



A Biennial Report on Executive Compensation at State Agencies

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The State Auditor's Office conducted a comprehensive market analysis for 65 executive officer positions at 64 state agencies.¹

Based on the State Auditor's Office analysis, most of the 65 executive officer positions were assigned to salary groups with competitive salary ranges. This is, in part, a result of the adjustments made to the minimums and maximums of the salary ranges and the approval of a new salary group by the 89th Legislature. However, the analysis identified some executive officer positions with salary ranges and not-to-exceed (NTE) rates that may limit market competitiveness.

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This study was conducted in accordance with Article IX, Section 3.08, the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature).

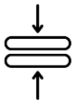
Market and Agency Analysis

MARKET ANALYSIS



Twenty-five executive officers were placed within salary ranges that could limit their ability to receive market-competitive salaries. Fifty-one executive officers have NTE rates below the market average. [Chapter 1-A](#)

PAY COMPRESSION



Pay compression exists among executive officers and their staff at several state agencies analyzed. A total of 254 employees had a base salary that either exceeded their executive officer's salary or was within 15.0 percent of the executive officer's salary. [Chapter 1-B](#)

TOP 50 HIGHEST-PAID MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES



Of the 65 executive officers included in this study, only 10 executive officers were among the top 50 highest-paid management employees. [Chapter 1-C](#)

Classification Recommendations

EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDED SALARY GROUPS



Twenty-five executive officer positions are recommended for salary group reassignments to better align with the market. [Chapter 2-A](#)

SALARY RANGE ADJUSTMENTS



Expanding existing range maximums by 2.5 percent will allow the executive officer salary structure to remain competitive and help retain leadership at our state agencies. [Chapter 2-B](#)

¹ This study analyzed salary data as of June 30, 2026.

Background Information

A market analysis on executive officer pay is required under Article IX, Section 3.08, of the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature). This market comparison study is similar to the biennial review of the State's Position Classification Plan.² (See text box for definition of an executive officer.)

A limited number of positions at state agencies, including executive officer positions, are exempt from the State's Position Classification Plan. Most executive officer positions are assigned to salary groups and have not-to-exceed (NTE) rates (see text box) that are outlined in Article IX, Section 3.04, the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature).

The State Auditor's Office's market analysis of executive officer pay focused on:

- The executive officers' annual base salaries and the midpoints of assigned salary ranges.
- The agencies' annual appropriations, the number of authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, and the agencies' missions.
- The specialized experience, education, or skills required for each position.

Additionally, because state agency executive officer positions have both a salary range and an NTE rate, the study included a review of both.

The Legislature sets salaries during the budget process, or an agency's governing board sets salaries as authorized by statute or the General Appropriations Act. When setting salaries, the Legislature and each agency's governing board should consider an individual executive officer's past and current performance, experience, education, licenses, and certifications, as well as the agency's ability to pay. Due to those considerations, not all executive officers should be paid at the market average, which is usually an amount that is at or near the midpoint of an assigned salary range.

Definition of Executive Officer

For the purposes of this report, "executive officer" refers to a state employee who serves as the administrative head for a state agency and holds a title such as executive director or commissioner.

Salary Groups and Salary Ranges

The State currently categorizes executive officer positions into ten salary groups, each with a corresponding salary range that defines the minimum and maximum annual salaries for positions assigned to that group.

Not-to-exceed (NTE) Rate

In addition to a salary group assignment, most executive officers also are assigned an NTE rate. Unless specifically authorized by the General Appropriations Act, executive officers may not receive a salary that exceeds the NTE rate, regardless of the salary range maximum.

² For more information, see *A Biennial Report on the State's Position Classification Plan for the 2028-2029 Biennium* (State Auditor's Office Report No. 27-701, October 2026).

This study of executive compensation did not include a review of judicial compensation³ or certain executive officer positions at some state entities. Elected officials were also excluded from this study; salaries for elected officials are determined as matters of public policy and are not tied directly to the market averages for similar professional positions. See [Appendix 1](#) for more details about the methodology for this study.

³ The 80th Legislature created the Judicial Compensation Commission to recommend appropriate salaries for justices and judges of the Supreme Court of Texas, the Court of Criminal Appeals, the courts of appeals, and the district courts. The Commission is tasked with submitting a report on judicial compensation to the Legislature by December 1 of each even-numbered year.



Chapter 1-A Market Analysis on Salary Ranges and Review of Not-to-exceed Rates

The State Auditor's Office conducted a comprehensive market analysis for 65 executive officer positions at 64 state agencies⁴ using relevant market data from both public and private sectors to reflect the nature and complexity of those positions (see [Background Information](#)).

Most of the 65 executive officer positions were assigned to salary groups with competitive salary ranges. This is, in part, a result of the adjustments made to the minimums and maximums of the salary ranges and the approval of a new salary group by the 89th Legislature. However, pay disparity exists and the analysis identified some executive officer positions with salary ranges and not-to-exceed (NTE) rates that may limit market competitiveness. (See text box for information about the analysis.)

Of the 65 executive officer positions included in the analysis:

- 25 (38.5 percent) positions were placed within a salary range that could limit the agency's ability to offer a market-competitive salary.
- 40 (61.5 percent) positions were placed in market-competitive salary ranges.

Comparison of Salary Range Midpoint with Market Average Pay

The midpoint of a salary group's salary range is meant to correspond to the average pay in the job market. Salary ranges are typically developed around the midpoint to allow for pay variances based on employee experience, expertise, and performance.

In this report, the midpoints of state salary ranges for each position were compared with the average market salary. If the midpoint of the salary range was not competitive with the market average, a recommendation was made to adjust the salary group to better align with the market average. (See [Appendix 2](#) for detailed information about market analysis and salary group recommendations.)

⁴ The Department of Insurance has 2 commissioners (the Commissioner of Insurance and the Commissioner of Workers' Compensation), which created a total of 65 executive officer positions to be reviewed.

Although this report does not recommend specific salaries for individual executive officer positions, adjustments may be needed to help ensure that the salary ranges for executive officer positions are competitive with the market. See [Chapter 2-A](#) for recommended executive officer salary groups.

Fifty-one executive officer positions have 2026-2027 biennium NTE rates that are below the market average.

Executive Officer Salaries and NTE Rates. NTE rates for the 2026-2027 biennium⁵ either increased or stayed the same for the 65 executive officer positions compared to their fiscal year 2025 NTE rate. Thirty-four or 52.3 percent of the 65 positions had their NTE rates **increased**, while the NTE rates of the remaining positions stayed the **same**. (See [Background Information](#) for definition of NTE rates.)

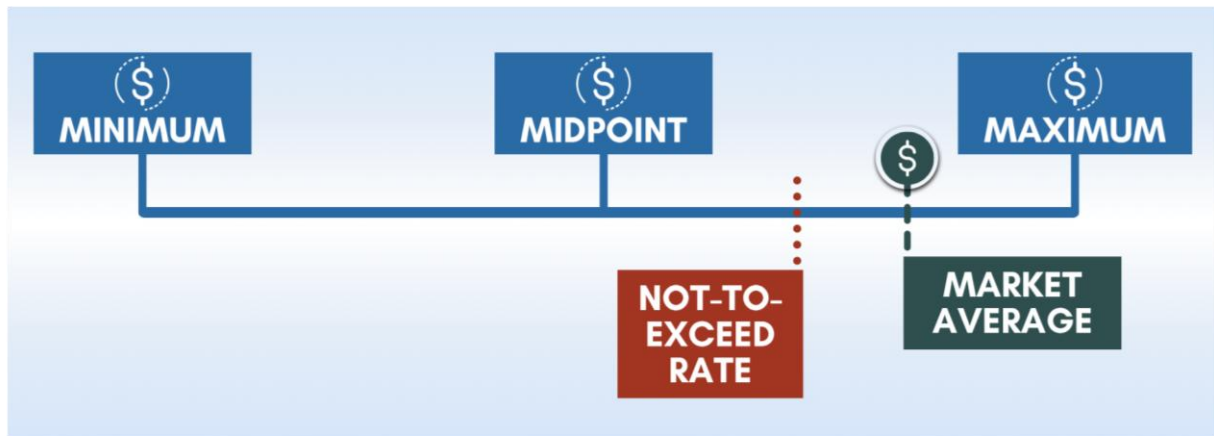
Excluding the four executive officer positions that were vacant or had an interim executive director during the time of this analysis, 49 of the 65 executive officers had salaries that were **equal** to their NTE rate for the 2026-2027 biennium. Twelve executive officers had salaries **below** their NTE rate for the 2026-2027 biennium.

