

Staff Pay, Selected Positions in House Member Offices, 2001-2023

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Staff Pay, Selected Positions in House Member Offices, 2001-2023

Levels of pay for congressional staff are a source of recurring questions among Members of Congress, congressional staff, and the public. There may be interest in congressional pay data for multiple reasons, including assessment of the costs of congressional operations, guidance in setting pay levels for staff in Member offices, or comparison of congressional staff pay levels with those of other federal government pay systems.

This report provides pay data for 17 staff position titles that are typically used in House Members' offices. These positions are the following: Caseworker, Chief of Staff, Communications Director, Constituent Services Director, Constituent Services Representative, Deputy Chief of Staff, District Deputy Director, District Director, Field Representative, Legislative Assistant, Legislative Correspondent, Legislative Director, Operations Director, Press Secretary, Scheduler, Senior Legislative Assistant, and Staff Assistant. The following table provides 2023 median pay levels for positions for which data are available in constant 2024 dollars, and change in pay between 2022 and 2023.

2023 Median Pay and Percentage Change for Selected Staff Positions in House Members' Offices in 2024 Dollars and Percentage Change, 2022-2023

Position	2023 Pay, 2024\$	Change, 2022- 2023	Position	2023 Pay, 2024\$	Change, 2022- 2023
Caseworker	\$68,910	-0.99%	Legislative Assistant	\$74,783	-1.01%
Chief of Staff	\$187,060	-4.15%	Legislative Correspondent	\$65,568	2.89%
Communications Director	\$107,565	6.10%	Legislative Director	\$113,199	-3.03%
Constituent Services Director	\$97,064	11.95%	Operations Director	\$97,064	4.00%
Constituent Services Representative	\$64,340	2.24%	Press Secretary	\$72,649	-15.39%
Deputy Chief of Staff	\$130,871	-6.32%	Scheduler	\$77,163	-2.84%
District Deputy Director	\$90,833	-8.35%	Senior Legislative Assistant	\$90,150	1.64%
District Director	\$120,302	-7.93%	Staff Assistant	\$57,852	1.07%
Field Representative	\$66,844	-5.62%			

Source: Statement of Disbursements of the House, as collated by LegiStorm, various years, and CRS calculations. Change is based on 2024 dollars per the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the first half of 2024.

Report tables provide aggregate statistics on pay for each staff position for 2001, 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019-2023, including quartiles, median pay, and average pay. Complete data for 2001-2023 are available to congressional staff upon request. Graphic displays are also included where data are available, providing representations of pay from the following two perspectives:

- a line graph showing change in median pay, 2001-2023, in nominal (current) and 2024 dollars; and
- distributions of 2023 pay in 2024 dollars, in \$10,000 increments.

The Congressional Research Service provides a number of products on staffing issues. These can be found in CRS Report R44688, *Congressional Staff: CRS Products*.

SUMMARY

R44323

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Introduction

Levels of pay for congressional staff are a source of recurring questions among Members of Congress, congressional staff, and the public. Members of the House of Representatives typically set the terms and conditions of employment for staff in their offices. These include job titles, duties, and rates of pay, subject to minimum and maximum levels.¹ There may be interest in congressional pay data from multiple perspectives, including assessment of the costs of congressional operations; guidance in setting pay levels for staff in Member offices; or comparison of congressional staff pay levels with those of other federal government pay systems.

Publicly available resources do not provide aggregated congressional staff pay data in a readily retrievable form. Pay information in this report is based on the *Statement of Disbursements of the House* (SOD),² published quarterly by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO),³ as collated by LegiStorm. Data in this report are based on official House reports of specific staff positions. Additionally, this report provides annual data, which allows for observations about the nature of House Member staff compensation over time.

This report provides pay data for 17 staff position titles that are typically used in House Members' offices. The positions include the following:

Caseworker	District Deputy Director	Operations Director
Chief of Staff	District Director	Press Secretary
Communications Director	Field Representative	Scheduler
Constituent Services Director	Legislative Assistant	Senior Legislative Assistant
Constituent Services Representative	Legislative Correspondent	Staff Assistant
Deputy Chief of Staff	Legislative Director	

The collection of House Members' staff pay data for the years 2001-2023 proceeded as follows. For each year, a random sample⁴ of 45 offices was taken for each position. House staff had to hold a position with the same job title in the Member's office for the entire calendar year examined, and not receive pay from any other congressional employing authority to be included. Generally, each position has no more than one observation per House Member's office each year.

Every recorded payment ascribed in the LegiStorm data to those staff for the calendar year is included. Data collected for this report may differ from an employee's stated annual salary due to the inclusion of overtime, bonuses, or other payments⁵ in addition to base salary paid in the course of a year.

¹ Effective December 30, 2022, the maximum annual pay for House staff, a figure that has increased over time, is \$212,100. A minimum salary of \$45,000 per year was also established. See Order of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, December 30, 2022, set out as a note following 2 U.S.C. 4532. Maximum payable rates for House Member office staff since 2001 are available in **Table 1**.

