



**County Technical Services, Inc.**  
**2021 County Salary Survey**

**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary ..... 1

Unemployment Rate in Colorado Is a Mixed Bag..... 1

The GDP ..... 1

The Employment Cost Index ..... 2

Turnaround in the Economy Is on Its Way..... 2

Participation in the 2021 CTSI County Wage Survey ..... 3

Vacation and Sick Leave ..... 3

Medical Costs..... 4

Conclusion ..... 4

2021 Reported Wages by Benchmark Job Titles..... 5

Average Wage by County Revenue Group..... 7

Chart-Average Wage by County Revenue Group ..... 9

Chart-Median Wage by County Revenue Group..... 10

## **Executive Summary**

The economy took a tailspin in 2020 due to the COVID-19 virus. For various portions of the year, schools were closed, dining and shopping establishments were not in operation, and a statewide stay at home order was in effect. Parents found themselves home-schooling their children while trying to balance work obligations.

Fortunately, the economic recession did not last long. By January of 2021, robust economic growth and consumer spending were returning from their dramatic reductions. This was due in large part to stimulus programs enacted by Congress.

The 2021 economic forecast is much improved, following the quick recession cycle of 2020. As noted by KC Matthews, CFA, on the website [cobizmag.com](http://cobizmag.com), the 2020 economy witnessed one of the swiftest cycles in history, with economic contraction happening at a pace not seen since the government started keeping records in 1947. The economy contracted by 3.5% over the year, close to the average in periods of recession. Matthews believes it will take two years to recover from the material economic events, with the GDP landing at 4.1 %.

While the COVID-19 vaccination program is achieving country-wide success, it is expected that citizens will continue to stay home more. Inflation is a concern for the average American despite the American Rescue Plan. Thirty-eight thousand businesses have been dissolved since the pandemic struck. On the other hand, new business filings are up 16.4% in Colorado. *Legislative Council of the Joint Budget Committee, Colorado General Assembly-March 19, 2021. Economic Forecast, Executive Summary.*

As might be expected for tourism-based economies, Colorado's high-country communities have been the hardest hit by the pandemic. As summer approaches, restaurants and bars are opening in the mountain towns but they are faced with a labor shortage, partly due to a lack of affordable housing. Colorado's agricultural communities are dealing with drought and poor crops and the San Luis Valley is overall the hardest hit region of the state.

### **Unemployment Rate in Colorado Is a Mixed Bag**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics and as of this writing, unemployed workers make up 6.4% of Colorado's population of eligible workers, with information, finance, insurance, and construction having the largest number of unemployed. Sixteen thousand Colorado residents applied for unemployment for the first time in April 2021; 160,984 residents collected unemployment for the week that ended May 8, 2021. However, in May, nationwide, U.S. employers added 559,000 new jobs and unemployment fell to 5.8 percent from 6.1 percent the previous month. Mauer, Roy, "Job Growth in May Improves" SHRM News Alert.SHRM.org.

And, according to state labor department officials, Colorado's recovery is the sixth fastest in the United States, with 3.2 million workers in the labor force in April.

### **The GDP**

Gross domestic product (GDP) is a monetary measure of the value of all final goods and services produced in a period. The current GDP growth rate is 3.8%. In other words, the U.S. economy expanded at a rate of 3.8% in the first quarter of 2021.

## **The Employment Cost Index**

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) measures the cost of labor and can reveal whether the increased cost of labor is justified or not. Published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, at [bls.gov](http://bls.gov), it details the growth of total employment compensation.

The Bureau's April news release reported that compensation costs for civilian workers increased 0.9% for the 3-month period ending March 2021. Wages and salaries for these workers increased 1% and benefit costs increased 0.6%.

## **Turnaround in the Economy Is on Its Way**

According to the Colorado Sun, Chung, Tamara, "What's Working", May 22, 2021, 3.2 million Coloradans were in the workforce in April. 9 News reports as of May 4, 2021, 1,960,179 Coloradans have been fully vaccinated. With the vaccine available and summer on its way, the businesses that were shuttered for the pandemic are re-opening for business. Unemployment is down, and Congress pumped needed revenue into the economy and workers pockets. As more workers find their way back into the workforce, the recovery will be well on its way.

