

UUA Office of Church Staff Finances

24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210



UUA Salary Recommendations for 2017-2018 Program Year

To: Congregational Leaders (Suggested distribution: presidents, treasurers, search committees, ministers, and administrators)

From: Jan Gartner, UUA Compensation and Staffing Practices Manager

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Each year, the UUA Office of Church Staff Finances reviews the UUA salary recommendations for religious professionals and other congregational staff. We do so taking into consideration salary data from a variety of sources.

For the 2017-2018 program year, we will not be changing our recommendations. The numbers on our charts for each position will be the same as those on the current (2016-2017) recommendations. We are calling it a “catch-up year.”

Read on: This does not mean holding salaries constant.

Why a Catch-up Year?

- We're embarking on an across-the-board review of our compensation program. We've begun working with a consultant to look at the methodology underlying all of our salary and benefit recommendations. On the heels of deeper, broader philosophical thinking, the timing does not feel right for making incremental adjustments to the existing structure.
- Congregations often fail to move an employee through the recommended range for their position over time. (In other words, someone hired near the minimum of their range may still be near the minimum after years of effective service, in part because the range shifts upwards each year.) Keeping the structure static this year gives congregations the chance to move staff salaries up, relative to their defined range, to recognize the increased experience and value they bring to the congregation over time.
- We are aware that rising benefit costs, especially health care, mean that congregations face higher expenditures for staff support, even if staffing levels and salaries are kept constant.

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Next steps in setting salaries for 2017-2018

- 1) The Consumer Price Index has increased an average of about 1% each year for the past 3 years. We suggest starting with a 1% pay increase across the board, simply to account for overall cost of living changes.
- 2) While the UUA Salary Recommendations are not changing for the coming year, the Geographic (Geo) Index for your congregation may change. Geo indices reflect the wages paid in a given community in relation to the national average. Geo Index 3 is the national average for wages, while Geo 1-2 are below, and Geo 4-7 are above. Geo Indices do not reflect cost of living in a community, which should also be taken into consideration when determining salaries.
- 3) As you begin to budget for the next program year, study your staff's salaries in relationship to our current recommendations. Some guiding questions:
 - Where does each staff member's salary fall within the range defined for their position?
 - Relative to their differing levels of experience and other relevant factors, is there pay equity across the staff team? Are staff members of similar experience and performance levels at a comparable place within their respective ranges?
 - How can inequities be remedied?
- 4) Compensation is more than just salary. Does your congregation contribute to the health insurance needs of your staff? Does it do so equally, taking into account hours worked? Have you offered long-term disability insurance to all employees working 750 hours or more? LTD insurance protects both the congregation and the employee if a disabling condition occurs.
- 5) Review eligibility for the UUA Retirement Plan. All employees who have met the eligibility criteria, established under the Plan, must receive an employer contribution AND the percentage contribution must be the same for all eligible employees. This is not optional under our federally-regulated plan. Employees may not opt out, and congregations may not set different eligibility criteria.
- 6) Take advantage of the services of a [UUA Compensation Consultant](#). These volunteers are trained and supported by the Office of Church Staff Finances. While Compensation Consultants are often called upon to help during times of transition, they are available to you any time you want to review staff compensation. Their services are free of charge.

For More Information

www.uua.org/compensation

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