² In this report, pay refers to monies paid by the House to staff, and excludes other components of total compensation, which might include paid leave or employer contributions to various insurance and retirement benefits.

³ Volumes of the Statement of Disbursements since July 2009 are available at http://disbursements.house.gov/.

⁴ Each year, a different, random sample of Members' offices was taken for each position. A study that examines pay data based on different job titles, or which combines pay data from positions of similar titles or presumptive duties (e.g., legislative aide, legislative assistant and senior legislative assistant, or executive assistants, schedulers, office managers, and executive assistant/schedulers), or estimates of pay using different data collection criteria, could result in findings that are different from those provided here.

⁵ For each year, the SOD reports pay data for five time periods: January 1 and 2; January 3-March 31; April 1-June 30; July 1-September 30; and October 1-December 31. The aggregate pay of those five periods equals the annual pay of a (continued...)

For some positions, it was not possible to identify 45 employees who held that title for the entire year. This report provides no data on positions with 16 or fewer identifiable staff.

The Congressional Research Service provides a number of products on staffing issues. These can be found in CRS Report R44688, *Congressional Staff: CRS Products*.

Data Concerns

There may be some advantages to relying on official salary expenditure data instead of survey findings, but data presented here are subject to some challenges that could affect the findings or their interpretation. Some of the concerns include the following:

- There are no data for first-term Members in the first session of a Congress. Authority to use the Member Representational Allowance (MRA) for the previous year expires January 2, and new MRA authority begins on January 3 when new Members elected in general elections typically take office.
- The SOD reports monies paid directly by the House to staff, but does not provide the individual value of other components of compensation, which might include paid leave or employer contributions to various insurance and retirement benefits.
- Pay data provide no insight into the education, work experience, position, office, congressional tenure, and full- or part-time status of staff, or other potential explanations for levels of compensation.
- Data do not differentiate between staff based in Washington, DC, district offices, or both.
- Member offices that do not utilize any of the 17 job position titles, or whose pay data were not reported consistently, are excluded.
- Potential differences could exist in the job duties of positions with the same title. Aggregation of pay by job title rests in part on the assumption that staff with the same title carry out similar tasks. Given the wide discretion congressional employing authorities have in setting the terms and conditions of employment, there may be differences in the duties of similarly titled staff that could have effects on their levels of pay.

Data Tables and Visualizations

Tables in this section provide background information on House pay practices, comparative data for each position, and detailed pay data and visualizations for each position. **Table 1** provides the maximum payable rates for House Member staff since 2001 in both nominal (current) and constant 2024 dollars. Constant dollar calculations throughout the report are based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for various years.

Table 2 provides available percentage changes in median pay in 2024 dollars for 17 positions; for Members of Congress; and for salaries paid under the General Schedule in Washington, DC, and

congressional staff member. The brief reporting period accommodates accounting of the Member Representational Allowance (MRA), which authorizes expenditures from January 3 to January 2 of the following year. Other forms of payment do not appear to be recorded in a consistent manner. Sometimes overtime and other pay is listed as separate entries, and in other instances, significant one-time changes in a quarterly total might suggest payments in addition to regular salary.

surrounding areas and in the Rest of the United States (RUS) area. **Table 3-Table 19** provide available pay data for each staff position for 2001 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019-2023, including data distributed by quartile, median pay, and average pay. Staff pay tables also provide a comparison, at various intervals to 2023, based on data availability, of the cumulative percentage change in median pay for that position, in 2024 dollars.⁶

Graphic displays are also included for each position, providing representations of pay from the following two perspectives:

- distributions of 2023 pay in 2024 dollars, in \$10,000 increments; and
- a line graph showing change in median pay, 2001-2023 (or available data), in nominal (current) and 2024 dollars.

House Member Office Staff Pay Tables

	Interpret	ing Pay Tables: Statistic	s Describing P	ay Data					
For each year including the f		able, statistical values for staff po	ositions are included	in Table 3-Tal	ble 19,				
Minimum & I	Maximum Th	The smallest and largest pay level, respectively, for each position.							
Average (Me	´div \$4	the mean is the average of a list of numbers, in which the sum of all the values is vided by the total number of values. For example, if three salaries, \$30,000, $5,000$, and \$90,000, were identified for a given staff position, the average (mean) build be (\$30,000 + \$45,000 + \$90,000) \div 3 = \$55,000.							
Median	lov	The midpoint at which half of the numbers in a list are higher and the other half lower. For example, if three salaries, \$30,000, \$45,000, and \$90,000, were identified for a given staff position, the midpoint (median) would be \$45,000.							
Statistical Qu	is a the ind (Q be be be lar	Statistical values that divide data into quarters. In a list of numbers, Quartile I (QI) is a number that falls in the middle between the lowest number, or minimum, and the median. For example, if QI for a given staff position was $50,000$, this would indicate that 25% of employees in that position make $50,000$ or less. Quartile 2 (Q2) is also the median. Quartile 3 (Q3) is a number that falls in the middle between the median and the highest number in the list, or maximum. Numbers between QI and Q3 compose the interquartile range, the difference between the largest and smallest values in the middle 50% of a list of numbers. Quartiles might also be described as percentiles, as shown below.							
	S	tatistical Measures Use	ed in Pay Tables						
Minimum	Quartile I (Q I)	Quartile 2 (Q2) Median	Quartile 3 (Q3)	Maximum	Average				
Lowest number in a list	25 th Percentile 25% of staff make less than Q I	50 th Percentile 50% of staff make less than Q2	75 th percentile 75% of staff make less than Q3	Highest number in a list	The mean, or number expressing the central value in a				

