

City Clerk Salary: How Much Money Does a City Clerk Make?

By [Black Mountain Software](#) | Published March 11, 2013 |

Last month, we asked our blog readers and members of our LinkedIn Group, [The City Clerk Cafe](#), to participate in a city clerk salary survey to find out how much city clerks get paid. We wanted to paint an accurate picture of how much money a city clerk employee actually makes. We asked our over 700 Clerk Café members to participate, and that's exactly what they did!

What we found was very interesting!

What didn't surprise us:

- **City clerks have girl power.** Of those who responded, 80 percent were female. Despite a world where gender roles are changing, it seems the role of the city clerk employee still mostly belongs to the women.
- **City clerks still remember the days of bell bottoms.** Overwhelmingly, city clerks are an aging demographic, with a whopping 80 percent of survey respondents over the age of 40.
- **City clerks are smart cookies.** Sixty-five percent of city clerks surveyed have a college degree.

What surprised us:

- **Making "ends meet" versus "meaty" salaries.** We were shocked to see that despite a small differentiation in age (which usually correlates to number of years on the job), salaries among city clerks were vastly different. Sixty-five percent of respondents fit into a wide salary calculation of \$30-\$75,000 per year. While we believe furloughs, and part-time versus full-time workers may have altered this number a bit, we were very surprised to see that factors such as city size and age/number of years on the job didn't make as much of an impact as initially estimated.
- **Bigger cities mean bigger salaries—sort of.** Yes, bigger cities have bigger budgets and a higher cost of living, which means bigger salaries, right? But we were surprised to see that gap wasn't as large as we expected for towns ranging in size for 5,000 – 25,000 people. While the average city clerk in a town of less than 5,000 is expected to make \$30 – \$60,000/yr, their larger city counterparts (5,000-25,000 people) have a high and low point about \$15,000 higher; however, the salary ranges still overlap quite a bit. So, a small town clerk at the mid- to high-salary range would still make a comparable salary to the low- and mid-wage city clerk in a larger city. Where the real difference was noted, was in cities with a population over 150,000 people. Eighty percent

of city clerks in these cities reach over \$75,000 per year—that's \$15,000 a year higher than the top salary of a city clerk in a town with a population under 5,000.

- **Clerk education relevant, but not definitive.** Even though 65 percent of clerks have a college degree, there was little difference in pay among the degree-ed versus non-degree-ed clerks. Almost half (46%) of respondents without a degree make over \$45,000/yr, while a slight majority (66%) with a college degree make more than \$45,000/yr. So, a college degree is likely to help bump clerks over the \$45,000/yr mark, but other factors, such as city size and number of service years are also likely to play a part.
- **Less experienced clerks gaining ground on salaries.** Gone are the days where seniority was the only wage determinant for a government worker. Clerks with less than five years of experience can make up to \$60,000/yr, depending on their city size and education level, which rivals the salaries of those with five to 15 years experience (\$45,000+/yr), and those with 15 years or more (\$60,000+/yr).

So what does all this tell us about city clerk salaries? Well, it appears that city clerk salaries are vastly diverse in range, and depend somewhat on three factors: 1) City size; 2) Education; 3) Experience.

What does it take to make \$60,000 as a city clerk? If you are making upwards of \$60,000/yr, you are likely college educated, working in a city with a population over 25,000, and have more than 10 years experience. However, clerks are breaking through these barriers, some with less than 5 years experience, some with no college degree, and some in towns with a population smaller than 5,000. It really depends on the mixed bag of offerings a clerk has to offer his or her city.

INFOGRAPHIC BELOW



The average salary of City Clerks based on city population



The average salary of City Clerks based on level of education



The average salary of City Clerks based on years of experience

