



The Voice for Your Library

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NJLA Member Services Committee
2026 Minimum Starting Salary Recommendations (2.83% increase from 2025)
Approved by the NJLA Executive Board on August 19, 2025

NJLA recommends staff receive annual increases of at least 2.83%, or the minimum starting recommendation for the position, whichever is greater. Employees 18 or older must be paid the [state minimum wage](#) of \$15.49 per hour in 2025. The minimum wage most likely will increase in 2026. According to an October 8, 2024, [news release from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development](#) (NJDOL), the state sets the minimum wage for the coming year based on any increase in Consumer Price Index (CPI) data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. There may be exceptions to the minimum wage for small employers. The rates in the chart below are calculated based on a 35-hour work week.

Disclaimer: The cost of living varies widely across New Jersey and so does library funding, particularly from dedicated taxes and other government sources. This document is intended to help library workers, boards, and administrators establish salary standards that are fair and financially sustainable within their institutions.

The job titles in this guide are based on the [New Jersey Civil Service](#) system ([job description and title code search](#)). NJLA does not have position descriptions, e.g., we do not distinguish between the job titles of Library Assistant, Community Library Assistant, and Technical Library Assistant (the latter two are not covered explicitly by this guide).

Methodology and Notes

For 2026, NJLA's recommended change of 2.83% is derived by averaging the most recently available annual or 12-month salary and economic indicators listed below. These are the most recent data available as of August 10, 2025:

- The average “teacher contract settlements” for the academic year 2025-26, as reported by the [New Jersey School Boards Association](#) (updated July 28, 2025): 3.52%.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers \(CPI-U\), U.S. city average, all items index \(unchained\)](#): The most recent “unadjusted 12-month percentage change.” The most recent month available is June 2025: 2.7%.

- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, [Personal Consumption Expenditures, including food and energy](#) (PCE, also known as consumer spending), cumulative for the 12 months ending June 2025, released July 31, 2025: 2.6%.
- The U.S. Social Security Administration's [cost-of-living adjustment](#) (SSA COLA) for 2025, released Oct. 10, 2024; 2.5%.

	Annual Salary 2026	Hourly Rate 2026
Library Support Positions		
Library Assistant	\$35,909	\$19.73
Senior Library Assistant	\$41,837	\$22.99
Principal Library Assistant	\$48,822	\$26.83
Library Associate	\$50,869	\$27.95
Supervising Library Assistant	\$57,986	\$31.86
Library Clerk Driver	\$43,338	\$23.81
Bookkeeper	\$53,864	\$29.60
Library Guard	\$33,951	\$18.65
Custodian	\$39,942	\$21.95
Page	\$29,055	\$15.96

	Annual Salary 2026	Hourly Rate 2026
Library Support Positions		
Librarian	\$65,834	\$36.17
Senior Librarian	\$75,730	\$41.61
Principal Librarian	\$85,585	\$47.02
Supervising Librarian	\$98,552	\$54.15

	Annual Salary 2026	Hourly Rate 2026
Administrative Positions		
Administrative Secretary	\$59,843	\$32.88
Assistant Director (Population up to 49,999)	\$102,962	\$56.57
Assistant Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$118,284	\$64.99
Assistant Director (Population 100,000 and up)	\$147,723	\$81.17
Director (Population below 7,500)	\$97,257	\$53.44
Director (Population 7,500-14,000)	\$102,962	\$56.57
Director (Population 15,000-49,999)	\$118,284	\$64.99
Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$147,831	\$81.23
Director (Population 100,000 and up)	\$184,787	\$101.53