Median—midpoint at which

half of the numbers in a list

lower

are higher and the other half

Interquartile Range = Q3-Q1

Middle number

Upper Quartile

between

Median and

Maximum

Middle number

Minimum and

Lower Quartile

between

Median

set of data

⁶ 2024 CPI-U based on the first half of the year.

Year	Nominal \$	2024\$	-	Year	Nominal \$	2024\$
2001	\$140,451	\$247,550	-	2013	\$168,411	\$225,658
2002	\$145,226	\$251,982		2014	\$168,411	\$222,056
2003	\$149,728	\$254,005		2015	\$168,411	\$221,793
2004	\$153,022	\$252,859		2016	\$168,411	\$219,030
2005	\$156,848	\$250,688		2017	\$168,411	\$214,461
2006	\$159,828	\$247,468		2018	\$168,411	\$209,348
2007	\$159,828	\$240,615		2019	\$168,411	\$205,622
2008	\$163,795	\$237,469		2020	\$173,900	\$209,736
2009	\$168,411	\$245,033		2021	\$199,300	\$229,584
2010	\$168,411	\$241,079		2022	\$203,700	\$217,266
2011	\$168,411	\$233,702		2023	\$212,100	\$217,281
2012	\$168,411	\$228,964	_	2024	\$212,100	\$212,100

Table I.Annual Maximum Pay for Staff in House Members' Offices,2001-2024

Source: 2 U.S.C. 4532 note, CRS calculations based on Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the first half of 2024.

	2023 Pay, 2024\$	2022- 2023	2019- 2023	2014- 2023	2009- 2023	2004- 2023	2001- 2023
Caseworker	\$68,910	-0.99%	10.34%	18.95%	4.15%	-9.58%	10.98%
Chief of Staff	\$187,060	-4.15%	-1.30%	2.09%	-4.30%	-8.71%	1.80%
Communications Director	\$107,565	6.10%	10.82%	13.21%	1.33%	-0.24%	-3.99%
Constituent Services Director	\$97,064	11.95%	—	—	—	—	_
Constituent Services Representative	\$64,340	2.24%	11.72%	8.92%	3.01%	7.86%	11.32%
Deputy Chief of Staff	\$130,871	-6.32%	—	—	—	—	_
District Deputy Director	\$90,833	-8.35%	—	—	—	—	_
District Director	\$120,302	-7.93%	2.95%	3.09%	-6.33%	-5.57%	-6.30%
Field Representative	\$66,844	-5.62%	10.60%	6.35%	2.09%	2.48%	6.83%
Legislative Assistant	\$74,783	-1.01%	10.75%	15.23%	1.78%	3.44%	3.26%
Legislative Correspondent	\$65,568	2.89%	15.57%	23.60%	15.92%	14.28%	18.80%
Legislative Director	\$113,199	-3.03%	6.57%	1.34%	-7.84%	-2.55%	-3.06%
Operations Director	\$97,064	4.00%	—	—	—	—	_
Press Secretary	\$72,649	-15.39%	2.10%	-8.88%	-19.73%	-18.58%	-17.56%
Scheduler	\$77,163	-2.84%	14.91%	17.04%	1.11%	3.54%	3.53%
Senior Legislative Assistant	\$90,150	1.64%	14.25%	—	—	—	_
Staff Assistant	\$57,852	1.07%	21.09%	21.04%	6.02%	-3.36%	5.88%
Congressional Staff Position	s Pay Chang	ge Summa	ıry				
Increase		7	12	П	8	5	8
Decrease		10	I	I	4	7	4
Members of Congress, Gene	eral Schedul	e Pay Cha	nge				
MCs	\$178,250	-3.95%	-16.10%	-22.31%	-29.59%	-31.77%	-30.30%
General Schedule, DC	Varies	0.71%	-5.23%	-3.22%	-9.35%	-3.70%	3.00%
General Schedule, Rest of U.S.	Varies	0.24%	-6.83%	-7.40%	-13.75%	-12.47%	-7.29%

Table 2. 2023 Median Pay, 2024 Dollars, Changes in Pay for Selected Staff in House
Member Offices, Members of Congress, and Selected General Schedule Employees

Source: CRS calculations, based on pay data provided in **Table 3-Table 19** for congressional positions in 2024 dollars; CRS Report 97-1011, *Salaries of Members of Congress: Recent Actions and Historical Tables*, for Members of Congress; and the Office of Personnel Management for federal civilian workers in the District of Columbia and surrounding areas and rest of the U.S. localities, various years. Nominal Member pay in 2024 is \$174,000. General Schedule pay for individuals varies by grade, step, and locality, but percentage changes are consistent within each locality. "—" indicates data are unavailable. 2024 dollars are based on Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the first half of 2024.

