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**NJLA 2027 Minimum Starting Salary Recommendations (3.375% increase from 2026)
Approved by the NJLA Executive Board on September 15, 2026**

NJLA recommends staff receive annual increases of at least 3.375%, or the minimum starting recommendation for the position, whichever is greater. Employees 18 or older must be paid the state minimum wage of \$15.92 per hour in 2026. The minimum wage will increase in 2027. According to an October 1, 2025, news release from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOLE), 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. For example, we do not distinguish among the job titles Library Assistant, Community Library Assistant, and Technical Library Assistant (the latter two are not explicitly covered by this guide).

Methodology and Notes

For 2027, NJLA's recommended increase of 3.375% 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 5, 2026:

- The average "teacher contract settlements" for the academic year 2026-27, as reported by the [New Jersey School Boards Association](#) (updated July 8, 2026): 3.5%.
- 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 percent change." The most recent month available is June 2026: 3.5%.
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, [Personal Consumption Expenditures, including food and energy](#) (PCE, also known as consumer spending, in table 2.8.7), cumulative for the 12 months ending June 2026, released July 30, 2026: 3.7%.

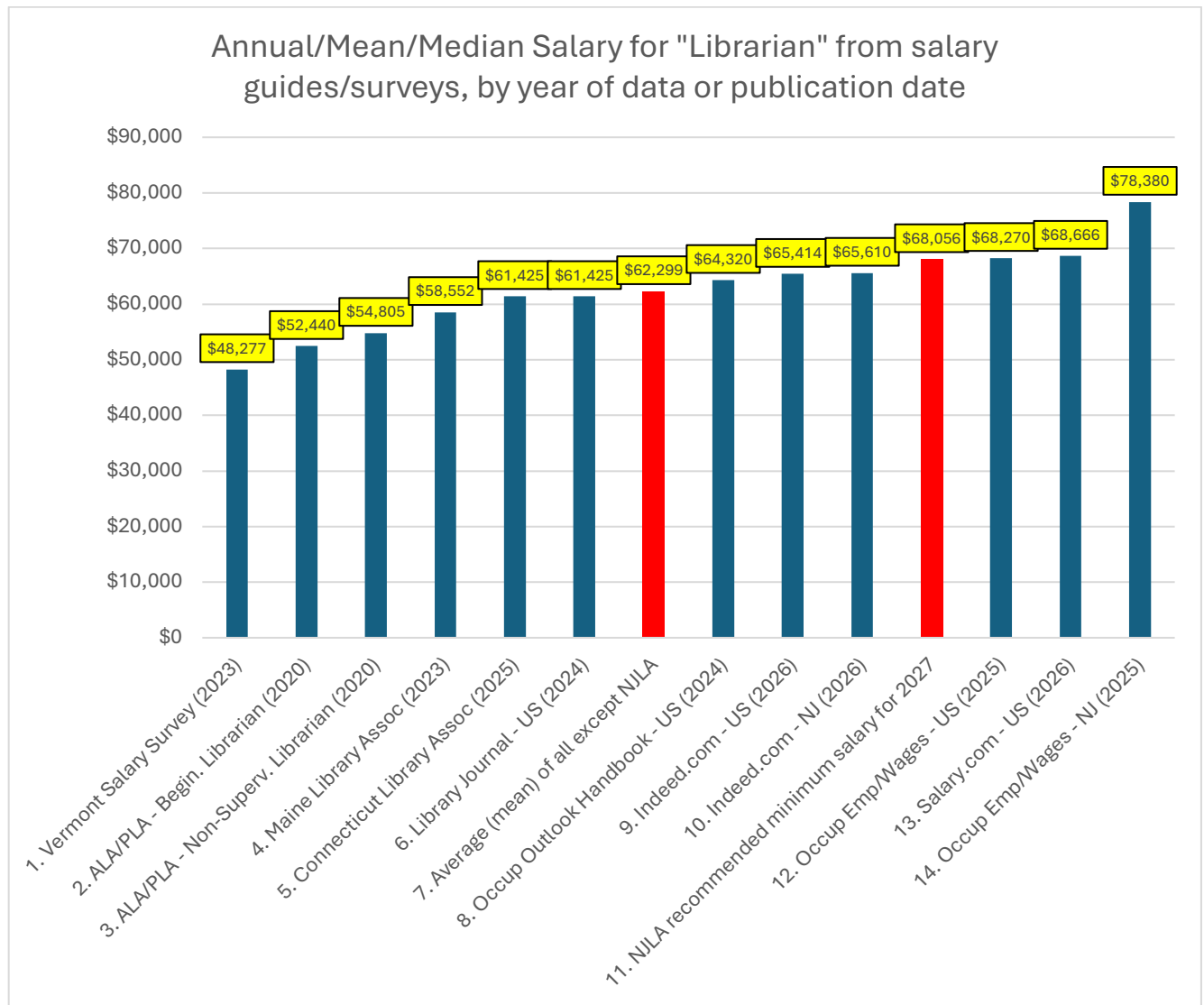
- The U.S. Social Security Administration's [cost-of-living adjustment](#) (SSA COLA) for 2026, released October 24, 2025: 2.8%.