Figure 1 on the following page illustrates the scenario in which an executive officer position's NTE rate within the salary range is below the market average.

⁵ The NTE rates were identical in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 (the 2026-2027 biennium).

Figure 1

*Example of NTE Rate That Is Below Market Average
Within a Salary Range*



NTE Rates and Market Averages. Although half of the NTE rates of the 65 executive officer positions increased, a comparison of the NTE rates for the 2026-2027 biennium to the market average compensation for similar executive positions determined that a significant number were still **below** the market.

Specifically:

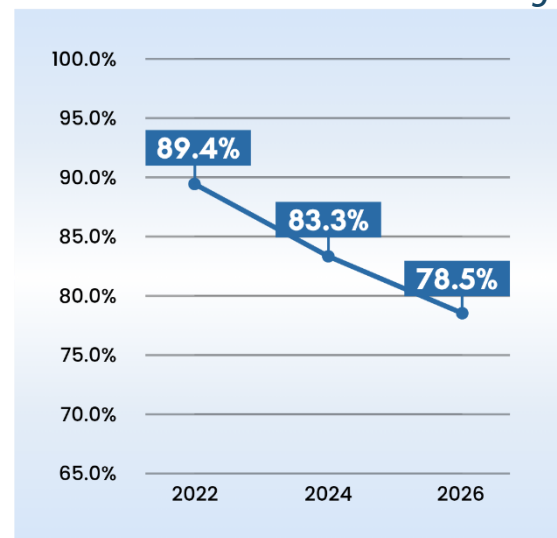
- 14 executive officer positions had NTE rates that were **above** the market average.
- 51 executive officer positions, or 78.5 percent, had NTE rates that were **below** the market average. The percentage difference ranged from 0.1 percent to 13.7 percent.

This is a decrease of executive officer positions that had NTE rates below the market average since fiscal years 2022 and 2024. Those percentages were 89.4 percent and 83.3 percent, respectively (see Figure 2).

See [Appendix 3](#) for additional information on the NTE rates.

Figure 2

*Percentage of Executive Officer Positions
With NTE Rates Below Market Average*



Executive officers and human resources directors expressed concerns about and challenges with executive officer compensation at some state agencies.

In March 2026, the State Auditor's Office surveyed executive directors and human resources directors at 64 state agencies⁶ to obtain feedback on various factors related to executive compensation.

The State Auditor's Office identified common themes in the survey responses. The concerns and challenges summarized below come from 95.3% of those human resources directors surveyed and 92.3% of those executive officers surveyed. Survey respondents identified challenges related to the following factors:

- **Limited salary growth for some executive officers.** Some survey respondents cited that, per statute, executive officers do not have access to the same salary increases and merit raises available to classified employees who are on the State's Position Classification Plan.
- **Market competitiveness.** Survey respondents expressed concern that current salary groups and NTE rates may limit an agency's ability to compete with other state agencies, public and private sector employers, and external organizations for candidates with specialized executive-level experience.
- **Increasing responsibilities, budgets, and position complexity.** Survey respondents noted that executive responsibilities have expanded due to increased funding, program growth, technology modernization, and organizational change without corresponding adjustments to compensation.
- **Salary compression.** Survey respondent responses indicated that some executive officer salaries are comparable to or lower than subordinate positions within the same agency, creating pay compression and internal equity concerns.
- **Recruitment and retention challenges.** Survey respondents reported that salary groups and NTE rates are not competitive enough to attract qualified

⁶ The Department of Insurance has 2 commissioners (the Commissioner of Insurance and the Commissioner of Workers' Compensation), which created a total of 65 executive officer positions to be reviewed.

executive candidates, resulting in limited applicant pools, extended vacancies, and difficult-to-fill executive officer positions.

Human resources directors are always included in this survey, as they can provide valuable insight into executive officer compensation. They understand the agency's organizational structure, workforce needs, internal pay relationships, and challenges with recruiting and retaining qualified leadership. Figure 3 reflects the 61 responses received from human resources directors. These responses were to questions regarding whether salary group, NTE assignments, or pay compression were challenges for their agency's executive officer positions.

Figure 3

Percentages of Concerns and Challenges Identified in Human Resources Directors' Survey Responses



The State Auditor's Office's analysis aligned with some of the concerns outlined in the survey responses. When executive officer pay is competitive, the State is better able to recruit and retain qualified executive officers capable of effectively and efficiently managing state agencies.

Chapter 1-B

Pay Compression

The State Auditor's Office conducted an analysis to determine if pay compression exists by comparing annual base salaries⁷ of executive officers with those of other employees within their agencies (see text box for definition of pay compression). While it may be justifiable for some employees to earn more than their direct supervisors, standard compensation practices recommend there should be at least a 15.0 percent difference. This differential is important for maintaining internal pay equity by acknowledging the skills, experience, and broad responsibilities of executives managing an agency.

 **Pay Compression Defined**

Pay compression occurs when an employee's salary comes close to or exceeds that of his or her supervisor, including an executive officer. This can lead to internal inequity if the pay difference does not adequately reflect the difference in the scope and complexity of the job.

Pay compression still exists among executive officers and their staff at several state agencies. Additionally, several executive officers and human resources directors surveyed for this report expressed concerns about this issue (see [Chapter 1-A](#) for additional survey information).

A total of 254 employees had base salaries that either exceeded their executive officer's salary or were within 15.0 percent of the executive officer's salary.

A total of 35 employees at 14 agencies had annual base salaries that exceeded their executive officers' annual base salaries by amounts ranging from \$1,807 (or 1.0 percent) to \$389,023 (or 137.8 percent).

Of the 64 agencies reviewed, this analysis also identified 42 state agencies had employees with annual base salaries that were no more than 15.0 percent less than their executive officers' annual base salaries.⁸ Of the annual base salaries identified in this threshold:

- **Within 5.0 percent less.** A total of 31 employees at 15 agencies had annual base salaries that were within 5.0 percent less than their

⁷ This study analyzed salary data as of June 30, 2026.

⁸ While our analysis typically examined salary differences of up to 10.0 percent in past reports, for this report we expanded the analysis to 15.0 percent to better illustrate both current and potential future pay compression.

executive officers' annual base salaries. Of those, 96.8 percent of those employees were in a deputy director, director, or general counsel position.

- **Within 5.01 to 10.0 percent less.** A total of 65 employees at 30 agencies had annual base salaries that were between 5.01 percent to 10.0 percent less than the executive officer's annual base salary. Of those, 70.8 percent were in a deputy director, director, or general counsel position.
- **Within 10.01 to 15.0 percent less.** A total of 123 employees at 32 agencies had annual base salaries that were between 10.01 to 15.0 percent less than the executive officers' annual base salaries. Of those, 57.7 percent were in a deputy director, director, or general counsel position.

Figure 4 on the next page provides additional details on the employees who had higher annual base salaries than their executive officers, and Figure 5 starting on page 12 lists the number of employees whose annual base salaries were within 15.0 percent of their executive officers' salaries.

Possible Causes of Pay Compression

Pay compression can occur at state agencies for a variety of reasons. Possible causes include:

- Salaries for some executives may be set too low.
- Executive officers classified as "exempt" are not eligible for the same types of salary increases as the employees they manage. Employees classified within the State's Position Classification Plan are eligible for increases, such as merit increases, that do not exist for most exempt employees, such as executive officers.