Nominal \$ 2024 \$													
Year	#	Minimum	QI	Q2, Median	Q3	Maximum	Average	Minimum	QI	Q2, Median	Q3	Maximum	Average
2001	45	\$21,750	\$30,000	\$35,229	\$40,122	\$61,572	\$36,189	\$38,335	\$52,876	\$62,093	\$70,717	\$108,522	\$63,785
2004	45	\$28,333	\$37,804	\$46,120	\$50,000	\$63,900	\$44,992	\$46,819	\$62,468	\$76,210	\$82,622	\$105,591	\$74,346
2009	45	\$28,919	\$38,750	\$45,475	\$53,375	\$86,210	\$47,751	\$42,077	\$56,380	\$66,165	\$77,659	\$125,433	\$69,477
2014	45	\$27,833	\$40,075	\$43,937	\$51,000	\$85,000	\$46,984	\$36,699	\$52,840	\$57,933	\$67,245	\$112,076	\$61,950
						Most	Recent Fiv	ve Years					
2019	45	\$23,000	\$46,125	\$51,150	\$58,000	\$90,500	\$52,187	\$28,082	\$56,316	\$62,452	\$70,815	\$110,496	\$63,717
2020	45	\$32,434	\$48,733	\$52,500	\$56,400	\$89,917	\$53,932	\$39,117	\$58,776	\$63,319	\$68,023	\$108,446	\$65,046
2021	45	\$35,200	\$50,125	\$56,067	\$59,583	\$83,333	\$55,682	\$40,549	\$57,742	\$64,586	\$68,637	\$95,996	\$64,143
2022	45	\$47,583	\$57,000	\$65,250	\$75,200	\$105,000	\$67,489	\$50,752	\$60,796	\$69,595	\$80,208	\$111,993	\$71,984
2023	45	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$67,267	\$75,500	\$111,375	\$69,118	\$51,221	\$61,466	\$68,910	\$77,344	\$114,096	\$70,806
20	22 Day I	Distribution										Cha	inge
		JISTIDUTION					Median	Pay	···· Nomina	al \$ —— Con	stant \$	2022-2023	-0.99%
359	[%]]						\$80					2019-2023	10.34%
							JO O	Λ				2014-2023	18.95%
								\sim	\sim	\sim	18	2009-2023	4.15%
18	% -						\$55				<u></u>	2004-2023	-9.58%
										· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		2001-2023	10.98%
09	" 📙												in figures ousands.
	\$40	\$60 \$80 \$100	\$120 \$140	\$160 \$180	\$200 \$220		\$30		201		2023		Gusanus.

