

# National Compensation Survey Holiday Profile – Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday

January 2018

The National Compensation Survey<sup>1</sup> (NCS) captures the provisions and costs of employer-provided benefits in private industry and state and local government, including leave benefits such as vacation, sick leave, and holidays. In the first of a series of holiday profiles, starting with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday holiday, BLS is publishing new data on the incidence of federal and other prominent holidays. The Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. is the newest federal holiday, starting in 1986, to honor the Civil Rights leader. The holiday occurs on the third Monday in January.

Over 3 in 4 civilian workers<sup>2</sup> (76 percent) received paid holidays in March 2017,<sup>3</sup> including 88 percent of full-time workers. Paid holidays cost employers an average of 74 cents per employee hour worked.<sup>4</sup> Among civilian workers who receive paid holidays, one-third (33 percent) received Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday as a paid holiday. Eighty-six percent of state and local government workers and 24 percent of private industry workers received Dr. King's birthday as a holiday. (See Table 1.)

**Table 1. Percent of workers receiving the Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday paid holiday, March 2017**  
(All workers with paid holidays = 100 percent)

Characteristics	Civilian		Private industry		State and local government	
	Percent	Standard Error	Percent	Standard Error	Percent	Standard Error
<b>All workers</b>	33	0.9	24	1.1	86	1.1
<b>Occupational group:</b>						
Management, business, and financial	43	1.8	35	2.0	94	1.4
Professional and related	46	2.0	33	2.5	85	1.5
Service	38	2.3	24	3.0	82	2.8
Sales and office	33	1.3	25	1.5	91	1.4
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	20	1.7	12	1.8	88	2.2
Production, transportation, and material moving	15	1.3	12	1.4	82	6.0
<b>Bargaining status<sup>1</sup>:</b>						
Union	58	2.3	33	4.4	86	1.5
Nonunion	29	1.0	23	1.0	86	1.4
<b>Establishment size:</b>						
1-99 workers	24	1.3	19	1.3	87	2.1
100 workers or more	43	1.2	30	1.6	86	1.4
<b>Census region<sup>1</sup>:</b>						
Northeast	43	1.6	36	1.7	90	2.7
South	32	1.2	22	1.5	88	1.6
Midwest	26	2.6	17	3.1	76	2.1
West	37	2.3	26	2.6	90	3.0

**Footnotes:**

(1) For more information on bargaining status and census region definitions, see the *Bureau of Labor Statistics, Handbook of Methods, National Compensation Measures*, [www.bls.gov/opub/hom/ncs/concepts.htm](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/ncs/concepts.htm).

More highlights of Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday paid holiday benefits include:

- The incidence ranged from 46 percent of civilian workers in professional and related occupations to 15 percent of workers in production, transportation, and material moving occupations.
- Union workers (58 percent) were twice as likely as nonunion workers (29 percent) to receive the paid holiday.



- Civilian workers in establishments of 100 workers or more (43 percent) received the paid holiday at a significantly higher rate than workers in establishments of 1 to 99 workers (24 percent).
- Thirty-six percent of private industry workers in the Northeast region received the paid holiday, compared with 17 percent in the Midwest.

### Estimation Methods for Specific Paid Holidays

The estimates of specific paid holiday percentages for this profile are based on information field economists collected for sample establishments. Missing data were not subject to imputation procedures used in other NCS publications. Workers were included as having paid holiday leave for partial or full paid holidays. Data are rounded to the nearest whole number. Use caution in applying these estimates because they are only based on collected data, part of the overall sample, and not subject to standard imputation and processing methods. Those methods can affect estimates based on establishment and worker characteristics of available and missing holiday information.<sup>5</sup>

Standard errors are based only on collected holiday information. (See Table 1.) Data that satisfied strict relative standard error criteria for collected and matched holiday collection information were used in this profile.

### More Holidays Data

Upcoming paid holiday benefit profiles in 2018 will be available at [www.bls.gov/ebs/](http://www.bls.gov/ebs/).

In addition to paid holidays data in this profile, BLS also publishes the average number of paid holidays offered. Civilian workers received an average of 8 paid holidays per year.<sup>3</sup> The latest incidence and provisions data on paid leave and other benefits, such as healthcare and retirement, can be found in “National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States” available at [www.bls.gov/ebs/](http://www.bls.gov/ebs/).

### END NOTES

(1) The National Compensation Survey (NCS) collects information on employee wages and salaries and benefits from a nationally representative sample of about 8,200 responding establishments. (See [March 2017 Appendix 1](#)). The NCS program produces the Employment Cost Index (ECI) and Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC). The ECI tracks changes over time in average employer costs for pay and benefits, while the ECEC expresses average employer costs for pay and benefits in dollars and cents. The NCS also tracks coverage and provisions of employer-sponsored benefits such as healthcare, retirement, and leave benefits. For more information, see [www.bls.gov/ncs](http://www.bls.gov/ncs).

(2) Civilian workers include both private industry and state and local government workers.

(3) *Bureau of Labor Statistics: National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in the United States, March 2017*, [www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2017](http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2017).

(4) *Bureau of Labor Statistics: National Compensation Survey: Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, March 2017*, [www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/ecec\\_06092017.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/ecec_06092017.pdf).

(5) *Bureau of Labor Statistics: Handbook of Methods, National Compensation Measures*, [www.bls.gov/opub/hom/ncs/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/ncs/home.htm).