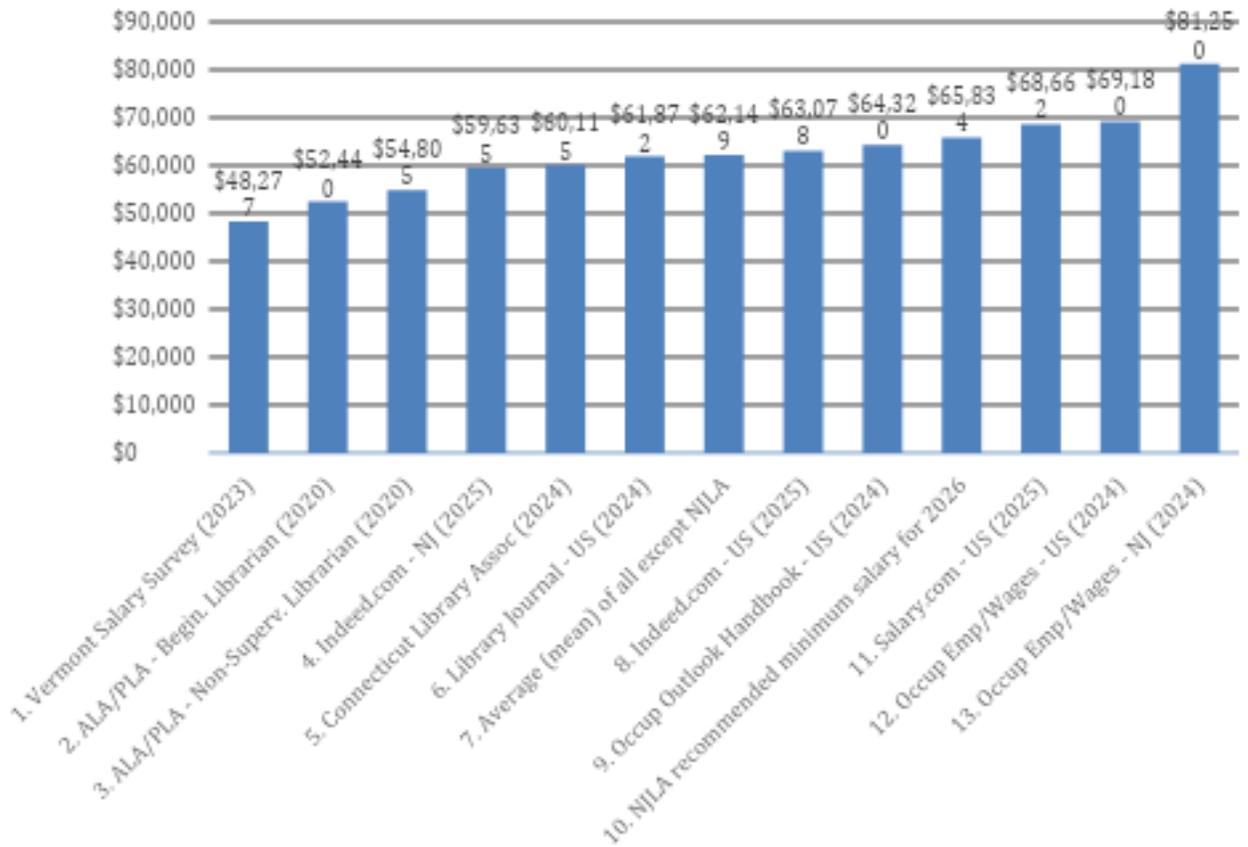
Sources used in Salary Guide effective Jan. 1, 2026	2024 percentage change (end of 2023, or 2023-2024 academic year)	2025 percentage change (end of 2024, or 2024-2025 academic year)	2026 percentage change (latest figures available as of Aug. 10, 2025)
New Jersey School Boards Association, Percentage Increases, Teacher Contract Settlements	3.32%	3.43%	3.52%
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), US City Average, All Items (unchained), 12-month periods	3.20%	2.40%	2.70%
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures including food and energy (PCE, aka consumer spending)	3.60%	2.10%	2.60%
U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA), Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)	3.20%	2.50%	2.50%

Average of indicators			2.83%
	3.33%	2.6075%	
Three-year average of the average of indicators (year in question plus two previous years.) Previous salary guides used slightly different indicators.	4.923%	4.0975%	2.9225%

The following sources are presented for informational purposes:

- Cost of living calculators: [Bankrate](#); [Best Places](#); [SmartAsset](#).
- Living wage calculator from Massachusetts Institute of Technology: [New Jersey](#) and [NJ counties and areas](#).
- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Metropolitan Statistical Areas covering New Jersey](#); some include areas of other states.