Table 3. Caseworker

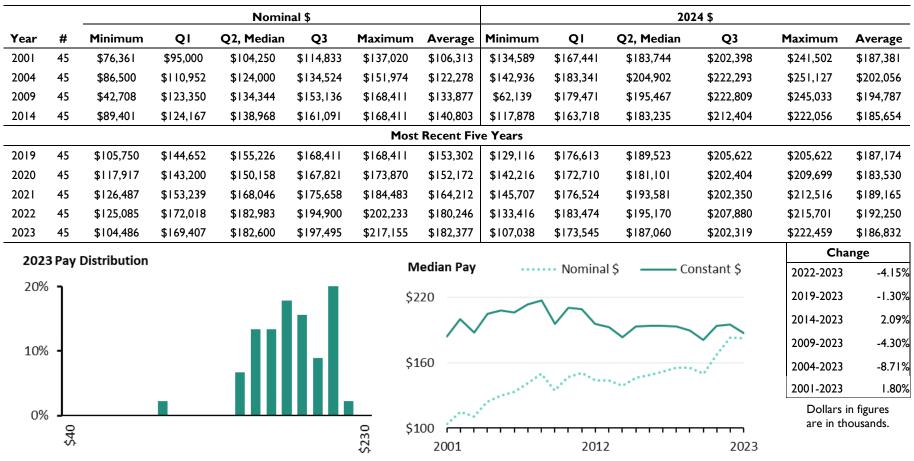


Table 4. Chief of Staff

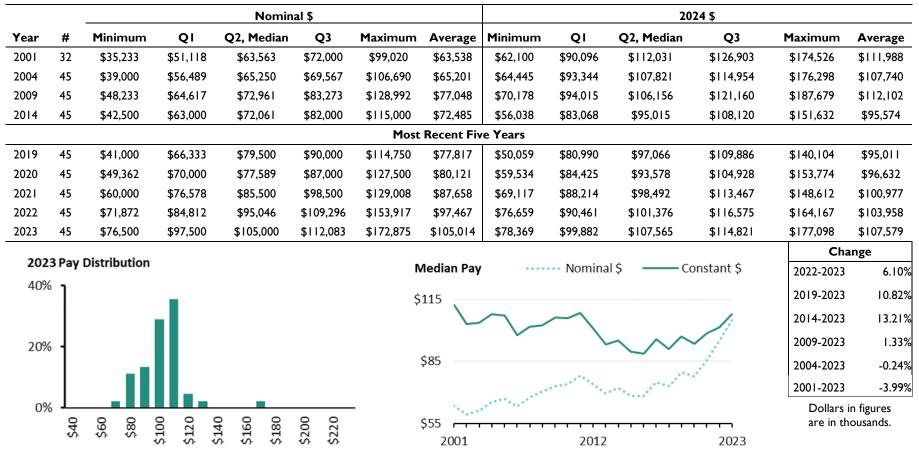


Table 5. Communications Director

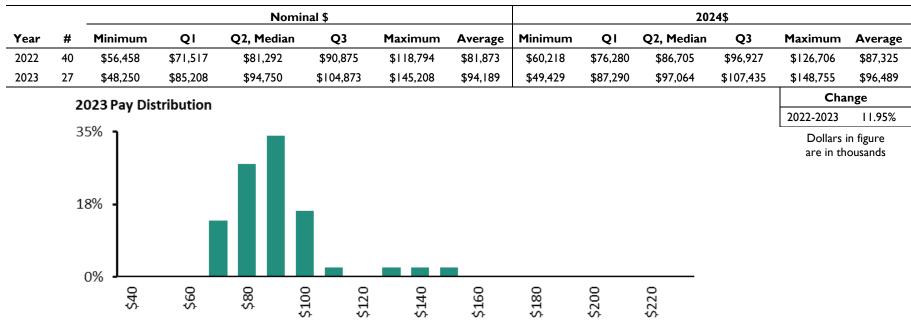


Table 6. Constituent Services Director

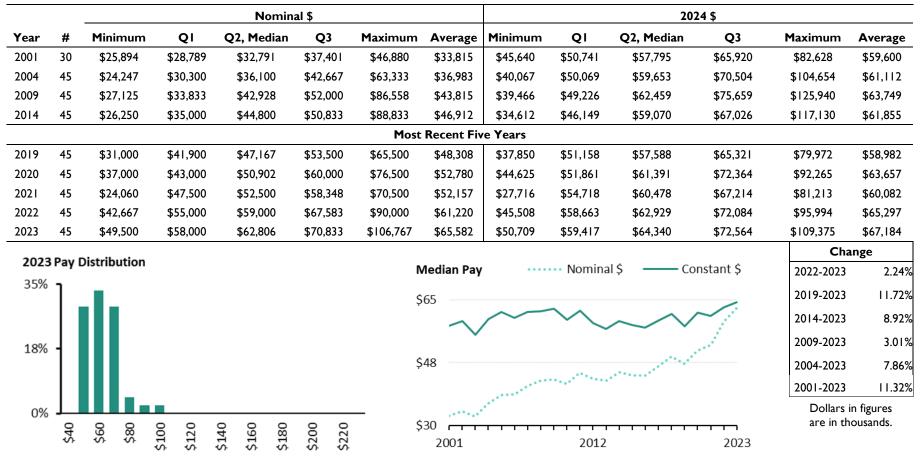


Table 7. Constituent Services Representative

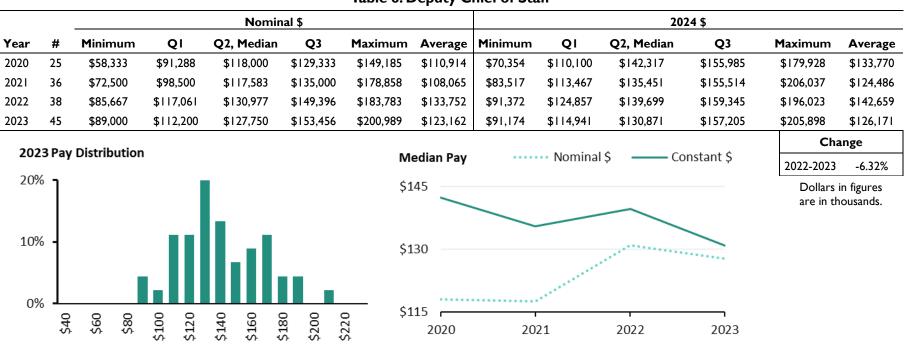


Table 8. Deputy Chief of Staff

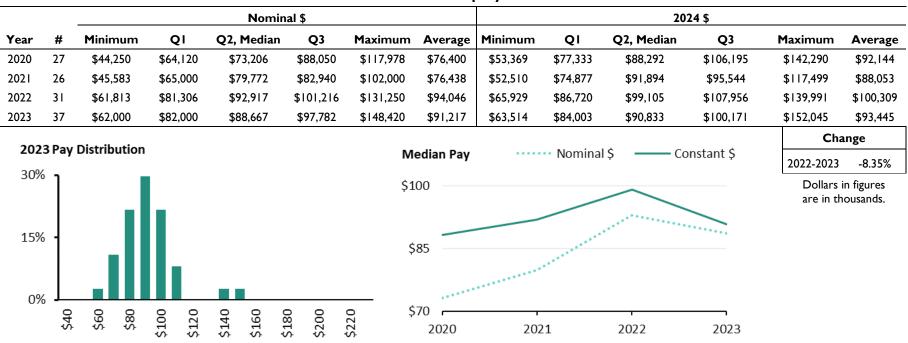


Table 9. District Deputy Director

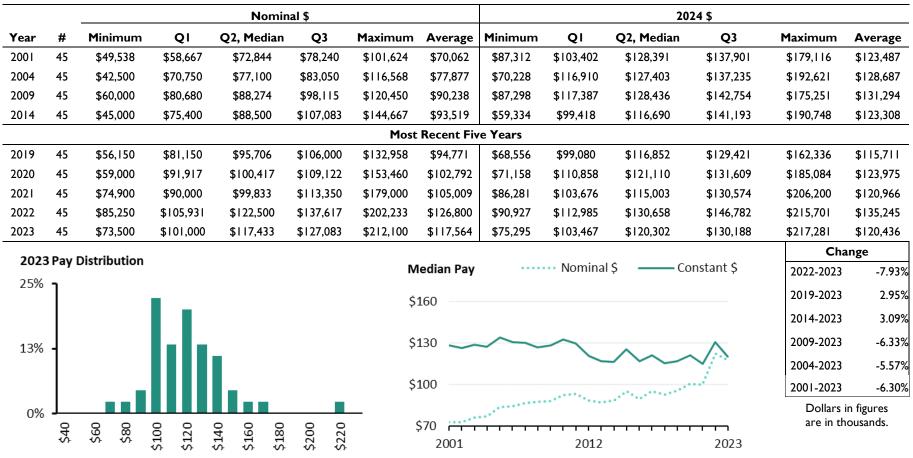


Table 10. District Director

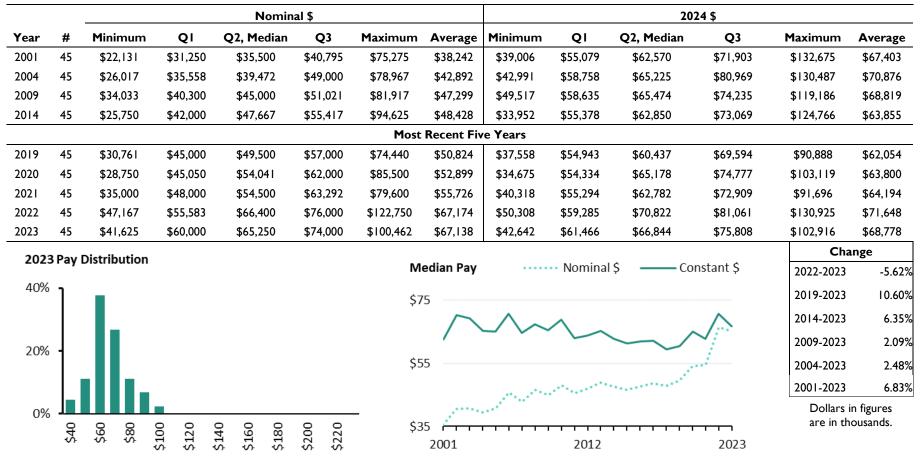


Table 11. Field Representative

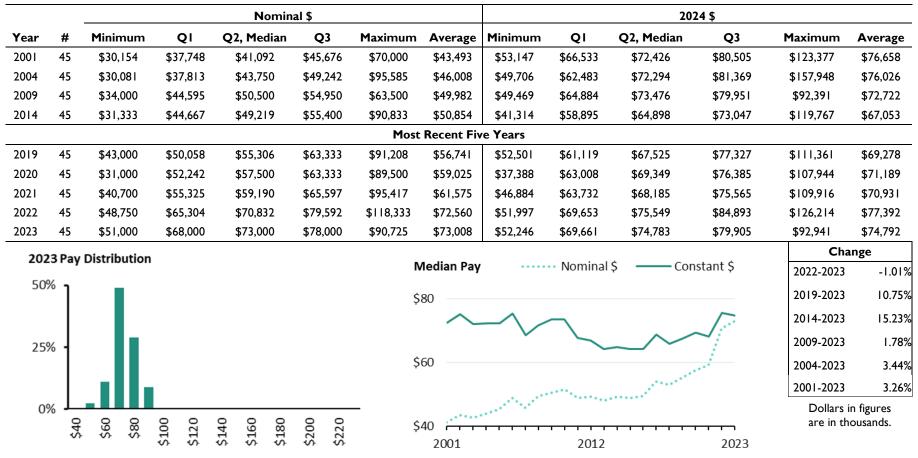


Table 12. Legislative Assistant

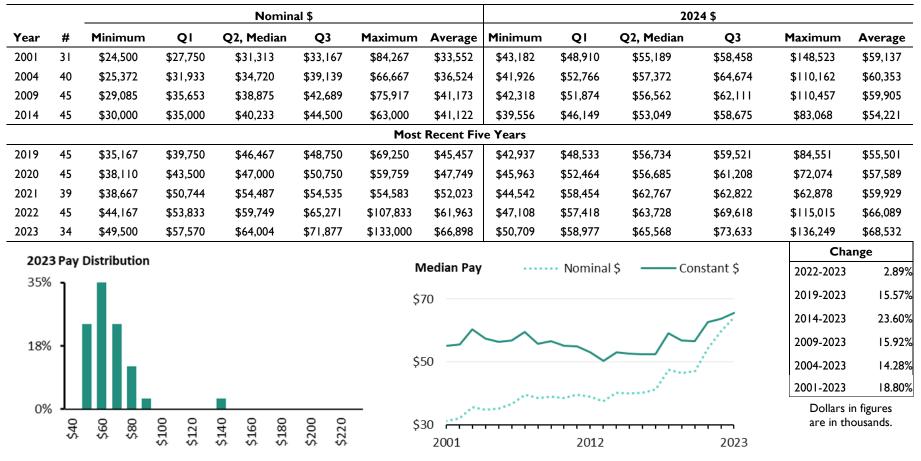


Table	13. Leg	gislative	Corres	pondent