## Participation in the 2021 CTSI County Wage Survey

A total of twenty-six counties participated in the 2021 survey: Alamosa, Clear Creek, Conejos, Crowley, Elbert, Fremont, Gilpin, Grand, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Lake, Lincoln, Logan, Montezuma, Morgan, Ouray, Prowers, Rio Blanco, Rio Grande, Saguache, San Miguel, Sedgwick, Summit, Teller, Weld, and Yuma.

### Vacation and Sick Leave

Twenty-three counties provided information on their vacation and sick leave. This chart depicts the average earned vacation and sick time based on employee length of employment.

Sick Days-Management	Earned after years of service					
	less than 2	2	5	10	15	20+
<b>Average</b>	11	11	11	12	12	12
<b>Minimum</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Maximum</b>	19	19	19	19	19	21

Sick Days-Others	Earned after years of service					
	less than 2	2	5	10	15	20+
<b>Average</b>	11	11	11	11	12	12
<b>Minimum</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Maximum</b>	19	19	19	19	19	21

Vacation Days-Management	Earned after years of service					
	less than 2	2	5	10	15	20+
<b>Average</b>	11	12	15	18	20	21
<b>Minimum</b>	4	4	6	8	8	8
<b>Maximum</b>	15	21	21	27	27	30

Vacation Days-Others	Earned after years of service					
	less than 2	2	5	10	15	20+
<b>Average</b>	11	11	14	18	19	20
<b>Minimum</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Maximum</b>	15	21	21	27	27	30

## Medical Costs

The Society for Human Resource Management reports that the employers' health care costs continue to increase at approximately 5% per year. Many private employers are reportedly passing the increased cost of health insurance on to workers; the result being that salary increases are offset by the increased costs an employee must pay for health care. That trend is tempered in local government, where many of the counties absorb some or all of employees' health care costs. The pandemic did create a lapse in usage for elective surgeries and routine care, as well as a need to increase the availability of telehealth benefits. Now that we seem to be emerging from the pandemic, employees and their dependents will likely begin to access elective and routine care they deferred last year. It is unknown at this time if this surge in healthcare usage post pandemic will cause an increase to future cost trends within the medical industry.

This chart shows the distribution of cost of health insurance benefits between the employer and employee for the twenty reporting counties.

Distribution of Cost of Health Insurance	
Employer Pays 100%	30%
Employer Pays 80% - 99%	45%
Employer Pays 25% - 79%	25%

## Conclusion

Although the national and state economies are rebounding from the disruption caused by the pandemic, government employment has not fully returned to pre-pandemic levels and county wages in respondent counties continue to increase and decrease in the various classifications. This is not unexpected based on both local and national economic factors. The pace of the overall economic recovery supports some optimism about the return of "normal" economic activity and wage growth; but it will be a unique challenge for county commissioners in a post-pandemic environment to budget for compensation levels that account for experience and parity, as well as the current job market for employees, when evaluating wages and benefits for all employee classifications.

