

CAPITOL FACTS & FIGURES

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Governors' Salaries, 2013

The Council of State Governments has been collecting data on governors' salaries for *The Book of the States* since 1937. In recent years, the average governor's salary has grown more slowly than in the past, with a number of states cutting their chief executive's pay during and after the Great Recession.

Governors' salaries in 2013 range from a low of \$70,000 per year to a high of \$187,256.

- The average annual salary for U.S. governors in 2013 is \$133,348.
- Maine Gov. Paul LePage, with an annual salary of \$70,000, earns the lowest salary, followed by Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe, who earns \$86,890 per year.
- Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett of Pennsylvania has the highest gubernatorial salary — \$187,256 — but he has refused at least three cost-of-living adjustments during his tenure, making his actual pay closer to \$175,000. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's salary of \$179,000 per year ranks second among governors' salaries.
- Governors in 21 states earn more than the average salary.
- Governors in three states — Alabama, Florida and Tennessee — either do not accept a paycheck or they return their salaries to the state, while Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder returns all but \$1 of his salary to the state. Several governors have taken voluntary salary reductions in recent years.

Governors' salaries have been cut in some states and increased in others during and since the recession.

- Governors in a handful of states — Idaho, Indiana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Tennessee — saw their salaries increase in 2013 over 2012 levels. The average salary increase for these eight governors was \$4,115, or 3.2 percent.
- Only once during the past 10 years has the average annual salary for governors decreased. In 2010, the average salary fell slightly, from \$131,115 to \$130,595, in large part because the salary for California's governor was reduced by 18 percent based on recommendations from the state's Citizens Compensation Commission. Prior to the reduction, the governor's salary was the highest in the country — \$212,179. Florida and Hawaii also cut pay for their top executive branch official in 2010.



- Although a number of states reduced governors' salaries from 2003 to 2009, those reductions were offset by increases in other states, making the average annual change for governors' salaries a 2.8 percent increase over this period.
- Since the 2010 decrease, the average governor's salary has grown more slowly than in the previous decade, increasing less than 1 percent each year. That is due, in large part, to the widespread salary freezes that halted cost-of-living adjustments for public employees, which have persisted since the recession.

The average governor's salary in 2013 is very close to what it was 75 years ago, when adjusted for inflation.

- The average salary for a governor in the 48 states was \$7,823 in 1937. When adjusted for inflation, the average salary for a governor in 1937 becomes \$126,575 — just 5 percent shy of the average salary in 2013.
- In 1937, the governor of New York collected the highest salary, earning \$25,000 a year. That \$25,000 salary in 2013 dollars would be worth \$404,500 — more than double what Cuomo earns today.
- The governor of South Dakota earned the least of any governor in 1937 — \$3,000 — which is equal to \$48,540 in today's dollars, or less than half of Gov. Dennis Daugaard's current \$100,972 salary.