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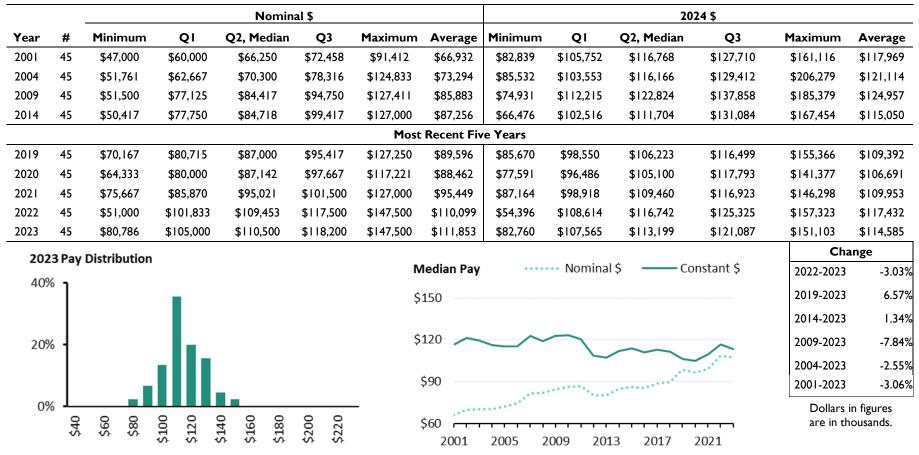


Table 14. Legislative Director

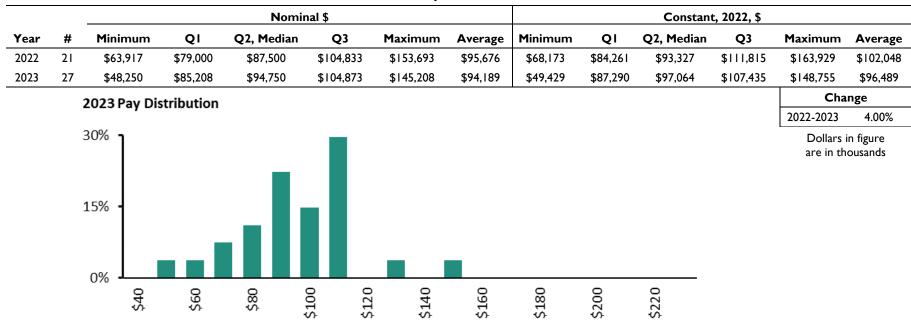


Table 15. Operations Director

				Nomin	al \$					202	24 \$		
Year	#	Minimum	QI	Q2, Median	Q3	Maximum	Average	Minimum	QI	Q2, Median	Q3	Maximum	Average
2001	45	\$29,000	\$45,167	\$50,000	\$57,250	\$85,913	\$52,726	\$51,113	\$79,608	\$88,127	\$100,905	\$151,425	\$92,93 I
2004	45	\$32,378	\$45,653	\$54,000	\$66,390	\$93,500	\$56,927	\$53,502	\$75,438	\$89,23 I	\$109,705	\$154,503	\$94,068
2009	41	\$36,000	\$55,750	\$62,208	\$77,300	\$117,400	\$65,998	\$52,379	\$81,115	\$90,5 I I	\$112,469	\$170,814	\$96,025
2014	28	\$43,500	\$53,458	\$60,464	\$68,196	\$124,233	\$63,049	\$57,356	\$70,487	\$79,725	\$89,919	\$163,806	\$83,132
						Most	Recent Fiv	ve Years					