Annual/Mean/Median Salary for "Librarian" from salary guides/surveys, by year of data or publication date



Items with an asterisk are the same as in the previous year, because no new data were available as of August 10, 2025.

1. [Vermont Public Library Compensation and Salary Survey Analysis](#) (September 2023): Mean hourly rate for Adult Services Librarian: \$24.68. Mean hourly rate for Youth Services Librarian: \$21.73. Average of the two: \$23.21. Extrapolated to annual salary, based on a [40-hour work week](#): \$48,277.
2. * ALA Public Library Association (ALA/APA) Library Salary Database, 2020 Salary Survey, Beginning Librarian (MLS): Median salary of this position at small libraries (serving populations of 10,000–24,999): \$56,500; Median salary of this position at medium libraries (serving 25,000–99,999): \$52,819. Median salary of this position at very large libraries (serving 500,000 or more): \$48,000. Average: \$52,440 (No responses from very small libraries [serving less than 10,000] or large libraries [serving 100,000–499,999]).
3. * ALA-APA Library Salary Database, 2020 Salary Survey, Librarian Who Does Not Supervise (MLS): Median salary of this position at very small libraries: \$55,000; Median salary of this position at small libraries: \$55,000; Median salary of this position at medium libraries: \$58,809. Median salary of this

position at large libraries: \$55,218. Median salary of this position at very large libraries: \$50,000. Average: \$54,805 (No responses from very small or large libraries).

4. [Indeed.com \(NJ\)](#): “The average salary for a librarian is \$59,635 per year in New Jersey. 32 salaries taken from job postings on Indeed in the past 36 months (updated August 1, 2025).” (checked August 10, 2025).
5. * [Connecticut Library Association](#): Compensation benchmarks, February 2024: \$33.03 per hour for MLS Librarian (50th percentile, statewide) (\$60,115 annually at 35 hours per week). Checked Aug. 10, 2025.
6. * [Library Journal: Placements and Salaries Survey 2024](#) (published Oct. 15, 2024). Average full-time annual starting salary for the class of 2023: \$61,872.
7. Average (mean) of all salaries in this chart, except for the NJLA recommendation: \$62,149.
8. [Indeed.com \(US\)](#): Average salary for a librarian as of August 4, 2025: \$63,078 (checked August 10, 2025)
9. [U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook](#): 2024 median pay for librarians and library media specialists: \$64,320 (checked August 10, 2025).
10. NJLA 2026 minimum starting salary recommendation: \$65,834.
11. [Salary.com \(US\)](#): “How much does a Librarian make in the United States? (2025) As of August 01, 2025, Librarians in the United States earn an average annual salary of \$68,662 with an hourly rate of \$33. Salary ranges from \$53,443 (10th percentile) to \$82,257 (90th percentile), with the majority earning between \$60,696 (25th percentile) and \$75,778 (75th percentile). Compensation varies based on experience, skills, company size, and local market factors - all explored below.” (checked August 10, 2025).
12. [U.S. Occupational Employment and Wages \(US\)](#), May 2024, 25-4022 Librarians and Media Collections Specialists. Annual mean wage: \$69,180 (based on 40 hours a week; checked August 10, 2025).
13. [U.S. Occupational Employment and Wages \(NJ\)](#), May 2024, 25-4022 Librarians and Media Collections Specialists. Annual mean wage: N.J.: \$81,250 (checked August 10, 2025).