Figure 4

Number of Employees With Salaries Higher Than the Executive Officers at Their Respective Agencies as of June 30, 2026

Agency	Number of Employees	Job Classification Series/Title(s)
Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	1	Chief Scientific Officer
Commission on Law Enforcement	2	Director, General Counsel
Department of Housing and Community Affairs	5	Deputy Director, Director, General Counsel
Department of Insurance, Workers' Compensation ^a	5	Director, General Counsel, Master Administrative Law Judge
Juvenile Justice Department	1	Physician
Office of Public Utility Counsel	2	Director, General Counsel
Pension Review Board ^b	1	Chief Actuary
Preservation Board	1	Deputy Director
Racing Commission	1	Veterinarian
Securities Board	1	Director
State Office of Risk Management	2	Deputy Director, General Counsel
Texas Education Agency	8	Deputy Director, Director, General Counsel
Texas Medical Board	4	Deputy Director, Director, General Counsel
Texas State Board of Dental Examiners	1	Dentist
Total	35	

^a The Department of Insurance has two commissioners: the Commissioner of Insurance and the Commissioner of Workers' Compensation.

^b Salaries are current as of June 30, 2026; however, the agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 25, 2026.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.

Figure 5

Number of Employees With Salaries That Were Within 15.0 Percent Less Than Their Executive Officers' Salaries as of June 30, 2026

Agency	Within 5.0% Less	5.01% – 10.0% Less	10.01% – 15.0% Less
Alcoholic Beverage Commission ^a		1	1
Animal Health Commission	1		1
Board of Chiropractic Examiners		1	
Board of Pharmacy	1		
Board of Plumbing Examiners		2	
Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	1	1	2
Commission on Environmental Quality	1	2	4
Commission on Law Enforcement		4	4
Department of Housing and Community Affairs		1	2
Department of Information Resources		3	1
Department of Insurance ^b			3
Department of Insurance, Workers' Compensation ^b	1	1	2
Department of Licensing and Regulation			5
Department of Motor Vehicles	1	1	
Department of Transportation	2	3	3
Executive Council of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners		1	1
Facilities Commission	4	3	
Health and Human Services Commission		15	42
Higher Education Coordinating Board		2	
Historical Commission		1	2
Juvenile Justice Department	3	1	
Library and Archives Commission	1	2	
Military Department			3
Office of Capital and Forensic Writs		2	4
Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council			1
Office of Public Utility Counsel			1

Agency	Within 5.0% Less	5.01% – 10.0% Less	10.01% – 15.0% Less
Pension Review Board ^c		1	1
Preservation Board			2
Public Finance Authority		1	
Public Utility Commission of Texas	2	2	4
Racing Commission	1	1	2
School for the Blind and Visually Impaired			1
School for the Deaf		1	1
Securities Board	2	1	1
Soil and Water Conservation Board			1
State Office of Risk Management	1		
Texas Board of Nursing		1	1
Texas Education Agency	9	5	13
Texas Ethics Commission		2	1
Texas Medical Board			4
Texas Workforce Commission		2	4
Veterans Commission		1	3
Water Development Board			2
Totals	31	65	123

^a Salaries are current as of June 30, 2026; however, the agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 1, 2026.

^b The Department of Insurance has two commissioners: the Commissioner of Insurance and the Commissioner of Workers' Compensation.

^c Salaries are current as of June 30, 2026; however, the agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 25, 2026.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.

Changes in Salaries for the Highest-paid Executive Officer Positions at State Agencies

Figure 6 shows the difference in salaries over 5 years for the 25 highest-paid executive officer positions at state agencies. Salaries for executive officer positions have varied among state agencies, with changes ranging from an increase of 0.1 percent to an increase of 44.2 percent over the last 5 fiscal years (fiscal years 2022 through 2026). Two executive officers have not received salary increases for the past five years.

Figure 6

Five-year Percentage Change in Base Pay for the 25 Highest-paid Executive Officer Positions as of June 30, 2026 ^a

Rank	Agency	Job Title	5-year Comparison		
			2026 Base Salary as of June 30, 2026	2022 Base Salary as of June 30, 2022 ^b	Percent Change from June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2026
1	Department of Public Safety	Director	\$390,908	\$299,813	30.4%
2	Health and Human Services Commission	Executive Commissioner	\$345,250	\$290,258	18.9%
3	Department of Transportation	Executive Director	\$344,000	\$344,000	0.0%
4	Higher Education Coordinating Board	Commissioner	\$325,000	\$299,813	8.4%
5	Department of Criminal Justice	Executive Director	\$319,813	\$275,501	16.1%
6 (tie)	Department of Family and Protective Services	Commissioner	\$300,000	\$235,500	27.4%
6 (tie)	Department of State Health Services ^c	Commissioner	\$300,000	\$271,083	10.7%
8	Parks and Wildlife Department ^d	Executive Director	\$284,324	\$200,643	41.7%
9	Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	Executive Director	\$282,277	\$281,875	0.1%
10	Department of Information Resources	Executive Director	\$279,982	\$194,182	44.2%
11 (tie)	Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council	Administrative Director	\$268,900	\$211,500	27.1%
11 (tie)	Department of Insurance	Commissioner of Insurance	\$268,900	\$217,139	23.8%
13 (tie)	Public Utility Commission of Texas	Executive Director	\$257,858	\$200,000	28.9%

Rank	Agency	Job Title	5-year Comparison		
			2026 Base Salary as of June 30, 2026	2022 Base Salary as of June 30, 2022 ^b	Percent Change from June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2026
13 (tie)	Commission on Environmental Quality	Executive Director	\$257,858	\$223,277	15.5%
15	Alcoholic Beverage Commission ^e	Administrator	\$249,000	\$200,000	24.5%
16	Water Development Board	Executive Administrator	\$245,000	\$199,582	22.8%
17	Military Department	Adjutant General	\$240,000	\$191,357	25.4%
18	Juvenile Justice Department	Executive Director	\$237,802	\$216,725	9.7%
19	Department of Licensing and Regulation	Executive Director	\$235,000	\$180,000	30.6%
20	Texas Workforce Commission	Executive Director	\$234,500	\$200,494	17.0%
21	State Office of Administrative Hearings	Chief Administrative Law Judge	\$233,849	\$180,000	29.9%
22 (tie)	Public Finance Authority	Executive Director	\$230,000	\$200,000	15.0%
22 (tie)	Department of Motor Vehicles	Executive Director	\$230,000	\$200,952	14.5%
24	Texas Education Agency	Commissioner	\$220,375	\$220,375	0.0%
25	Department of Housing and Community Affairs	Executive Director	\$216,351	\$192,299	12.5%

^a This analysis is based on the 65 executive officers included in the market analysis study.

^b Fiscal year 2022 base salaries were pulled from [A Report on Executive Compensation at State Agencies](#), SAO Report 22-706, August 2022.

^c The agency had an interim executive officer as of June 30, 2026.

^d The salary is current as of September 1, 2026.

^e The agency had an interim executive officer as of September 1, 2026.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Uniform Statewide Payroll/Personnel System, Human Resource Information System, and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.

Chapter 1-C

Top 50 Highest-paid Management Employees at State Agencies

To understand how executive officer pay is aligned between each other and among employees in other executive management positions, the State Auditor's Office reviewed the top 50 highest-paid management employees across the 64 state agencies included in the scope of this study. (See text box for definitions of types of positions.)

Differences in salary disparity may exist between executive officers and management staff.

Types of Positions

A **classified position** is included in the State's Position Classification Plan in Article IX of the General Appropriations Act.

An **exempt position** included in this study is listed in the General Appropriations Act under a state agency's schedule of exempt positions or is exempted by the Governor from the State's Position Classification Plan.

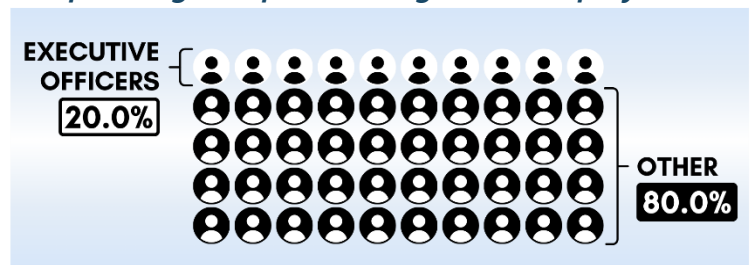
An **unclassified position** is neither classified nor exempt. In this report, those positions are at state agencies that are not required to follow the State's Position Classification Plan.