Governors' Salaries

State	1937		2012		2013	
	Governor's Salary	Governor's Salary (in 2013 dollars)	Governor's Salary	Percent of National Average	Governor's Salary	Percent of National Average
Alabama*	\$6,000	\$97,080	\$119,950	90.3%	\$119,950	90.0%
Alaska	...	...	\$145,000	109.2%	\$145,000	108.7%
Arizona	\$6,000	\$97,080	\$95,000	71.6%	\$95,000	71.2%
Arkansas	\$6,000	\$97,080	\$86,890	65.4%	\$86,890	65.2%
California	\$10,000	\$161,800	\$173,987	131.0%	\$173,987	130.5%
Colorado	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$90,000	67.8%	\$90,000	67.5%
Connecticut	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$150,000	113.0%	\$150,000	112.5%
Delaware	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$171,000	128.8%	\$171,000	128.2%
Florida*	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$130,273	98.1%	\$130,273	97.7%
Georgia	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$139,339	104.9%	\$139,339	104.5%
Hawaii	...	...	\$117,312	88.4%	\$117,312	88.0%
Idaho	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$115,348	86.9%	\$117,000	87.7%
Illinois	\$12,000	\$194,160	\$177,412	133.6%	\$177,412	133.0%
Indiana	\$8,000	\$129,440	\$107,881	81.3%	\$111,688	83.8%
Iowa	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$130,000	97.9%	\$130,000	97.5%
Kansas	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$99,636	75.0%	\$99,636	74.7%
Kentucky*	\$6,500	\$105,170	\$153,970	116.0%	\$153,970	115.5%
Louisiana	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$130,000	97.9%	\$130,000	97.5%
Maine	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$70,000	52.7%	\$70,000	52.5%
Maryland	\$6,500	\$105,170	\$150,000	113.0%	\$150,000	112.5%
Massachusetts	\$10,000	\$161,800	\$139,832	105.3%	\$139,832	104.9%
Michigan*	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$159,300	120.0%	\$159,300	119.5%
Minnesota	\$7,000	\$113,260	\$120,303	90.6%	\$120,303	90.2%
Mississippi	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$122,160	92.0%	\$122,160	91.6%
Missouri	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$133,821	100.8%	\$133,821	100.4%
Montana	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$108,167	81.5%	\$108,167	81.1%
Nebraska	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$105,000	79.1%	\$105,000	78.7%
Nevada	\$7,000	\$113,260	\$149,573	112.7%	\$149,573	112.2%
New Hampshire	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$113,834	85.7%	\$113,834	85.4%
New Jersey	\$20,000	\$323,600	\$175,000	131.8%	\$175,000	131.2%
New Mexico	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$110,000	82.8%	\$110,000	82.5%
New York*	\$25,000	\$404,500	\$179,000	134.8%	\$179,000	134.2%
North Carolina	\$10,500	\$169,890	\$139,590	105.1%	\$141,265	105.9%
North Dakota	\$4,000	\$64,720	\$110,283	83.1%	\$116,999	87.7%
Ohio	\$10,000	\$161,800	\$148,886	112.1%	\$148,886	111.7%
Oklahoma	\$6,500	\$105,170	\$147,000	110.7%	\$147,000	110.2%
Oregon	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$93,600	70.5%	\$93,600	70.2%
Pennsylvania*	\$18,000	\$291,240	\$183,255	138.0%	\$187,256	140.4%
Rhode Island	\$8,000	\$129,440	\$129,210	97.3%	\$129,210	96.9%
South Carolina	\$7,500	\$121,350	\$106,078	79.9%	\$106,078	79.5%
South Dakota	\$3,000	\$48,540	\$98,031	73.8%	\$100,972	75.7%
Tennessee*	\$4,000	\$64,720	\$170,340	128.3%	\$178,356	133.8%
Texas	\$12,000	\$194,160	\$150,000	113.0%	\$150,000	112.5%
Utah	\$6,000	\$97,080	\$109,470	82.4%	\$109,470	82.1%
Vermont*	\$5,000	\$80,900	\$142,542	107.4%	\$142,542	106.9%
Virginia	\$10,000	\$161,800	\$175,000	131.8%	\$175,000	131.2%
Washington	\$6,000	\$97,080	\$166,891	125.7%	\$166,891	125.2%
West Virginia	\$10,000	\$161,800	\$150,000	113.0%	\$150,000	112.5%
Wisconsin	\$6,000	\$97,080	\$144,423	108.8%	\$144,423	108.3%
Wyoming	\$6,500	\$105,170	\$105,000	79.1%	\$105,000	78.7%
50-state average	\$7,823	\$126,575	\$132,772	...	\$133,348	...
American Samoa	...	...	\$50,000	37.7%	\$50,000	37.5%
Guam	...	...	\$90,000	67.8%	\$90,000	67.5%
No. Mariana Islands	...	...	\$70,000	52.7%	\$70,000	52.5%
Puerto Rico	...	...	\$70,000	52.7%	\$70,000	52.5%
U.S. Virgin Islands	...	...	\$80,000	60.3%	\$80,000	60.0%

Source: The Council of State Governments Survey, 1937, 2012 and 2013. Excerpted from Table 4.3, The Governors: Compensation, Staff, Travel and Residence, The Book of the States 1937, 2012 and 2013, The Council of State Governments, <http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/kc/view-content-type/1219>

Notes*

- Alabama** - Gov. Robert Bentley is not accepting his salary, \$119,950 until the unemployment rate in Alabama drops.
- Florida** - Gov. Rick Scott did not collect his salary in 2012 or 2013.
- Kentucky** - Reflects a voluntary 10 percent salary reduction by Gov. Steve Beshear in 2012.
- Michigan** - Gov. Rick Snyder returned all but \$1.00 of his salary in 2012 and 2013.
- New York** - Gov. Andrew Cuomo voluntarily reduced his salary by 5 percent in 2013.
- Pennsylvania** - Gov. Tom Corbett has refused at least three of cost-of-living adjustments during his tenure, returning the increases to the state and making his actual pay closer \$175,000 in 2012 and 2013.
- Tennessee** - Gov. Bill Haslam returned his salary to the state in 2012 and 2013. Tennessee statute currently mandates the governor and the chief justice of the Supreme Court receive the same salary.
- Vermont** - Gov. Peter Shumlin took a voluntary 5 percent reduction in his annual salary set in statute in 2012.