



MEMO

To: Network Advisory Council
From: Rebekah Kamp, State Library Data Coordinator
Subject: Staffing & Salary Study
Date: March 11, 2024

In response to a goal set by the Network Advisory Council (NAC) to research library staffing and compensation around the state, the Montana State Library introduced a section in the FY 2023 Public Libraries Survey to collect data necessary to conducting an analysis of wages in public libraries. The State Library presents *Montana Public Library Staffing & Salaries Study, 2024* as a draft for review by the Network Advisory Council.

Some key observations made in the analysis include the following:

- 83% of Montana's smallest libraries operate with less than two FTE which has an impact on the hours open to the public and creates disparity in access to resources.
- Compensation for the library director role has a wide range, from \$9.95 an hour to \$78.28, with a median of \$22.61. Only 8% of directors are compensated at or above the median rate for management positions which is \$40 an hour according to the May 2022 OEWS Research Estimates for Montana.
- Some libraries require qualifications for the library director role beyond the certification requirement set by [ARM 10.102.1160](#). However, most libraries require only a high school diploma or bachelor's degree. Annotations provided by respondents indicated that requirements might be shifting due to the recent rule changes.
- Montana public library directors have an impressive level of experience with an average of over ten years across all service area population bands.
- Only 20% of libraries benefit from the leadership of an assistant director. However, the presence of an assistant director can have an important role in succession planning and continuity of service.
- Other than the director, the library assistant role is the most common across libraries of all sizes. The median hourly wage for this paraprofessional role is \$16.35 and most commonly requires a high school diploma.
- Very few libraries employ their own IT staff (8 total). However, 75% of the largest libraries hire IT professionals which influence the types of technology training and support that might be available to the public.



Before final publication, staff request that the NAC consider the following questions for discussion at the March meeting:

1. If the State Library were to conduct a follow-up study, what additional information would be helpful to achieve the stated outcomes (see the introduction section)?
2. What audiences should we consider for sharing this report?
3. Do the results spark any ideas about how to better support libraries?