



# Summary Report Compensation Benchmarking for Connecticut Library Association



June 3, 2021

## 1. Overview

Connecticut Library Association (CLA) is the state's professional organization of librarians, library staff, friends, and trustees that work together to improve library service to the residents of Connecticut and to advance the interests of professional library staff. CLA desired assistance on compensation benchmarking to define market competitive levels of hourly base compensation for four (4) unique staff positions in town libraries in each of the six (6) CLA Regions and Statewide, for a total of 28 position/location combinations.

KardasLarson, LLC (KL) has completed a compensation benchmarking study of the positions of interest to define the market competitive compensation levels for the positions of interest. This report presents a summary of the methodology used in the study and the study findings.

This study was conducted in full compliance with the salary survey "safety zone" guidelines established by the US Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission in 1996. These guidelines require that no attributions to an organization as a data source can be made in a report to a participating or sponsoring organization that may reveal the actual source of the information.

## 2. Methodology for Compensation Benchmarking

CLA provided and confirmed job descriptions for the following four positions of interest for the benchmarking study:

- Level I – Library Assistant (or Library Clerk)
- Level II – Library Technical Assistant
- Level III – Library Technician
- MLS Librarian

The six CLA Regions are geographic divisions within the state of Connecticut. Region 1 encompasses many of the towns and cities in Litchfield County. Region 2 is comprised of towns and cities that are predominantly in Hartford County. Region 3 is dominated by towns and cities in Tolland and Windham Counties. Region 4 is primarily composed of towns and cities in Fairfield County. Region 5 is a mixture of towns and cities located in Middlesex and New Haven Counties. Region 6 is predominantly comprised of towns and cities in New London County. Data were also derived for Statewide distributions of hourly base compensation representative of all towns and cities in the state of Connecticut.

KL conducted a compensation benchmarking study of the positions of interest based on conventional market-pricing techniques. The job descriptions provided by CLA for the positions of interest were reviewed and analyzed to extract all relevant compensable factors for comparison to compensation information databases for similar organizations. Such compensable factors include education requirements for a position, amount of experience in a similar environment, size of the organization, operating budget of the organization, location of the organization, specific knowledge/skills/abilities required, certifications required, date of the survey information, etc. Consideration of these factors, in addition to position titles, assured comparable data for comparable positions.

The market-pricing analysis involved interrogating specialized premium subscription databases, publicly available databases, KardasLarson proprietary databases, and other proprietary databases using the identified compensable factors. In all cases, multiple position titles were considered for the comparisons to assure that matches in the market were appropriate and not simply based on job title.

It should be noted that all acquired data from the surveys and databases were reviewed for legitimacy, and adjustments were made as needed to correct utilized survey data for geographic differences due to organization location, for the age of the data, and for other appropriate factors. No data more than 2 years old were utilized in the analysis. In instances where only annualized compensation data were available, the determined base hourly rates were adjusted as needed for the average number of hours worked per week in each Region and Statewide using data contained in the most recent report from the Connecticut State Library on "Connecticut's Public Libraries: A Statistical Profile". This varied from a low of 35.1 hours per week in Region 1 to a high of 36.3 hours per week in Region 5.

From the acquired data, market-priced base hourly rates were determined for each position, along with 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile distributions of compensation data.

### **3. Market Pricing of Salaries**

The derived data for market average hourly rates and percentiles were compiled in a table for comparison to actual current rates for employees in the positions by members of the Connecticut Library Association. The results are shown in Table 1.

In Table 1, it should be noted that the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile number represents the median of the data, or market midpoint, meaning that half of the compensation data points are above that value and half are below. The segment between the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile and the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile represents the 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile of the distribution of compensation data for a position, and the segment between the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile represents the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile of the distribution of compensation data for a position. The market average represents the mathematical average of

all the data in a given distribution, and it is typically very near the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or median of the range of data.

If actual compensation rates were available for employees in each of the positions, Table 1 would also show the market index for each incumbent in each position. The market index is simply the ratio of the current hourly rate to the market average hourly rate. A market index of 100% indicates that the current base compensation rate is exactly at the market average for a given position.