	Annual Salary 2027	Hourly Rate 2027
Library Support Positions		
Library Assistant	\$37,121	\$20.40
Senior Library Assistant	\$43,249	\$23.76
Principal Library Assistant	\$50,470	\$27.73
Library Associate	\$52,586	\$28.89
Supervising Library Assistant	\$59,943	\$32.94
Library Clerk Driver	\$44,801	\$24.62
Bookkeeper	\$55,682	\$30.59
Library Guard	\$35,097	\$19.28
Custodian	\$41,290	\$22.69
Page	\$30,036	\$16.50
Professional Librarian Positions		
Librarian	\$68,056	\$37.39
Senior Librarian	\$78,286	\$43.01
Principal Librarian	\$88,473	\$48.61
Supervising Librarian	\$101,878	\$55.98
Administrative Positions		
Administrative Secretary	\$61,863	\$33.99
Assistant Director (Population up to 49,999)	\$106,437	\$58.48
Assistant Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$122,276	\$67.18
Assistant Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$152,709	\$83.91
Director (Population below 7,500)	\$100,539	\$55.24
Director (Population 7,500-14,000)	\$106,437	\$58.48
Director (Population 15,000-49,999)	\$122,276	\$67.18
Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$152,820	\$83.97
Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$191,024	\$104.96

Sources used in Salary Guide effective January 1, 2027	2025 percentage change from previous year	2026 percentage change from previous year	2027 percentage change from previous year
New Jersey School Boards Association, Percentage Increases, Teacher Contract Settlements	3.43%	3.52%	3.5
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), US City Average, All Items (unchained), 12-month periods	2.40%	2.70%	3.5
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Personal Consumption Expenditures including food and energy (PCE, aka consumer spending)	2.10%	2.60%	3.7
U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA), Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)	2.50%	2.50%	2.8
Average of indicators	2.6075%	2.83%	3.375%
Three-year average of the average of indicators (year in question plus two previous years.) Previous salary guides used slightly different indicators.	4.0975%	2.9225%	2.71875%

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.



Items with an asterisk are the same as in the previous year, because no new data were available as of August 5, 2026.

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. [Maine Library Association Wage Study](#) (October 2023). Proposed hourly range for Librarian, Circulation Supervisor, and Technical Services Librarian/Cataloger (Appendix A): \$20 per hour minimum, \$36.30 per hour maximum. The average of these is \$28.15, or \$58,552 per year based on 40 hours per week. Many of the positions listed in Appendix B list a 40-hour work week.
5. [Connecticut Library Association](#): Compensation benchmarks, August 2025: \$33.75 per hour for MLS Librarian (50th percentile, statewide) (\$61,425 annually at 35 hours per week). Checked August 5, 2026.
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: \$62,299.
8. [U.S. Occupational Outlook Handbook](#): 2024 median pay for librarians and library media specialists: \$64,320.
9. [Indeed.com \(US\)](#): Average salary for a librarian as of August 2, 2026: \$65,414.
10. [Indeed.com \(NJ\)](#): "The average salary for a librarian is \$65,610 per year in New Jersey. 58 salaries taken from job postings on Indeed in the past 36 months (updated August 1, 2026)."
11. NJLA 2027 minimum starting salary recommendation: \$68,056.
12. [U.S. Occupational Employment and Wages \(US\)](#), May 2025, 25-4022 Librarians and Media Collections Specialists. Annual median wage: \$68,270 (based on 40 hours a week).
13. [Salary.com \(US\)](#): "How much does a Librarian make in the United States? As of August 01, 2026, the average salary for a Librarian in the United States is \$68,666 per year, which breaks down to an hourly rate of \$33. However, a Librarian's salary can vary significantly. Here's a look at the typical salary range: Top Earners (90th percentile): \$82,289. Majority Range (25th-75th percentile): \$60,715 to \$75,797. Entry-Level (10th percentile): \$53,476."
14. [U.S. Occupational Employment and Wages \(NJ\)](#), May 2025, 25-4022 Librarians and Media Collections Specialists. Annual median wage: N.J.: \$78,380 (based on 40 hours a week).

