



CHARITY
VILLAGE

2019 CANADIAN
NONPROFIT SECTOR

SALARY AND BENEFITS STUDY



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Executive Summary

The 2019 edition of the Canadian Nonprofit Sector Salary and Benefits Study is the fifth in a series that began in 2011. This robust compensation study focuses exclusively on charities and nonprofits in Canada. The survey collected compensation and profile data for six staff levels. A total of 1,590 completed surveys were received within the survey period.

The study was carried out by The Portage Group Inc., a full-service management consulting firm that specializes in providing market research and information-based organizational and strategic planning for nonprofit organizations.

The following section summarizes the report's key highlights.

CASH COMPENSATION

- Since 2016, average compensation has increased for senior management (level 3), functional/program staff (level 5) and among support staff (level 6). At other levels, compensation declined or remained stagnant. Looking at the sector in general, compensation is growing slowly. Over the seven-year period from 2011 to 2018, compensation has grown at an average rate of 0.4% to 1.8% per year, depending on the level.
- Full-time employees have higher comparative compensation levels than permanent part-time employees at all levels. Compensation for full-time staff is also higher than casual part-time or contract staff at all levels except senior executive (level 2).

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Average cash compensation at four of six levels is lower in registered charities than in other nonprofits. The exceptions are senior executives (level 2), where average compensation is higher in registered charities than other nonprofits, and functional/program staff (level 5), where the difference is negligible.
- Average compensation at all levels generally increases with the size of the community in which employees are located. However, as seen in previous studies, the premium tends to be higher at the more senior staff levels. The highest pay for four of six levels is found in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The two exceptions are management/supervisory staff (level 4) and support staff (level 6), where Ottawa ranks first and the GTA ranks second.
- At all levels except for support staff, health-related organizations are among the leaders in cash compensation. Children/family organizations are also near the top for the top two management levels. The highest average compensation for level 5 is provided by arts and culture organizations.

- At the four management levels, higher organization revenue and larger staff size generally translates into higher compensation.
- For levels 1, 3, 4 and 5, cash compensation increases as the organizational jurisdiction broadens up to the national level before dropping again for international organizations.
- Average cash compensation at four of six levels is higher in affiliated organizations (organizations that operate under the same umbrella name or brand but are run as separate nonprofit organizations).

DEMOGRAPHICS AND EXPERIENCE

- The results continue to show that men earn more on average than women at all management levels. While the largest gap continues to be at the Chief Executive level, the gap is lower than in 2017, and is at the lowest level in the history of the study. As in past studies, further analysis shows that the compensation gap between men and women reflects the fact that men employed in the sector are more likely to work for larger organizations, which tend to pay better than smaller organizations.
- The current study continues to show a strong correlation between age and cash compensation at all levels.
- The results continue to show that sector employees are a well-educated group. With the exception of support staff, 84% or more have completed at least some post-secondary education. As seen in past studies, higher education generally correlates to higher compensation, particularly if the degree/diploma is relevant to the job.
- At all levels, a relevant certification brings higher cash compensation. The difference is most notable for senior executives.
- Years of experience can be measured in a variety of ways (i.e., years at the organization, in the position, at the level, in the nonprofit sector or in the discipline) and is a key factor in determining compensation. While all five of these experience types generally correlate with compensation, the strongest relationship tends to be with years in the current discipline.

PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES

- With only 9% of participants offering a formal incentive plan, they continue to be an anomaly in the nonprofit sector. Formal incentive plans continue to be most prevalent at the senior management levels.
- Organizational performance measures are most common among Chief Executives (level 1) and senior executives (level 2). Individual performance continues to be commonly used at all levels.

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Health Benefits:

- Three quarters (76%) of participating organizations provide health benefits to at least one level of staff. Health benefits are least common among Chief Executives (level 1) and most common among senior management (level 3) and management/supervisory staff (level 4).
- Primary health benefits include life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment, employee assistance program (EAP), extended health care/major medical insurance, prescription drug plan, vision care, benefit coverage for family & dependents, alternative therapy insurance and dental plan.

Retirement Benefits:

- Half (50%) of participating organizations offer retirement benefits. Senior management (level 3) are the most likely to receive these benefits, followed by management/supervisory staff (level 4). The value of retirement benefits, when offered, ranges from 4.3% to 5.3% of cash compensation depending on level.
- RSP plans continue to be more common than pension plans and matched contribution RSP plans continue to be more popular than basic contribution plans. Defined contribution pension plans are more common at all levels than defined benefit plans.

Education

- Three-quarters of Chief Executives (level 1) and eight in ten staff at other management levels (levels 2,3 and 4) have education benefits available to them. The same holds true for just under two-thirds of non-management staff.

Automobile

- Only one in ten Chief Executives (level 1) and senior executives (level 2) receive automobile benefits. At lower levels, only 1% to 4% receive the benefit.
- Parking benefits are received by 9% to 17% of employees at level 5 or higher.

Perquisites

- A significant majority (79% or more) of nonprofit management staff receive perks. The portion is lower among level 5 (64%) and 6 (43%) staff.
- Employer-paid conference registration and travel, a cell phone/smartphone for work and a compressed work week or flextime are among the top five perks for all nonprofit employees surveyed. Professional dues are also among the top five perks for levels 1 to 5.