**Table 1** – Compensation Benchmarking Results



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**Compensation Benchmarking Results**  
**May 2021**  
Market-Pricing for Hourly Rate Base Compensation

Position	Market Percentiles			Market Average
	25th	50th	75th	
<b>Statewide</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	14.36	16.45	18.79	16.51
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	15.75	18.15	20.90	18.24
Library Technician - Level III	17.19	19.84	22.87	19.93
MLS Librarian	28.16	31.26	34.39	31.27
<b>Region 1</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	13.36	15.16	17.15	15.20
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	14.36	16.43	18.77	16.50
Library Technician - Level III	15.72	17.95	20.47	18.01
MLS Librarian	24.98	27.81	30.68	27.82
<b>Region 2</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	14.39	16.37	18.55	16.42
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	15.71	17.99	20.57	18.07
Library Technician - Level III	17.72	20.31	23.21	20.39
MLS Librarian	26.67	29.49	32.33	29.49

**Table 1** – Compensation Benchmarking Results (continued)



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**Compensation Benchmarking Results**  
**May 2021**  
Market-Pricing for Hourly Rate Base Compensation

Position	Market Percentiles			Market Average
	25th	50th	75th	
<b>Region 3</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	13.82	15.69	17.74	15.74
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	14.81	16.92	19.27	16.98
Library Technician - Level III	16.77	19.16	21.81	19.23
MLS Librarian	26.03	28.89	31.77	28.89
<b>Region 4</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	15.12	17.34	19.80	17.40
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	16.21	18.68	21.50	18.77
Library Technician - Level III	17.72	20.49	23.62	20.58
MLS Librarian	28.35	31.41	34.54	31.43
<b>Region 5</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	13.74	15.64	17.74	15.69
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	14.84	17.02	19.49	17.10
Library Technician - Level III	16.54	19.00	21.76	19.07
MLS Librarian	26.10	28.98	31.90	28.99
<b>Region 6</b>				
Library Assistant (or Library Clerk) - Level I	13.85	15.70	17.76	15.76
Library Technical Assistant - Level II	14.90	17.02	19.42	17.09
Library Technician - Level III	16.56	18.91	21.55	18.98
MLS Librarian	25.09	27.79	30.52	27.80

#### **4. Observations**

The variation in compensation levels across the CLA Regions is representative of the differences in the “cost of labor” for a given role in a geographic area.

Each percentile range for the compensation for a given position in a given Region presents a market range which can provide guidance in compensating employees in the town libraries in that Region. The range presents a spectrum of values for competitive compensation rates, with inexperienced employees who are not yet considered fully competent in a role typically paid at the lower end of a range, while more experienced and higher performing employees in the same role are typically paid at the higher end of a range. The midpoint, or 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, is typically the rate for someone considered reasonably competent in a role and is performing up to normal expectations.

As a point of reference, the projected starting compensation rate for an MLS Librarian in Connecticut is nearly the same as the determined 25<sup>th</sup> percentile for an MLS Librarian in the Statewide category. The Connecticut State Library report, noted above, indicates that the Statewide average entry level or starting rate for an MLS Librarian was \$27.00 per hour. This was during the period July 2019 to June 2020 defined in the report. If a January 1, 2020 date is adopted for the average for the rate, at a typical increase rate of 3% per year as has been seen in the overall labor market for the past 5+ years, the current starting rate should then be “aged” to \$28.15 per hour. The market determined rate, at the Statewide 25<sup>th</sup> percentile which should be like a typical starting rate, is seen to be \$28.16 in Table 1 for the MLS Librarian position. The two values compare very favorably.

It should be noted that the determined market ranges should not be considered absolute boundaries for employee compensation. As percentiles, 25 percent of individuals will be compensated below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile and 25 percent of individuals will be compensated above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile in a market range. But the market ranges do provide a reasonable approach to managing the compensation rates for employees, based on their experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as their performance against expectations.

#### **5. Conclusion**

A market-pricing study of the base compensation hourly rates for four library staff positions in each CLA Region and Statewide has been completed. Then identified market ranges for each position in each CLA Region can provide guidance in managing compensation rates for library employees. These results should be discussed with the operating members of the Board at CLA to assure completeness and continued usefulness of the data for the organization.

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