NJLA Minimum Starting Salary Recommendations for 2017 to 2022

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Library Support Positions						
Library Assistant	\$28,245	\$28,810	\$29,386	\$29,974	\$30,543	\$31,606
Senior Library Assistant	\$32,909	\$33,567	\$34,238	\$34,923	\$35,586	\$36,824
Principal Library Assistant	\$38,403	\$39,171	\$39,954	\$40,753	\$41,526	\$42,972
Library Associate	\$40,013	\$40,813	\$41,629	\$42,462	\$43,268	\$44,774
Supervising Library Assistant	\$45,611	\$46,523	\$47,453	\$48,402	\$49,321	\$51,037
Library Clerk Driver	\$34,089	\$34,771	\$35,466	\$36,175	\$36,862	\$38,144
Bookkeeper	\$42,369	\$43,216	\$44,080	\$44,962	\$45,815	\$47,410
Library Guard	\$26,936	\$27,482	\$28,028	\$28,592	\$29,138	\$30,157
Custodian	\$31,923	\$32,560	\$33,215	\$33,870	\$34,507	\$35,708
Page	\$15,361	\$15,652	\$18,200	\$20,020	\$21,840	\$23,660
Professional Librarian Positions						
Librarian	\$51,783	\$52,819	\$53,875	\$54,953	\$55,996	\$57,945
Senior Librarian	\$59,568	\$60,759	\$61,974	\$63,213	\$64,413	\$66,654
Principal Librarian	\$67,320	\$68,666	\$70,039	\$71,440	\$72,796	\$75,329
Supervising Librarian	\$77,520	\$79,070	\$80,651	\$82,264	\$83,825	\$86,742
Administrative Positions						
Administrative Secretary	\$47,073	\$48,014	\$48,974	\$49,953	\$50,901	\$52,672
Assistant Director (Population up to 49,999)	\$80,988	\$82,608	\$84,260	\$85,945	\$87,576	\$90,624
Assistant Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$93,040	\$94,901	\$96,799	\$98,735	\$100,609	\$104,110
Assistant Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$116,280	\$118,606	\$120,978	\$123,308	\$125,648	\$130,021
Director (Population below 7,500)	\$76,500	\$78,030	\$79,591	\$81,183	\$82,724	\$85,603
Director (Population 7,500-14,000)	\$80,988	\$82,608	\$84,260	\$85,945	\$87,576	\$90,624
Director (Population 15,000-49,999)	\$93,040	\$94,901	\$96,799	\$98,735	\$100,609	\$104,110
Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$116,280	\$118,606	\$120,978	\$123,398	\$125,740	\$130,116
Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$145,350	\$148,257	\$151,222	\$154,246	\$157,174	\$162,643

NJLA Minimum Starting Salary Recommendations for 2022 to 2027

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Library Support Positions						
Library Assistant	\$31,606	\$32,724	\$34,033	\$34,920	\$35,909	\$37,121
Senior Library Assistant	\$36,824	\$38,127	\$39,652	\$40,686	\$41,837	\$43,249
Principal Library Assistant	\$42,972	\$44,492	\$46,272	\$47,479	\$48,822	\$50,470
Library Associate	\$44,774	\$46,358	\$48,212	\$49,469	\$50,869	\$52,586
Supervising Library Assistant	\$51,037	\$52,843	\$54,957	\$56,390	\$57,986	\$59,943
Library Clerk Driver	\$38,144	\$39,494	\$41,074	\$42,145	\$43,338	\$44,801
Bookkeeper	\$47,410	\$49,087	\$51,050	\$52,381	\$53,864	\$55,682
Library Guard	\$30,157	\$30,940	\$32,178	\$33,017	\$33,951	\$35,097
Custodian	\$35,708	\$36,400	\$37,856	\$38,843	\$39,942	\$41,290
Page	\$23,660	\$25,717	\$27,537	\$28,255	\$29,055	\$30,036
Professional Librarian Positions						
Librarian	\$57,945	\$59,995	\$62,395	\$64,022	\$65,834	\$68,056
Senior Librarian	\$66,654	\$69,013	\$71,774	\$73,646	\$75,730	\$78,286
Principal Librarian	\$75,329	\$77,995	\$81,115	\$83,230	\$85,585	\$88,473
Supervising Librarian	\$86,742	\$89,812	\$93,404	\$95,840	\$98,552	\$101,878
Administrative Positions						
Administrative Secretary	\$52,672	\$54,536	\$56,717	\$58,196	\$59,843	\$61,863
Assistant Director (Population up to 49,999)	\$90,624	\$93,831	\$97,584	\$100,129	\$102,962	\$106,437
Assistant Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$104,110	\$107,794	\$112,106	\$115,029	\$118,284	\$122,276
Assistant Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$130,021	\$134,622	\$140,007	\$143,658	\$147,723	\$152,709
Director (Population below 7,500)	\$85,603	\$88,632	\$92,177	\$94,581	\$97,257	\$100,539
Director (Population 7,500-14,000)	\$90,624	\$93,831	\$97,584	\$100,129	\$102,962	\$106,437
Director (Population 15,000-49,999)	\$104,110	\$107,794	\$112,106	\$115,029	\$118,284	\$122,276
Director (Population 50,000-99,999)	\$130,116	\$134,720	\$140,109	\$143,762	\$147,831	\$152,820
Director (Population 100,000 and above)	\$162,643	\$168,399	\$175,135	\$179,702	\$184,787	\$191,024

