



PUBLIC SECTOR vs. PRIVATE SECTOR

FACT

Numerous research studies have found that public sector workers earn less than private sector workers when age, education and similar factors are considered. Public sector workers on average have more years of experience and their jobs require more education and training.

FACT

Studies have found the average wages for state and local governments to be as much as 25 percent less than private employers.

FACT

State workers *nationally* earn 11 percent less than their private sector counterparts, after adjusting for age and education.

FACT

State workers in *New York* earn 7 percent less than their private sector counterparts after adjusting for age and education, based on 2000-2008 salaries.

FACT

For government employees in high earning fields of expertise such as Attorneys and Doctors the gap widens. Public employees in those job titles make significantly less than their counterparts in the private sector.

FACT

Over the last 20 years, the earnings for state and local employees have generally declined relative to comparable private sector employees.

FACT

Even accounting for benefits, state employees receive less total compensation than private sector employees in the same profession. For example, a private sector Computer Programmer's average total compensation is 6.5 percent higher than a NY state employee Computer Programmer. A private sector Registered Nurse makes 3.3 percent more in total compensation than a NY state employee RN.

“This recession calls for equal sacrifice, but long-term patterns indicate that the average compensation of state and local employees is not excessive. Indeed, if the goal is to compensate public and private workforces in a comparable manner, then the data does not call for reductions in average state and local wages and benefits.”

— “OUT OF BALANCE?” BY KEITH A. BENDER AND JOHN S. HEYWOOD

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New York State Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO

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