Of the 50 highest-paid employees in management positions:

- Ten (20.0 percent) were executive officers (see Figure 7).
- Forty (80.0 percent) were in other management positions. Of those 40 positions:
 - Thirty-six were in classified positions assigned to salary groups B34, B35, and B36 in Salary Schedule B.⁹ The 36 classified positions were all deputy directors.
 - Three were in unclassified positions at the Higher Education Coordinating Board.
 - One was in a chief scientific officer position that is exempt from the State's Position Classification Plan.

Figure 7

Top 50 Highest-paid Management Employees



⁹ Salary groups in Salary Schedule B can be found at [State of Texas Salary Schedules](#).

The executive officers at the Department of Public Safety and the Health and Human Services Commission were the two highest-paid executive officers as of June 30, 2026. Figure 8 lists the job titles, annual base salaries, employee types, and salary groups for the highest-paid management positions at state agencies.

Figure 8

Top 50 Highest-paid Management Employees at State Agencies as of June 30, 2026^a

Rank	Agency	Job Title	Annual Base Salary	Employee Type	Salary Group	Executive Officer of Agency?
1	Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	Chief Scientific Officer	\$671,300	Exempt	None	No
2	Department of Public Safety	Director	\$390,908	Exempt	10	Yes
3	Health and Human Services Commission	Executive Commissioner	\$345,250	Exempt	10	Yes
4	Department of Transportation	Executive Director	\$344,000	Exempt	10	Yes
5 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$335,710	Classified	B36	No
5 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$335,710	Classified	B36	No
7	Health and Human Services Commission	Deputy Director IV	\$327,857	Classified	B36	No
8	Higher Education Coordinating Board	Commissioner of Higher Education Coordinating Board	\$325,000	Exempt	9	Yes
9 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director IV	\$320,000	Classified	B36	No
9 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director IV	\$320,000	Classified	B36	No
9 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director IV	\$320,000	Classified	B36	No
9 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$320,000	Classified	B36	No
13	Department of Criminal Justice	Executive Director	\$319,813	Exempt	10	Yes
14	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$318,636	Classified	B36	No
15 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$306,385	Classified	B36	No
15 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$306,385	Classified	B36	No
17 (tie)	Higher Education Coordinating Board	Deputy Commissioner	\$305,287	Unclassified	None	No
17 (tie)	Higher Education Coordinating Board	Deputy Commissioner	\$305,287	Unclassified	None	No

Rank	Agency	Job Title	Annual Base Salary	Employee Type	Salary Group	Executive Officer of Agency?
19 (tie)	Department of Family and Protective Services	Commissioner	\$300,000	Exempt	9	Yes
19 (tie)	Department of State Health Services ^b	Commissioner	\$300,000	Exempt	9	Yes
19 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director IV	\$300,000	Classified	B36	No
22	Health and Human Services Commission	Deputy Director III	\$295,002	Classified	B35	No
23 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director III	\$288,655	Classified	B35	No
23 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director III	\$288,655	Classified	B35	No
23 (tie)	Department of Transportation	Deputy Director III	\$288,655	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No

Rank	Agency	Job Title	Annual Base Salary	Employee Type	Salary Group	Executive Officer of Agency?
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
26 (tie)	Department of Public Safety	Deputy Director III	\$285,000	Classified	B35	No
41	Parks and Wildlife Department ^c	Executive Director	\$284,324	Exempt	8	Yes
42	Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	Chief Executive Officer	\$282,277	Exempt	9	Yes
43	Department of Information Resources	Executive Director	\$279,982	Exempt	9	Yes
44 (tie)	Health and Human Services Commission	Deputy Director II	\$277,446	Classified	B34	No
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44 (tie)	Health and Human Services Commission	Deputy Director II	\$277,446	Classified	B34	No
44 (tie)	Health and Human Services Commission	Deputy Director II	\$277,446	Classified	B34	No
44 (tie)	Health and Human Services Commission	Deputy Director II	\$277,446	Classified	B34	No
49	Higher Education Coordinating Board	Chief Information Officer	\$276,000	Unclassified	None	No
50	Texas Education Agency	Deputy Director II	\$274,633	Classified	B34	No

^a This analysis is based on the annual base salary as of June 30, 2026, for the listed job titles and excluded medical and investment positions; judicial compensation; higher education institutions and legislative agencies; elected officials; the Secretary of State; the Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney; the Teacher Retirement System; the Employees Retirement System; the Permanent School Fund Corporation; Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company; Texas Cyber Command; and self-directed, semi-independent agencies. This analysis also does not include the presiding officer or board members of the Board of Pardons and Paroles or the chairs or commissioners of the Commission on Environmental Quality, the Public Utility Commission, the Water Development Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

^b The agency had an interim executive officer as of June 30, 2026.

^c The salary is current as of September 1, 2026.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.

Chapter 2-A

Executive Officer Recommended Salary Groups

As discussed in [Chapter 1-A](#), a market analysis study was conducted in accordance with the General Appropriations Act. This chapter offers recommendations on salary range assignments for certain executive officers. (See market analysis factors in the text box and [Chapter 2-B](#) for recommended salary range adjustments to the Schedule of Exempt Positions.)

Twenty-five executive officer positions are recommended for salary group reassignments to better align with the market.

This market analysis considered the following factors:

- Executive officer salaries and their assigned salary groups.
- The agency's annual appropriations and the number of authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) employees.
- The agency's mission.
- Market average compensation for similar executive positions.
- Salaries of other state employees.
- Specialized education, experience, and skills required for the position.

For this study, the State Auditor's Office categorized agencies into one of three executive officer compensation tiers. These tiers categorize agencies according to recommended salary groups. Moving executive officer positions that are below market averages for comparable positions into a salary group with a higher corresponding salary range would help provide those agencies with greater flexibility to offer more competitive salaries.

Recommended adjustments are detailed in Figure 9, Figure 10, and Figure 11 on the following pages, starting on page 22.



Five of the 24 executive officer positions in Tier I are recommended for salary group reassignments.

Tier I includes 24 state agencies, many of which are responsible for some of the most complex missions, manage extensive budgets, and have the largest authorized FTE counts. For example, the Health and Human Services Commission had an annual average of 37,856.5 FTEs and the Department of Criminal Justice had 32,211.7 FTEs as of August 31, 2025.¹⁰

Figure 9 on the next page lists the current and recommended salary groups for Tier I positions (sorted from highest salary to lowest salary). Only 10 of the Tier I positions were listed in the top 50 highest-paid management positions (see [Chapter 1-C](#)).

The executive officer positions for Tier I agencies have the following current or recommended exempt salary groups:

- Salary Group 7 (\$166,860 to \$268,900).
- Salary Group 8 (\$191,889 to \$308,807).
- Salary Group 9 (\$220,626 to \$355,608).
- Salary Group 10 (\$242,800 to \$390,908).

See [Appendix 2](#) for detailed information about the recommended salary groups for each executive officer position.

¹⁰ See [Full-time Equivalent State Employees for Fiscal Year 2025](#), (SAO Report 26-704, March 2026).

Figure 9

Tier I – Current and Recommended Executive Officer Compensation

Agency	Executive Officer Salary as of June 30, 2026	Current Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Department of Public Safety	\$390,908	10	
Health and Human Services Commission	\$345,250	10	
Department of Transportation	\$344,000	10	
Higher Education Coordinating Board	\$325,000	9	10
Department of Criminal Justice	\$319,813	10	
Department of Family and Protective Services	\$300,000	9	
Department of State Health Services ^a	\$300,000	9	
Parks and Wildlife Department ^b	\$284,324	8	
Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	\$282,277	9	
Department of Information Resources	\$279,982	9	
Department of Insurance	\$268,900	7	8
Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council	\$268,900	7	
Commission on Environmental Quality	\$257,858	8	
Public Utility Commission of Texas	\$257,858	7	
Alcoholic Beverage Commission ^c	\$249,000	7	
Water Development Board	\$245,000	7	
Military Department	\$240,000	7	8
Juvenile Justice Department	\$237,802	8	
Department of Licensing and Regulation ^d	\$235,000	7	8
Texas Workforce Commission	\$234,500	7	8
Department of Motor Vehicles	\$230,000	7	
Public Finance Authority	\$230,000	7	
Texas Education Agency	\$220,375	9	
Facilities Commission	\$208,161	7	

^a The salary reflects the NTE rate. The agency had an interim executive officer as of June 30, 2026.

^b The salary is current as of September 1, 2026.