Google Gemini (AI)-assisted executive summary and methodology statements. Most of this information is already written into the guide, but with different language. The rounding up and down to the nearest dollar is not explained above.

Executive Summary and Technical Appendix: Proposed 2027 NJLA Salary Guide Adjustments

1. Statement of Purpose

To maintain New Jersey's competitive edge in attracting and retaining highly qualified information professionals, the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) proposes a structural adjustment to our recommended minimum salary guidelines for the 2027 fiscal year. NJLA recommends a uniform 3.375% increase, moving the suggested baseline professional librarian starting salary from \$65,834 up to \$68,056. This target is mathematically grounded in local public-sector trends and core federal macroeconomic health indicators.

2. Methodology and Economic Rationale

Rather than relying on arbitrary figures or qualitative assessments, the 2027 recommendation is derived strictly by calculating the average of four primary state and federal economic indicators available as of the data freeze on August 5, 2026:

- **New Jersey Public Sector Trajectory (3.5%):** According to New Jersey School Boards Association data updated on July 8, 2026, the average teacher contract settlement for the 2026–27 academic year stands at 3.5%. Aligning library adjustments with local public school benchmarks keeps municipal information roles highly competitive with public education careers.
- **Cost-of-Living Pressures (3.5%):** The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) June 2026 unadjusted 12-month percent change for the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) reflects a 3.5% baseline inflation rate.
- **Consumer Spending Expansion (3.7%):** The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) July 30, 2026 release tracks Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) cumulative growth for the 12 months ending June 2026 at 3.7%. This underscores a persistent, elevated cost environment for basic household goods, energy, and services.
- **Federal Benchmark Baseline (2.8%):** The U.S. Social Security Administration's Cost-of-Living Adjustment (SSA COLA) enacted for 2026 provides a conservative, nationwide baseline anchor of 2.8%.

Averaging these local contract realities and federal economic indexes outputs an exact 3.375% target escalation (expressed mathematically as $2026 \text{ Value} \times 1.03375$).

3. Note on External Data Discontinuities

The Library Journal Placements & Salaries Survey tracking the LIS graduating class of 2024 was not published or issued during the 2025 calendar year cycle. Consequently, the 2024 Survey remains the most recent historical publication available from that specific vendor. To insulate our recommendations from external third-party publishing gaps or formatting changes, NJLA relies on uninterrupted state and federal economic indexing models for core calculations. This framework guarantees that New Jersey's library compensation benchmarks are built on transparent, uninterrupted public metrics rather than fluctuating industry-specific polling.

4. Technical Appendix: Rounding Conventions and Scale Integrity

To preserve institutional pay equity and prevent structural salary compression between support staff, professional librarians, and administrative leadership, the 3.375% scaling formula was executed symmetrically across all job categories. Individual position tiers comply with standard mathematical rounding rules to the nearest whole integer:

- Fractional values below \$0.50 are rounded down to the nearest whole dollar (e.g., the Librarian baseline of \$65,834 multiplied by 1.03375 yields \$68,056.40, which is expressed as \$68,056).
- Fractional values equal to or greater than \$0.50 are rounded up to the nearest whole dollar (e.g., the Page baseline of \$29,055 multiplied by 1.03375 yields \$30,035.61, which is expressed as \$30,036).

Recommendation

Applying this percentage directly protects the purchasing power of all library employees working within high-cost-of-living Mid-Atlantic environments. It ensures that New Jersey libraries can sustainably field qualified, master's-level talent and skilled support staff without suffering a "talent drain" to better-indexed adjacent sectors or corporate industries. We recommend adopting the formalized 2027 Salary Guide schedule as a robust, transparent, and logical framework for municipal budgetary planning.