

How the Model Compensation Scale Works

The model compensation scale for child care and development personnel works as a wage ladder that takes into consideration experience, responsibilities and education. Each row represents a position and each column displays an education requirement. Each cell in the table represents the hourly wage rate for a combination of position, years of service and education level. Some cells with NA values identify those combinations which are not applicable such as a combination of an assistant teacher position with a MA degree.

The base wage for a person with no experience and a minimum level of education requirement—6 to 12 units of ECE/CD—is determined by the living wage level for a single individual in Los Angeles County. This level is estimated to be \$10/hour in 2004 assuming that health insurance is provided by the employer. The base value in the matrix represents this living wage level which is the bottom left value in the table.

Starting from this base wage level of \$10¹, a child care worker would receive \$0.25 wage increase for each year of experience in the same child center. For example, an assistant teacher would earn \$10.25/hr after completing one year of service in the same center. Years of service column illustrates the wage increments for each additional year served in the same center. Wage rates would increase up to five years of service for each position. Zero (0) years of service refers to the starting position in a specific child care center. The rate of increase (\$.25) for each additional year of service is identical for all positions. This does not take into consideration merit increases which can vary and may take the place of an increase based on time on the job alone.

Regardless of experience, upon receiving a higher level of education, the worker's wage would increase by a certain increment depending on the level of education. The rate of increase between different education steps varies. For example, when an assistant teacher completes more than 12 units of ECE/ED (moving to the next step) her/his hourly wage would increase by \$.50. On the other hand, a worker (who may be an assistant teacher, teacher or a head teacher) who earns a BA degree (moving from 4th level to the 5th) would earn an additional \$2.5/hr. This scale places the greatest emphasis on educational attainment.

Finally, when a worker is promoted to a higher level of position with additional responsibilities, the wage level would go up by \$0.75 at a given education level. This rate of increase is fixed for all promotions. For example, when a teacher with three years of service and an AA degree (4th level of education) is promoted to a lead teacher, her/his hourly wage would increase from \$14.50 to \$15.25.

The mid range for Head/Lead teacher, under BA qualifications is \$18.75/hr. The full time monthly salary at this hourly rate is the equivalent of the average monthly salary for beginning California Elementary teachers. Top range (\$20.75) under BA plus qualifications results in a monthly salary which is the equivalent of a beginning pre-credentialed teacher for LAUSD.

¹ The scale version with an allowance for health coverage begins at \$11.00/hr.