^c The salary reflects the NTE rate. The agency had an interim executive officer as of September 1, 2026.

^d Senate Bill 3070 (89th Legislature, Regular Session) abolished the Texas Lottery Commission and transferred the administration of the state lottery and the licensing and regulation of charitable bingo to the Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.



Fourteen of the 29 executive officer positions in Tier II are recommended for salary group reassignments.

Tier II includes 29 executive officer positions. The executive officer positions for Tier II agencies have the following current or recommended exempt salary groups:

- Salary Group 4 (\$109,695 to \$176,839).
- Salary Group 5 (\$126,175 to \$203,337).
- Salary Group 6 (\$145,127 to \$233,849).
- Salary Group 7 (\$166,860 to \$268,900).

Most of these positions are at mid-sized state agencies, defined for the purposes of this report as having between 100 and 799 authorized FTE employees.

Figure 10 on the next page lists the current and recommended salary groups for Tier II positions (sorted from highest salary to lowest salary). See [Appendix 2](#) for detailed information about the recommended salary groups for each executive officer position.

Figure 10

Tier II – Current and Recommended Executive Officer Compensation

Agency	Executive Officer Salary as of June 30, 2026	Current Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
State Office of Administrative Hearings	\$233,849	6	
Department of Housing and Community Affairs	\$216,351	6	7
Texas Board of Nursing	\$203,337	5	6
Preservation Board	\$195,792	6	
Historical Commission	\$195,000	6	
Animal Health Commission	\$194,807	6	
School for the Deaf	\$185,000	5	6
Office of Capital and Forensic Writs	\$185,000	5	6
Office of State-Federal Relations ^a	\$185,000	7	
Department of Insurance, Workers' Compensation	\$182,328	6	
Securities Board	\$177,836	5	6
School for the Blind and Visually Impaired	\$177,824	5	6
Office of Public Utility Counsel	\$176,839	4	5
Office of Public Insurance Counsel	\$176,839	4	5
Texas Medical Board	\$174,776	5	6
State Commission on Judicial Conduct	\$173,535	5	
Commission on State Emergency Communications	\$171,688	4	5
Veterans Commission	\$170,098	5	6
Pension Review Board ^b	\$170,000	4	
Bond Review Board	\$167,500	4	5
State Office of Risk Management	\$166,887	5	
Office of Injured Employee Counsel	\$165,339	5	
Board of Pharmacy	\$165,077	5	
Commission on Law Enforcement	\$163,428	4	5
Texas Ethics Commission	\$163,221	5	
Library and Archives Commission	\$162,848	5	
Soil and Water Conservation Board	\$155,000	4	5

Agency	Executive Officer Salary as of June 30, 2026	Current Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Commission of Fire Protection	\$154,000	5	
Texas State Board of Dental Examiners	\$148,726	4	
^a Although the Office of State-Federal Relations is in Salary Group 7, it was kept in Tier II due to its budget size and number of authorized FTEs.			
^b The salary reflects the NTE rate. The agency had an interim executive officer as of September 25, 2026.			

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.



Six of the 12 executive officer positions in Tier III are recommended for salary group reassignments.

Tier III includes 12 executive officer positions at agencies with fewer than 100 authorized FTE employees. The executive officer positions for Tier III agencies have the following current or recommended exempt salary groups:

- Salary Group 1 (\$70,000 to \$112,750).
- Salary Group 2 (\$82,915 to \$133,658).
- Salary Group 3 (\$95,378 to \$153,717).
- Salary Group 4 (\$109,695 to \$176,839).

Figure 11 on the next page lists the current and recommended salary groups for Tier III positions (sorted from highest salary to lowest salary). See [Appendix 2](#) for detailed information about the recommended salary groups for each executive officer position.

Figure 11

Tier III – Current and Recommended Executive Officer Compensation

Agency	Executive Officer Salary as of June 30, 2026	Current Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Racing Commission	\$139,851	3	4
Commission on the Arts	\$139,623	3	4
Board of Plumbing Examiners	\$134,827	3	4
Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ^a	\$128,024	3	
Commission on Jail Standards	\$125,000	3	4
Texas Emergency Services Retirement System	\$122,500	3	
Executive Council of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners	\$118,842	2	
State Law Library	\$117,851	2	3
Board of Professional Geoscientists	\$116,655	2	3
Board of Chiropractic Examiners	\$115,365	2	
Funeral Service Commission ^b	\$112,892	2	
Optometry Board	\$104,000	2	

^a The Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is administratively attached to the Department of Licensing and Regulation through September 2027.

^b The salary reflects the NTE rate. The agency had an interim executive officer as of June 30, 2026.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.

Chapter 2-B

Salary Range Adjustments

Salary ranges serve as the foundation for administering base pay; therefore, it is important to review and adjust them as needed so they remain competitive in attracting and retaining top talent. (See text box for definition of a salary range adjustment.)

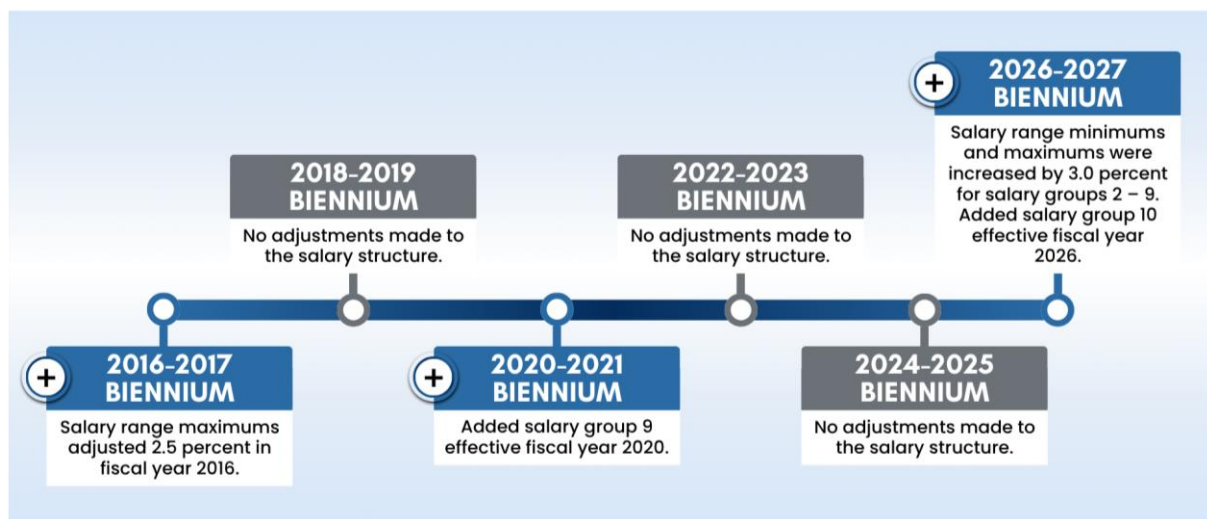
The State currently offers 10 salary groups for executive officers, each with corresponding salary ranges. The 89th Legislature added Salary Group 10 and increased the salary range minimums and maximums for Salary Groups 2 through 9 (see Figure 12). However, based on the market analysis and review of pay compression at some state agencies, adjustments to the salary ranges may be necessary to provide more flexibility to agencies to offer competitive compensation to executive officers.

Salary Range Adjustment

For the purposes of this report, a salary range adjustment is defined as a change in the minimum and/or maximum of a salary range.

Figure 12

History of Salary Range Movement of the Schedule of Exempt Positions ¹¹



Sources: The General Appropriations Acts (84th through 89th Legislatures).

¹¹ In fiscal year 2016, the Legislature provided an increase of 2.5 percent for certain employees who contributed to retirement at the Employees Retirement System; therefore, the maximums of the salary ranges were adjusted.

Expanding existing range maximums by 2.5 percent will allow the executive officer salary structure to remain competitive and help retain leadership at state agencies.

As reported in [Chapter 1-A](#), the salary range midpoints for some executive officer positions were below the market average of similar professional positions. In addition, in [Chapter 1-B](#) pay compression at state agencies remains a persistent issue. However, if the recommendations to the executive officer salary group assignments in [Chapter 2-A](#) are implemented, the salary range midpoints would improve and place the overall midpoint averages at levels more competitive with the market.