NJLA Minimum Starting Salary Recommendations for 2017 to 2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Library Support Positions					
Library Assistant	\$28,245	\$28,810	\$29,386	\$29,974	\$30,543
Senior Library Assistant	\$32,909	\$33,567	\$34,238	\$34,923	\$35,586
Principal Library Assistant	\$38,403	\$39,171	\$39,954	\$40,753	\$41,526
Library Associate	\$40,013	\$40,813	\$41,629	\$42,462	\$43,268
Supervising Library Assistant	\$45,611	\$46,523	\$47,453	\$48,402	\$49,321
Library Clerk Driver	\$34,089	\$34,771	\$35,466	\$36,175	\$36,862
Bookkeeper	\$42,369	\$43,216	\$44,080	\$44,962	\$45,815
Library Guard	\$26,936	\$27,482	\$28,028	\$28,592	\$29,138
Custodian	\$31,923	\$32,560	\$33,215	\$33,870	\$34,507
Page	\$15,361	\$15,652	\$18,200	\$20,020	\$21,840
Professional Librarian Positions					
Librarian	\$51,783	\$52,819	\$53,875	\$54,953	\$55,996
Senior Librarian	\$59,568	\$60,759	\$61,974	\$63,213	\$64,413
Principal Librarian	\$67,320	\$68,666	\$70,039	\$71,440	\$72,796
Supervising Librarian	\$77,520	\$79,070	\$80,651	\$82,264	\$83,825
Administrative Positions					
Administrative Secretary	\$47,073	\$48,014	\$48,974	\$49,953	\$50,901
Assistant Director (Population up to 49,999)	\$80,988	\$82,608	\$84,260	\$85,945	\$87,576
Assistant Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$93,040	\$94,901	\$96,799	\$98,735	\$100,609
Assistant Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$116,280	\$118,606	\$120,978	\$123,308	\$125,648
Director (Population below 7,500)	\$76,500	\$78,030	\$79,591	\$81,183	\$82,724
Director (Population 7,500-14,000)	\$80,988	\$82,608	\$84,260	\$85,945	\$87,576
Director (Population 15,000-49,999)	\$93,040	\$94,901	\$96,799	\$98,735	\$100,609
Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$116,280	\$118,606	\$120,978	\$123,398	\$125,740
Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$145,350	\$148,257	\$151,222	\$154,246	\$157,174

NJLA Minimum Starting Salary Recommendations for 2022 to 2026

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Library Support Positions					
Library Assistant	\$31,606	\$32,724	\$34,033	\$34,920	\$35,909
Senior Library Assistant	\$36,824	\$38,127	\$39,652	\$40,686	\$41,837
Principal Library Assistant	\$42,972	\$44,492	\$46,272	\$47,479	\$48,822
Library Associate	\$44,774	\$46,358	\$48,212	\$49,469	\$50,869
Supervising Library Assistant	\$51,037	\$52,843	\$54,957	\$56,390	\$57,986
Library Clerk Driver	\$38,144	\$39,494	\$41,074	\$42,145	\$43,338
Bookkeeper	\$47,410	\$49,087	\$51,050	\$52,381	\$53,864
Library Guard	\$30,157	\$30,940	\$32,178	\$33,017	\$33,951
Custodian	\$35,708	\$36,400	\$37,856	\$38,843	\$39,942
Page	\$23,660	\$25,717	\$27,537	\$28,255	\$29,055
Professional Librarian Positions					
Librarian	\$57,945	\$59,995	\$62,395	\$64,022	\$65,834
Senior Librarian	\$66,654	\$69,013	\$71,774	\$73,646	\$75,730
Principal Librarian	\$75,329	\$77,995	\$81,115	\$83,230	\$85,585
Supervising Librarian	\$86,742	\$89,812	\$93,404	\$95,840	\$98,552
Administrative Positions					
Administrative Secretary	\$52,672	\$54,536	\$56,717	\$58,196	\$59,843
Assistant Director (Population up to 49,999)	\$90,624	\$93,831	\$97,584	\$100,129	\$102,962
Assistant Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$104,110	\$107,794	\$112,106	\$115,029	\$118,284
Assistant Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$130,021	\$134,622	\$140,007	\$143,658	\$147,723
Director (Population below 7,500)	\$85,603	\$88,632	\$92,177	\$94,581	\$97,257
Director (Population 7,500-14,999)	\$90,624	\$93,831	\$97,584	\$100,129	\$102,962
Director (Population 15,000-49,999)	\$104,110	\$107,794	\$112,106	\$115,029	\$118,284
Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$130,116	\$134,720	\$140,109	\$143,762	\$147,831
Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$162,643	\$168,399	\$175,135	\$179,702	\$184,787