## 2021 Reported Wages by Benchmark Job Titles

Benchmark Job Title	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Accountant	\$29.52	\$19.53	\$61.43	31
Accounting Technician	\$22.22	\$14.50	\$38.50	67
Administrative Assistant	\$19.74	\$12.00	\$65.00	333
Administrative Supervisor	\$33.40	\$15.80	\$76.37	172
Appraisal or Property Records Technician	\$23.06	\$15.26	\$47.78	26
Appraiser (Personal Property)	\$25.79	\$15.86	\$43.52	25
Appraiser (Real Property)	\$26.58	\$14.50	\$49.73	44
Assistant County Clerk	\$19.44	\$14.19	\$35.83	118
Bailing Foreman	\$24.17	\$24.17	\$24.17	1
Benefits Technician	\$26.57	\$19.52	\$38.84	16
Building Inspector	\$32.57	\$15.00	\$80.85	29
Captain	\$41.34	\$22.43	\$76.04	26
Chief County Engineer	\$48.82	\$28.70	\$64.16	11
Chief or Deputy Assessor	\$28.54	\$14.32	\$48.23	31
Chief or Deputy County Clerk	\$25.47	\$14.00	\$44.14	42
Civil/Water/Traffic Engineer	\$42.66	\$31.44	\$51.44	6
Communications Dispatcher	\$25.68	\$14.21	\$40.44	132
Computer Systems Operator	\$33.48	\$18.99	\$57.04	38
Computer Systems Programmer	\$43.97	\$19.86	\$59.64	20
County Attorney	\$64.45	\$32.69	\$300.00	31
County Manager	\$52.18	\$20.42	\$100.87	20
Degreed Professional	\$37.12	\$21.50	\$120.00	64
Department Manager	\$44.11	\$13.53	\$122.64	149
Deputy Patrol	\$27.73	\$15.24	\$42.61	285
Detention Manager	\$30.92	\$15.68	\$63.93	51
Detention Officer	\$26.42	\$13.00	\$41.44	484
DHS Case Manager	\$24.80	\$15.92	\$45.63	85
DHS Caseworker (all levels)	\$26.77	\$15.32	\$40.44	304
DHS Intake Technician	\$21.42	\$12.75	\$34.85	270
Emergency Medical Technician	\$16.17	\$12.32	\$40.87	92
Engineering Technician (all levels)	\$28.32	\$23.15	\$37.92	22
Finance Analyst	\$41.75	\$18.12	\$111.16	14
Geographic Information Systems Specialist	\$34.69	\$18.09	\$45.72	15
Grant Contract Program Manager	\$26.95	\$10.10	\$42.00	6
Investigator or Sergeant	\$36.04	\$17.95	\$58.51	152
Landfill Operator	\$17.96	\$12.50	\$21.70	24
Legal Assistant	\$27.19	\$17.00	\$38.50	38
Maintenance Mechanic	\$20.56	\$12.32	\$68.86	119
Manager, Coordinator Emergency Medical Services	\$23.82	\$14.47	\$43.96	36
Mapper/Cartographer	\$24.26	\$16.00	\$32.39	13
Networked Systems Administrator	\$51.34	\$25.00	\$100.00	34
Personnel Analyst	\$28.75	\$20.24	\$36.45	9
Personnel Director	\$36.82	\$25.64	\$54.86	12
Planner	\$30.88	\$16.22	\$50.44	32

Benchmark Job Title	Average	Minimum	Maximum	Count
Planner Assistant	\$21.23	\$12.75	\$40.00	14
Plans Examiner	\$30.49	\$20.91	\$37.53	11
Public Health Nurse Manager	\$32.56	\$19.55	\$64.27	41
Public Health or EH Director	\$42.92	\$26.22	\$79.47	17
Public Health Personal Care Provider	\$21.32	\$12.30	\$89.85	137
R&B Equipment Operator (all levels)	\$22.60	\$15.00	\$34.00	470
R&B Foreman/Crew Leader	\$29.66	\$17.45	\$45.04	109
R&B Maintenance Worker	\$18.93	\$13.75	\$26.37	54
Recreation Specialist	\$26.36	\$17.84	\$34.85	5
Recreation Worker	\$17.26	\$12.32	\$28.00	63
Senior Center Van Driver	\$14.95	\$12.24	\$26.59	20
Transportation Inspector	\$31.02	\$22.15	\$42.65	8
Undersheriff Administration	\$35.13	\$18.77	\$76.05	30
Undersheriff Patrol	\$42.12	\$25.54	\$79.45	15
Vehicle Mechanic	\$25.20	\$12.50	\$40.67	56
Weed Pest Control Assistant	\$20.25	\$15.01	\$26.44	14
Weed Pest Control Supervision	\$28.12	\$20.87	\$49.22	\$11.00

## Average Wage by County Revenue Group

In general, wages have been slightly higher for the higher revenue counties.