To further improve the market competitiveness of the salary structure of executive officers and add flexibility for state agencies to address and prevent pay compression, the following changes are recommended to the Schedule of Exempt Positions:

- **Adjust the salary range maximums by 2.5 percent.** There is a minimal cost associated with this change, and it is closely aligned with current market standards.¹² The private sector typically reviews and adjusts their salary structures annually. The minimal cost of \$251 reflects the difference between the Texas Education Agency's executive officer's current salary and the minimum of the position's assigned salary group.
- **Delete Salary Group 1 and renumber the salary groups.** Salary Group 1 is no longer being used and does not provide a competitive salary range for executive officers in the current market.

Figure 13 on the next page presents the current Salary Schedule for the 2026-2027 biennium and the proposed Salary Schedule for the 2028-2029 biennium for the Schedule of Exempt Positions.

¹² According to salary budget surveys conducted by leading compensation and benefits organizations (WorldatWork, Mercer, and Economic Research Institute), the average adjustment in salary structures for 2026 was projected to be approximately 2.5 percent.

Figure 13

***Recommended Changes to the Salary Ranges
for the Schedule of Exempt Positions***

Current 2026–2027 Biennium				Recommended for the 2028–2029 Biennium			
Salary Group	 Minimum	 Midpoint	 Maximum	Salary Group	 Minimum	 Midpoint	 Maximum
1	\$70,000	\$91,375	\$112,750	1	<i>[Proposed to be deleted]</i>		
2	\$82,915	\$108,287	\$133,658	2	\$82,915	\$109,957	\$136,999
3	\$95,378	\$124,548	\$153,717	3	\$95,378	\$126,469	\$157,560
4	\$109,695	\$143,267	\$176,839	4	\$109,695	\$145,477	\$181,260
5	\$126,175	\$164,756	\$203,337	5	\$126,175	\$167,298	\$208,420
6	\$145,127	\$189,488	\$233,849	6	\$145,127	\$192,411	\$239,695
7	\$166,860	\$217,880	\$268,900	7	\$166,860	\$221,241	\$275,623
8	\$191,889	\$250,348	\$308,807	8	\$191,889	\$254,208	\$316,527
9	\$220,626	\$288,117	\$355,608	9	\$220,626	\$292,562	\$364,498
10	\$242,800	\$316,854	\$390,908	10	\$242,800	\$321,740	\$400,681

Sources: General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature), Section 3.04, page IX-23, and the State Auditor's Office's calculation of midpoint amounts and recommendations.



Appendix 1

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Objectives

The objectives of this project were to:

- Compare exempt positions to market average compensation for similar executive positions.
- Compare exempt position salaries to classified position salaries.
- Prepare an analysis of exempt position compensation that considers agency size and complexity, agency appropriations, and full-time equivalent (FTE) employee levels.

Scope

The scope of this report included 65 executive officer positions at 64 state agencies¹³ that were exempt from the State's Position Classification Plan during the 2026-2027 biennium.

¹³ The Department of Insurance has 2 commissioners (the Commissioner of Insurance and the Commissioner of Workers' Compensation), which created a total of 65 executive officer positions to be reviewed.

The following members of the State Auditor's staff performed the study:



- Lara Foronda Tai, CCP, PHR, SHRM-CP (Project Manager)
- Zoe Lipnicky, SHRM-CP (Assistant Project Manager)
- Sarah Daigle, CIA, CRMA (Quality Control Reviewer)

This study was conducted in accordance with Article IX, Section 3.08, Classification Study on Scheduled Exempt Positions, page IX-25, the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature). The annual base salaries of executive officers and classified employees included in this report were current as of June 30, 2026.

This study excluded executive officer positions at the courts; higher education institutions; legislative agencies; and self-directed, semi-independent agencies. In addition, executive officer positions were excluded at these agencies:

- The Dementia Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.
- The Employees Retirement System.
- The Office of State Prosecuting Attorney.
- The Permanent School Fund Corporation.
- The Secretary of State.
- The Teacher Retirement System.
- Texas Cyber Command.
- Texas Treasury Safekeeping Trust Company.

This study also excluded the presiding officer or board members of the Board of Pardons and Paroles and the chairs and commissioners of:

- The Commission on Environmental Quality.
- The Public Utility Commission.
- The Texas Workforce Commission.
- The Water Development Board.

Elected officials were also not included in this study. Salaries for elected officials are determined as matters of public policy and are not tied directly to the market averages for similar professional positions.

Methodology

For this study, the State Auditor's Office analyzed executive officer pay at state agencies and other public and private sector entities, considering factors such as:

- The amount of the agency's annual appropriations for fiscal year 2027 and the complexity of the agency's operations.
- The agency's number of authorized FTE employees' caps for fiscal year 2027, including changes approved by the Governor and the Legislative Budget Board.
- The market average compensation for similar executive and professional positions.
- The executive officer position's annual base salary compared to the annual base salaries of classified positions within the agency and compared to executive officer positions from different agencies.
- Specialized experience, education, or skills required for each position.

Fieldwork was conducted from January 2026 through September 2026.

This project was not an audit; therefore, the information in this report was not subject to all the tests and confirmations that would be performed in an audit. However, the information in this report was subject to certain quality control procedures to ensure accuracy.

In developing recommendations, the State Auditor's Office also reviewed compensation rates for similar work performed in the public and private sectors and compared those rates to the midpoints of existing salary ranges to determine the market competitiveness of the salary ranges for the positions reviewed. Market salary data for each survey was aged to January 1, 2027.

In addition to reviewing compensation data compiled by external parties, the State Auditor's Office conducted surveys of executive officers and human resources directors at the state agencies included in the scope of this study and at selected public sector entities in March 2026.

In developing the recommended salary groups and ranges, the State Auditor's Office reviewed:

- *Executive Compensation 2025: U.S. Executive Survey*, Compdata Surveys & Consulting, Salary.com, July 2025.

- *Superintendent Salary Reports*, Texas Education Agency, March 2026.
- *WorldatWork Salary Budget Survey 2025-2026*, 52nd Annual Executive Report & Analysis, 2025.
- *2025 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Salary Survey*, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, December 2025.
- *2025 Mercer Benchmark Database/Total Remuneration Survey, South Central Metropolitan Areas*, Marsh & McLennan Companies, April 2025.
- *2025 Nonprofits Salary Survey – United States National*, 2025 Economic Research Institute, March 2025.
- *2025 National Compensation Association of State Governments (NCASG) Salary Survey*, July 2025.
- *2025 Nonprofit Organizations Salary and Benefits Report*, The NonProfit Times, Bluewater Nonprofit Solutions, September 2024.
- *2025 Executive Compensation Survey*, Willis Tower Watson Data Services, April 2025.
- *2025 Texas Society for Healthcare Human Resources Administration and Education Wage and Benefit Survey*, Werling Associates Inc., February 2025.
- Occupational Employment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, May 2025.
- 2026 Mercer Quick Pulse Survey – US Compensation Planning Survey March Edition.
- Economic Research Institute, *National Compensation Forecast*, April 2026.
- Additional salary information that the state agencies provided.

Salaries for full-time, classified state employees and exempt executive officers as of June 30, 2026, were extracted from the following Office of Comptroller of Public Accounts' systems:

- Uniform Statewide Payroll/Personnel System (Historical Data).
- Human Resource Information System.
- Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System.

Appendix 2

Market Analysis and Salary Group Recommendations for Executive Officer Positions

To determine the market average for 65 executive officer positions at 64 state agencies, the State Auditor's Office blended market data from public, nonprofit, and private sector salary survey sources. To supplement that data, the State Auditor's Office sent surveys to agencies in Texas quasi-governmental agencies, major Texas cities and counties, and the 10 most populous states outside of Texas.

This analysis considered the nature and complexity of each agency, including factors such as the number of authorized full-time equivalent employees, the amount of the agency's annual appropriations, and the agency's scope of responsibilities. The analysis also considered requirements for executive officer positions, such as specialized or advanced degrees. The analysis did not consider the job performance or the experience level of the individuals currently performing the jobs.

As discussed in [Chapter 1-A](#), 25 executive officer positions are currently assigned to a salary group with a pay range that may limit the agency's ability to offer a market-competitive salary.

