



Technical Contact: (202) 691-6199
NCSinfo@bls.gov

USDL: 08-0408

Media Contact: (202) 691-5902
Internet address: www.bls.gov/ebs

For release: 10:00 AM EDT
Tuesday, March 25, 2008

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS IN STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT—SEPTEMBER 2007

Eighty-nine percent of workers in State and local government had access to employer-sponsored retirement benefits in September 2007. Almost 3 times as many workers had access to defined benefit plans (83 percent) than to defined contribution plans (29 percent). Nearly all workers (96 percent) who had access to a defined benefit retirement plan chose to participate in it, whereas only 63 percent of workers with access to defined contribution plans chose to enroll in them. Eighty-seven percent of workers had access to medical care plans, a percentage greater than access to dental care (55 percent) and to vision care (38 percent). These findings are from the Summary, "National Compensation Survey: Employee Benefits in State and local government, September 2007," published today. These results can be found on the BLS Web site <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/sp/ebsm0007.pdf>.

These data are from the National Compensation Survey (NCS), which provides comprehensive measures of occupational earnings, compensation cost trends, and details of benefit provisions. In addition to health and retirement plans, the survey also covered paid leave, disability insurance, and other selected benefits. This summary is the first release of data on benefits in State and local government since 1998. The National Compensation Survey (NCS) has been undergoing significant restructuring and changes in its approach to collecting, tabulating, and presenting its data.

Major findings

- State and local government employees enjoyed broad access to a wide variety of benefits at their workplace, including retirement and medical care benefits, available to a vast majority of employees, 89 percent and 87 percent, respectively. By comparison, only 61 percent of employees in private industry had access to retirement benefits of at least one type; 71 percent had access to medical care coverage in March 2007. (See <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/sp/ebsm0006.pdf> for the publication on private-industry workers.)
- The greatest factor affecting the availability of benefits in State and local government was full- vs. part-time status: access to almost all benefits was much higher for full-time than part-time employees—up to four times higher for some benefits.
- A variety of other benefits were offered to workers in State and local government. Work-related educational assistance benefits were offered to about two-thirds of all workers. Employee assistance programs were available to almost three-quarters of all employees; about 6 out of 10 workers had access to health care reimbursement accounts, and about half to dependent care reimbursement accounts and to wellness programs.

The release and Summary Report are available by e-mail request, by telephone (202) 691-6199, or on the BLS Internet site. Regional Information offices, listed on the Internet site, <http://www.bls.gov/bls/regncon.htm>, also are available to answer any of your questions.