grade to \$15 on an hourly basis.”

\*In my numbers, I did use current city grades and salaries from their current grade postings. I did not use the “projected” from the compensation study.

#### **COUNTY OF BOONE, MO**

I am recommending we base our rates and pay grades on the City of Columbia instead of the County of Boone due to the availability of similar job positions. Currently, the BCRSD grades are based only on salary amount, not job titles.