Figure 14 beginning on the next page lists the executive officers by General Appropriations Act article and provides the following information:

- Salaries as of June 30, 2026, or the not-to-exceed (NTE) amount authorized in the General Appropriations Act for positions that had an interim executive officer or a vacant position as of that date.
- The NTE salary rates for the 2026-2027 biennium in the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature).
- The market average salaries for the positions.
- Current and recommended salary group placements.

The recommended salary group changes have no cost to implement for the majority of executive officer positions.

Figure 14

***Market Analysis and Recommended Salary Group
Assignments for Executive Officer Positions***

Executive Officer Title	Salary as of June 30, 2026	NTE Rate for 2026–2027 Biennium ^a	Market Average	Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Article I - General Government					
Bond Review Board <i>Executive Director</i>	\$167,500	\$167,500	\$174,088	4	5
Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	\$282,277	\$282,277	\$301,310	9	No change
Commission on State Emergency Communications <i>Executive Director</i>	\$171,688	\$171,688	\$173,084	4	5
Commission on the Arts <i>Executive Director</i>	\$139,623	\$139,623	\$154,536	3	4
Department of Information Resources <i>Executive Director</i>	\$279,982	\$279,982	\$313,860	9	No change
Facilities Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$208,161	\$208,161	\$226,351	7	No change
Historical Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$195,000	\$196,591	\$213,469	6	No Change
Library and Archives Commission <i>Director - Librarian</i>	\$162,848	\$162,848	\$186,894	5	No Change
Office of State-Federal Relations <i>Executive Director</i>	\$185,000	\$185,000	\$163,428	7	No Change
Pension Review Board ^b <i>Executive Director</i>	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$151,339	4	No Change
Preservation Board <i>Executive Director</i>	\$195,792	\$207,367	\$211,956	6	No change
Public Finance Authority <i>Executive Director</i>	\$230,000	\$230,000	\$230,225	7	No change
State Office of Risk Management <i>Executive Director</i>	\$166,887	\$166,887	\$177,320	5	No Change

Executive Officer Title	Salary as of June 30, 2026	NTE Rate for 2026–2027 Biennium ^a	Market Average	Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Texas Emergency Services Retirement System <i>Executive Director</i>	\$122,500	\$131,981	\$140,597	3	No change
Texas Ethics Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$163,221	\$163,221	\$180,456	5	No change
Veterans Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$170,098	\$170,098	\$189,295	5	6
Article II – Health and Human Services					
Department of Family and Protective Services <i>Commissioner</i>	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$302,445	9	No change
Department of State Health Services ^c <i>Commissioner</i>	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$294,053	9	No change
Health and Human Services Commission <i>Executive Commissioner</i>	\$345,250	\$345,250	\$363,576	10	No change
Article III – Education					
Higher Education Coordinating Board <i>Commissioner of Higher Education</i>	\$325,000	\$325,000	\$328,867	9	10
School for the Blind and Visually Impaired <i>Superintendent</i>	\$177,824	\$177,824	\$185,016	5	6
School for the Deaf <i>Superintendent</i>	\$185,000	\$185,000	\$194,707	5	6
Texas Education Agency ^d <i>Commissioner of Education</i>	\$220,375	\$325,000	\$288,350	9	No change
Article IV – The Judiciary					
Office of Capital and Forensic Writs <i>Executive Director</i>	\$185,000	\$185,000	\$190,040	5	6
Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council <i>Administrative Director</i>	\$268,900	\$268,900	\$234,096	7	No change
State Commission on Judicial Conduct <i>Executive Director</i>	\$173,535	\$173,535	\$162,385	5	No change
State Law Library <i>Director</i>	\$117,851	\$121,360	\$135,620	2	3

Executive Officer Title	Salary as of June 30, 2026	NTE Rate for 2026–2027 Biennium ^a	Market Average	Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Article V – Public Safety and Criminal Justice					
Alcoholic Beverage Commission ^e <i>Administrator</i>	\$249,000	\$249,000	\$232,465	7	No change
Commission on Fire Protection <i>Executive Director</i>	\$154,000	\$154,000	\$178,462	5	No change
Commission on Jail Standards <i>Executive Director</i>	\$125,000	\$143,323	\$150,562	3	4
Commission on Law Enforcement <i>Executive Director</i>	\$163,428	\$163,428	\$179,925	4	5
Department of Criminal Justice <i>Executive Director</i>	\$319,813	\$319,813	\$326,609	10	No change
Department of Public Safety <i>Director</i>	\$390,908	\$390,908	\$360,643	10	No change
Juvenile Justice Department <i>Executive Director</i>	\$237,802	\$237,802	\$256,262	8	No change
Military Department <i>Adjutant General</i>	\$240,000	\$240,000	\$250,183	7	8
Article VI – Natural Resources					
Animal Health Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$194,807	\$194,807	\$202,460	6	No change
Commission on Environmental Quality <i>Executive Director</i>	\$257,858	\$257,858	\$279,965	8	No change
Parks and Wildlife Department ^f <i>Executive Director</i>	\$284,324	\$299,813	\$273,393	8	No change
Soil and Water Conservation Board <i>Executive Director</i>	\$155,000	\$160,262	\$175,698	4	5
Water Development Board <i>Executive Administrator</i>	\$245,000	\$245,000	\$242,988	7	No change
Article VII – Business and Economic Development					
Department of Housing and Community Affairs <i>Executive Director</i>	\$216,351	\$216,351	\$235,167	6	7
Department of Motor Vehicles <i>Executive Director</i>	\$230,000	\$230,000	\$248,184	7	No change

Executive Officer Title	Salary as of June 30, 2026	NTE Rate for 2026–2027 Biennium ^a	Market Average	Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Department of Transportation <i>Executive Director</i>	\$344,000	\$344,000	\$360,363	10	No change
Texas Workforce Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$234,500	\$234,520	\$263,935	7	8
Article VIII - Regulatory					
Board of Chiropractic Examiners <i>Executive Director</i>	\$115,365	\$115,365	\$119,598	2	No change
Board of Pharmacy <i>Executive Director</i>	\$165,077	\$165,077	\$177,981	5	No change
Board of Plumbing Examiners <i>Executive Director</i>	\$134,827	\$134,827	\$149,486	3	4
Board of Professional Geoscientists <i>Executive Director</i>	\$116,655	\$116,655	\$128,240	2	3
Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ^g <i>Executive Director</i>	\$128,024	\$128,024	\$137,830	3	No change
Department of Insurance <i>Commissioner of Insurance</i>	\$268,900	\$268,900	\$257,755	7	8
Department of Insurance, Workers' Compensation <i>Commissioner of Workers' Compensation</i>	\$182,328	\$182,328	\$208,461	6	No change
Department of Licensing and Regulation ^h <i>Executive Director</i>	\$235,000	\$235,000	\$255,222	7	8
Executive Council of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners <i>Executive Director</i>	\$118,842	\$118,843	\$120,948	2	No change
Funeral Service Commission ^c <i>Executive Director</i>	\$112,892	\$112,892	\$118,857	2	No change
Office of Injured Employee Counsel <i>Public Counsel</i>	\$165,339	\$165,339	\$182,203	5	No change
Office of Public Insurance Counsel <i>Public Counsel</i>	\$176,839	\$176,839	\$177,136	4	5
Office of Public Utility Counsel <i>Public Counsel</i>	\$176,839	\$176,839	\$178,214	4	5
Optometry Board <i>Executive Director</i>	\$104,000	\$107,237	\$116,625	2	No change

Executive Officer Title	Salary as of June 30, 2026	NTE Rate for 2026–2027 Biennium ^a	Market Average	Salary Group	Recommended Salary Group
Public Utility Commission of Texas <i>Executive Director</i>	\$257,858	\$257,858	\$234,566	7	No change
Racing Commission <i>Executive Director</i>	\$139,851	\$142,335	\$155,734	3	4
Securities Board <i>Securities Commissioner</i>	\$177,836	\$177,836	\$192,957	5	6
State Office of Administrative Hearings <i>Chief Administrative Law Judge</i>	\$233,849	\$233,849	\$205,724	6	No change
Texas Board of Nursing <i>Executive Director</i>	\$203,337	\$203,337	\$187,426	5	6
Texas Medical Board <i>Executive Director</i>	\$174,776	\$174,776	\$195,353	5	6
Texas State Board of Dental Examiners <i>Executive Director</i>	\$148,726	\$148,726	\$151,795	4	No change

^a NTE rates for the 2026-2027 biennium were verified by the Legislative Budget Board and subject to change due to the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature), Section 3.04.