Benchmark Job Title	01-Under \$10M	02-\$10M - \$50M	03-\$50M-\$100M	04-Over \$100M
Accountant	\$24.95	\$26.84	\$35.95	\$40.13
Accounting Technician	\$16.72	\$20.94	\$21.35	\$25.93
Administrative Assistant	\$19.47	\$18.02	\$20.89	\$22.55
Administrative Supervisor	\$18.98	\$27.88	\$31.87	\$38.88
Appraisal or Property Records Technician		\$19.69	\$19.52	\$37.26
Appraiser (Personal Property)		\$24.83		\$30.83
Appraiser (Real Property)	\$18.56	\$22.31	\$31.54	\$28.53
Assistant County Clerk	\$15.72	\$19.26		\$20.16
Bailing Foreman		\$24.17		
Benefits Technician	\$22.58	\$23.91		\$31.45
Building Inspector	\$18.53	\$31.79	\$49.44	\$35.29
Captain	\$22.43	\$35.46	\$50.23	\$71.04
Chief County Engineer		\$39.06	\$64.16	\$55.51
Chief or Deputy Assessor	\$17.01	\$28.46	\$48.23	\$45.49
Chief or Deputy County Clerk	\$17.50	\$26.18	\$30.62	\$44.14
Civil/Water/Traffic Engineer		\$49.41	\$31.44	\$43.77
Communications Dispatcher	\$16.59	\$22.18	\$28.81	\$28.48
Computer Systems Operator		\$25.27	\$29.67	\$38.07
Computer Systems Programmer		\$25.11	\$49.34	\$48.53
County Attorney	\$36.06	\$70.29	\$72.00	\$55.55
County Manager	\$32.44	\$52.84	\$100.87	
Degreed Professional	\$31.00	\$30.51		\$41.05
Department Manager	\$25.73	\$39.56	\$53.13	\$70.05
Deputy Patrol	\$19.35	\$25.02	\$33.31	\$37.86
Detention Manager	\$18.80	\$27.95	\$56.46	\$59.14
Detention Officer	\$15.08	\$21.05	\$26.17	\$34.83
DHS Case Manager	\$27.73	\$24.44	\$31.47	
DHS Caseworker (all levels)	\$18.99	\$22.84	\$28.23	\$30.84
DHS Intake Technician	\$17.40	\$18.88	\$20.29	\$24.05
Emergency Medical Technician	\$14.95	\$16.80		
Engineering Technician (all levels)		\$23.75	\$25.34	\$28.70
Finance Analyst	\$32.19	\$32.45	\$37.99	\$74.21
Geographic Information Systems Specialist		\$30.77	\$38.57	\$39.43
Grant Contract Program Manager		\$26.95		
Investigator or Sergeant	\$20.21	\$31.41	\$39.26	\$50.05
Landfill Operator	\$16.56	\$18.33		
Legal Assistant	\$17.00	\$25.17		\$28.31
Maintenance Mechanic	\$14.51	\$18.66	\$32.27	\$25.01
Manager, Coordinator Emergency Medical Services	\$19.01	\$24.59		
Mapper/Cartographer		\$22.30		\$27.39
Networked Systems Administrator		\$46.97	\$48.22	\$55.03
Personnel Analyst	\$25.64	\$25.84		\$34.64

Benchmark Job Title	01-Under \$10M	02-\$10M - \$50M	03-\$50M-\$100M	04-Over \$100M
Personnel Director	\$26.32	\$37.14	\$54.86	
Planner	\$20.71	\$28.07	\$33.65	\$41.68
Planner Assistant	\$19.91	\$18.76	\$23.50	\$28.44
Plans Examiner	\$20.91	\$29.47	\$30.10	\$35.64
Public Health Nurse Manager	\$28.83	\$31.45	\$41.72	\$64.27
Public Health or EH Director	\$31.25	\$39.93	\$68.59	\$79.47
Public Health Personal Care Provider	\$12.83	\$21.53	\$35.71	\$29.58
R&B Equipment Operator (all levels)	\$18.96	\$21.72	\$27.73	\$26.02
R&B Foreman/Crew Leader	\$25.73	\$27.66	\$36.18	\$33.24
R&B Maintenance Worker	\$16.52	\$17.97		\$20.92
Recreation Specialist		\$28.09		\$23.76
Recreation Worker		\$17.26		
Senior Center Van Driver		\$14.95		
Transportation Inspector	\$22.15	\$29.40	\$36.37	\$42.65
Undersheriff Administration	\$24.84	\$34.75	\$76.05	
Undersheriff Patrol	\$26.13	\$42.01	\$53.87	\$79.45
Vehicle Mechanic	\$24.68	\$24.02		\$28.32
Weed Pest Control Assistant		\$19.28	\$22.66	
Weed Pest Control Supervision	\$21.65	\$26.37	\$27.53	\$49.22

**Chart-Average Wage by County Revenue Group**



### Chart-Median Wage by County Revenue Group

