

State controller issues update on city, county government salaries statewide

Written by Elizabeth Larson

Tuesday, 18 December 2012 01:23 - Last Updated Tuesday, 18 December 2012 01:26

LAKE COUNTY, Calif. – The state controller reported Monday that he has published the latest salary, pension and other compensation figures for city and county employees and elected officials across California.

State Controller John Chiang updated the information, which is for the year 2011, on his compensation Web site, www.publicpay.ca.gov .

Chiang reported that the newest information is based on submissions from 462 cities and 53 counties, totaling more than \$37.6 billion. Average wages statewide are \$61,259, the site reported.

The latest update includes a detailed breakdown of actual wages paid, including regular pay, overtime, lump sum cash outs of vacation and sick leave, bonuses, and other pay subject to Medicare taxes; and the employer's share of pension costs, Chiang reported.

The Web site, which recently was completely redesigned, now offers analytical tools, map-based searches, trend analyses, chart and graph builders and direct access to the entire payroll database.

According to the latest information, the top five salaried employees across the state in 2011 included a senior psychiatrist at Salina Valley Psychiatric Program, \$800,363; a staff psychiatrist at Napa State Hospital, \$770,870; an orthopedic surgeon at Kern Medical Center, \$716,116; city manager for the city of Indian Wells, \$677,172; core physician, Kern Medical Center, \$669,708; general manager-metropolitan transit authority, San Francisco, \$567,595.

The data provided by the site shows that Lake County has some of the lowest compensation levels in California for its public officials.

There are 1,067 government employees, according to the site, which – with an estimated population of 64,784 – is a breakdown of 60 residents per employee.

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The site shows that the average wages are \$36,929 in Lake County, with approximately \$39,403,197 being paid out to all government officials countywide.

The top five paid positions in the county's government for 2011, based on the report, were the county administrative officer, \$142,842; public health officer, \$142,632; county counsel, \$122,910; social services director, \$120,436; and health services director, \$109,027.

Lake County's two incorporated cities, Clearlake and Lakeport, showed lower average compensation figures.

Clearlake, with a population of 15,289, has 65 government employees, for an average of 235 residents per employee. Wages average \$35,752 per employee, with total wages at \$2,323,884.

The top five paid positions for last year in Clearlake were the chief of police, \$111,685; police sergeant, \$95,057; records and communication officer supervisor, \$82,460; police sergeant, \$81,305; and city engineer, \$79,977.

In Lakeport, which has 4,745 residents, there are 79 employees for a resident to employee ratio of 60 to one. Average wages for city employees are \$32,497, with total wages at \$2,567,225.

The top five wage earners amongst the city of Lakeport's employees in 2011 were the city manager, \$112,883; community development director, \$97,696; police chief, \$90,376; police sergeant, \$89,001; and utilities director, \$86,718.

For the Monday posting, 17 cities and three counties did not file in time, or filed incomplete records, according to Chiang's office.

Counties not complying included Sutter, Humboldt and Tulare, while noncomplying cities

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included Bell, Brawley, Cloverdale, Dunsmuir, Fairfax, Firebaugh, Fort Jones, Hercules, Holtville, Imperial, Mammoth Lakes, Oakdale, Oakland, Pacific Grove, Porterville, Rio Vista, San Mateo and Tracy.

Each noncomplying agency could face a penalty of up to \$5,000, Chiang reported.

Chiang created the Web site in late 2010, after he ordered local governments to provide salary and other compensation information for their employees to his office.

The Web site's creation was in response to information about excessively high salaries for government officials in the Southern California city of Bell.

The controller's Web site includes data from cities, counties, special districts, California State Universities, community colleges and the state itself.

For the calendar year 2010, the wages for more than 1.5 million public positions were made available. More than 622,179 positions have been posted for calendar year 2011, Chiang reported.

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