2019	18	\$41,500	\$50,181	\$58,280	\$66,745	\$98,333	\$62,515	\$50,669	\$61,268	\$71,157	\$81,493	\$120,060	\$76,328
2020	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2021	—	_	_	_	—	—	—	—	—	—	_	—	_
2022	21	\$54,167	\$69,996	\$80,500	\$85,863	\$114,250	\$78,216	\$57,774	\$74,657	\$85,86 I	\$91,582	\$121,859	\$83,425
2023	17	\$52,472	\$63,000	\$70,917	\$83,667	\$92,267	\$72,618	\$53,754	\$64,539	\$72,649	\$85,710	\$94,520	\$74,392
202	2 Dov	Distribution										Cha	ange
	-	Distribution				M	edian Pay		•• Nomina	1\$ — Co	onstant \$	2022-2023	-15.39%
25%	°]					\$1	.00					2019-2023	2.10%
								L	\sim			2014-2023	-8.88%
13%	ά Ι							•		\sim	À	2009-2023	-19.73%
						\$	73				Ę.	2004-2023	-18.58%
												2001-2023	-17.56%
0%			0 0	0 0 0	0 0	_	45	•••					in figures Iousands.
	\$40	\$60 \$80	\$100 \$120	\$140 \$160 \$180	\$200 \$220	Ş	45 2001		2012		2023		iousanus.