^b The salary reflects the not-to-exceed rate. The agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 25, 2026.

^c The salary reflects the not-to-exceed rate. The agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of June 30, 2026.

^d The agency's executive officer's salary is currently \$251 below the minimum of the assigned salary group for the position.

^e The salary reflects the not-to-exceed rate. The agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 1, 2026.

^f The salary is current as of September 1, 2026.

^g The Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is administratively attached to the Department of Licensing and Regulation through September 2027.

^h Senate Bill 3070 (89th Legislature, Regular Session) abolished the Texas Lottery Commission and transferred the administration of the state lottery and the licensing and regulation of charitable bingo to the Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System, and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System; and the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature).

Appendix 3

NTE Rates for Fiscal Years 2025, 2026, and 2027

Figure 15 shows the executive officer pay (as of June 30, 2026) and the not-to-exceed (NTE) rates for fiscal years 2025, 2026, and 2027. The table is organized by General Appropriations Act article. The NTE rates for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 were identical. Most of the executive officers were making the same salary as their 2026-2027 biennium NTE rate.

[Chapter 1-A](#) provides more information about NTE rates.

Executive Officer Pay and NTE Rates

As of June 30, 2026, 49 executive officers were making the same base salary as their 2026-2027 biennium NTE rate. (This excludes four agencies that had vacant or interim executive officers.)

Although agencies may have received higher NTE rates for their executive officer position, this does not guarantee that an executive officer will receive a salary at that rate.

Figure 15

Comparison of the Fiscal Years 2025, 2026, and 2027 NTE Rates

Agency Name	Salary as of June 30, 2026	Fiscal Year 2025 NTE Rate	NTE Rate for 2026-2027 Biennium ^a
Article I – General Government			
Bond Review Board	\$167,500	\$156,742	\$167,500
Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas	\$282,277	\$282,277	\$282,277
Commission on State Emergency Communications	\$171,688	\$171,688	\$171,688
Commission on the Arts	\$139,623	\$139,623	\$139,623
Department of Information Resources	\$279,982	\$276,000	\$279,982
Facilities Commission	\$208,161	\$208,161	\$208,161
Historical Commission	\$195,000	\$175,513	\$196,591
Library and Archives Commission	\$162,848	\$162,848	\$162,848
Office of State-Federal Relations	\$185,000	\$149,240	\$185,000
Pension Review Board	Not Applicable ^b	\$149,240	\$170,000

Agency Name	Salary as of June 30, 2026	Fiscal Year 2025 NTE Rate	NTE Rate for 2026- 2027 Biennium ^a
Preservation Board	\$195,792	\$205,772	\$207,367
Public Finance Authority	\$230,000	\$230,000	\$230,000
State Office of Risk Management	\$166,887	\$159,574	\$166,887
Texas Emergency Services Retirement System	\$122,500	\$131,981	\$131,981
Texas Ethics Commission	\$163,221	\$152,604	\$163,221
Veterans Commission	\$170,098	\$170,098	\$170,098
Article II – Health and Human Services			
Department of Family and Protective Services	\$300,000	\$268,192	\$300,000
Department of State Health Services	Not Applicable ^c	\$271,083	\$300,000
Health and Human Services Commission	\$345,250	\$345,250	\$345,250
Article III – Education			
Higher Education Coordinating Board	\$325,000	\$325,000	\$325,000
School for the Blind and Visually Impaired	\$177,824	\$172,398	\$177,824
School for the Deaf	\$185,000	\$185,000	\$185,000
Texas Education Agency	\$220,375	\$325,000	\$325,000
Article IV – The Judiciary			
Office of Capital and Forensic Writs	\$185,000	\$185,000	\$185,000
Office of Court Administration, Texas Judicial Council	\$268,900	\$211,500	\$268,900
State Commission on Judicial Conduct	\$173,535	\$145,284	\$173,535
State Law Library	\$117,851	\$121,360	\$121,360
Article V – Public Safety and Criminal Justice			
Alcoholic Beverage Commission	Not Applicable ^d	\$203,743	\$249,000
Commission on Fire Protection	\$154,000	\$140,000	\$154,000
Commission on Jail Standards	\$125,000	\$127,619	\$143,323
Commission on Law Enforcement	\$163,428	\$163,428	\$163,428
Department of Criminal Justice	\$319,813	\$299,813	\$319,813

Agency Name	Salary as of June 30, 2026	Fiscal Year 2025 NTE Rate	NTE Rate for 2026- 2027 Biennium ^a
Department of Public Safety	\$390,908	\$299,813	\$390,908
Juvenile Justice Department	\$237,802	\$237,802	\$237,802
Military Department	\$240,000	\$210,007	\$240,000
Article VI – Natural Resources			
Animal Health Commission	\$194,807	\$194,807	\$194,807
Commission on Environmental Quality	\$257,858	\$257,858	\$257,858
Parks and Wildlife Department ^e	\$284,324	\$299,813	\$299,813
Soil and Water Conservation Board	\$155,000	\$160,262	\$160,262
Water Development Board	\$245,000	\$219,284	\$245,000
Article VII – Business and Economic Development			
Department of Housing and Community Affairs	\$216,351	\$216,351	\$216,351
Department of Motor Vehicles	\$230,000	\$230,000	\$230,000
Department of Transportation	\$344,000	\$344,000	\$344,000
Texas Workforce Commission	\$234,500	\$234,520	\$234,520
Article VIII – Regulatory			
Board of Chiropractic Examiners	\$115,365	\$108,720	\$115,365
Board of Pharmacy	\$165,077	\$156,336	\$165,077
Board of Plumbing Examiners	\$134,827	\$129,377	\$134,827
Board of Professional Geoscientists	\$116,655	\$116,655	\$116,655
Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners ^f	\$128,024	\$120,740	\$128,024
Department of Insurance	\$268,900	\$234,324	\$268,900
Department of Insurance, Workers' Compensation	\$182,328	\$182,328	\$182,328
Department of Licensing and Regulation ^g	\$235,000	\$190,000	\$235,000
Executive Council of Physical and Occupational Therapy Examiners	\$118,842	\$116,508	\$118,843
Funeral Service Commission	Not Applicable ^c	\$107,948	\$112,892
Office of Injured Employee Counsel	\$165,339	\$165,339	\$165,339

Agency Name	Salary as of June 30, 2026	Fiscal Year 2025 NTE Rate	NTE Rate for 2026-2027 Biennium ^a
Office of Public Insurance Counsel	\$176,839	\$160,262	\$176,839
Office of Public Utility Counsel	\$176,839	\$165,000	\$176,839
Optometry Board	\$104,000	\$107,237	\$107,237
Public Utility Commission of Texas	\$257,858	\$203,520	\$257,858
Racing Commission	\$139,851	\$142,335	\$142,335
Securities Board	\$177,836	\$177,836	\$177,836
State Office of Administrative Hearings	\$233,849	\$184,805	\$233,849
Texas Board of Nursing	\$203,337	\$171,547	\$203,337
Texas Medical Board	\$174,776	\$174,776	\$174,776
Texas State Board of Dental Examiners	\$148,726	\$141,867	\$148,726

^a NTE rates for the 2026-2027 biennium were verified by the Legislative Budget Board and subject to change due to the General Appropriations Act (89th Legislature), Section 3.04.

^b The agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 25, 2026.

^c The agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of June 30, 2026.

^d The agency had a vacant or interim executive officer as of September 1, 2026.

^e The salary is current as of September 1, 2026.

^f The Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is administratively attached to the Department of Licensing and Regulation through September 2027.

^g Senate Bill 3070 (89th Legislature, Regular Session) abolished the Texas Lottery Commission and transferred the administration of the state lottery and the licensing and regulation of charitable bingo to the Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Sources: The Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts' Human Resource Information System and Standardized Payroll/Personnel Reporting System, Legislative Budget Board, and the General Appropriations Acts (88th and 89th Legislatures).



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