Table 16. Press Secretary

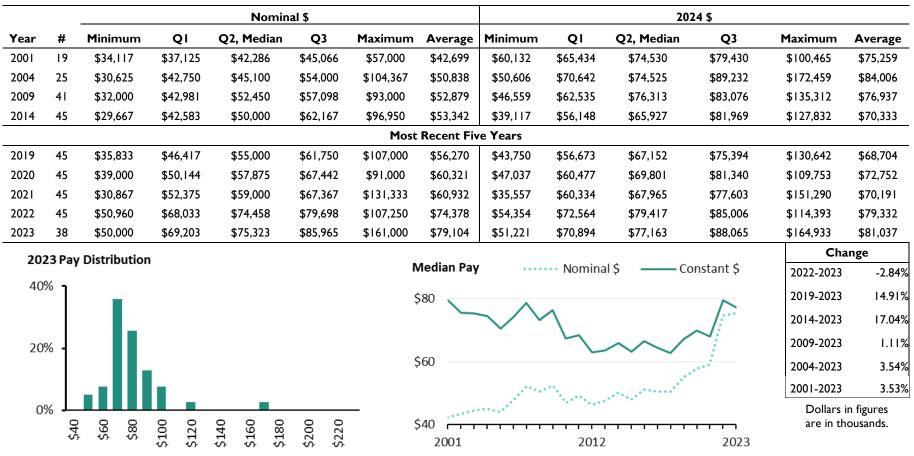


Table 17. Scheduler

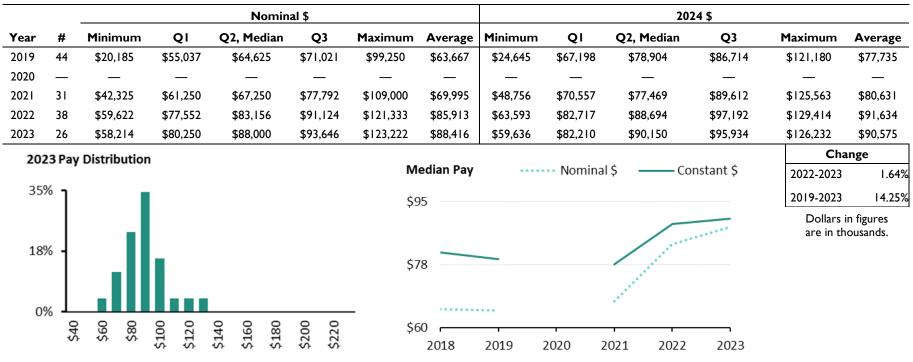


Table 18. Senior Legislative Assistant

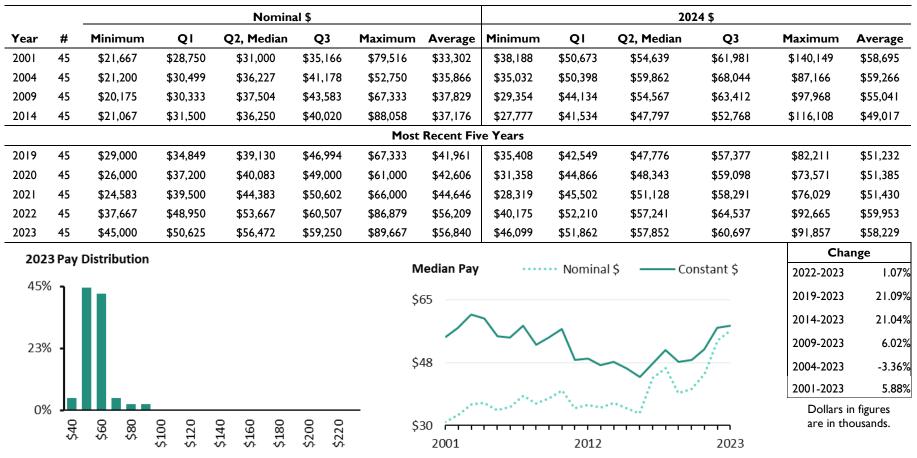


Table 19. Staff Assistant

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A number of CRS staff made substantial contributions to this report. Tyler L. Wolanin, former Research Assistant, collected data and coauthored this report. William T. Egar, former Analyst in American National Government, provided technical assistance and authored a section of the report. Wendy Matera, User Support Specialist, and Andrew M. Schaefer, Editor, provided formatting, editorial, and production support.

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