Benchmark Positions’ Base Salaries Rise an Average 4.3 Percent
This year 62 engineering companies in Colorado reported base salaries and bonuses for 3,146 employees matching surveyed positions. Based on 65 comparable benchmark positions, employees’ base salaries rose an average 4.3 percent from 2018 to 2019. Most participating companies (76%) are located in the Denver-Metropolitan area.

New Engineering Graduates Base Salaries up 5.1 Percent
The average base salary for an Engineering Intern 1 is $59,490 this year, up 5.1 percent over 2018. Overall, the Engineering Intern job group’s base salaries rose 4.5 percent over last year. Forty-five employers reported hiring 126 new engineering graduates in 2019, almost double the number reported for 2018. Employers are feeling the need to increase starting salaries with the tight labor market. Finding and hiring qualified employees is the number one challenge for firms for the third year in a row. The number two challenge employers cited is the ability to offer competitive salaries and benefits.

Prevailing Salaries for the Professional Engineers
The 62 participating companies reported base salaries for 733 professional engineers employed in Colorado. Base salaries increased 3.1 percent as a group. Professional Engineer 3’s (PE-3) saw the largest increase in base salaries, 7.5 percent, while Professional Engineer 5’s (PE-5) base salaries were essentially flat, -0.4 percent.

PE’s Base Salaries from the 10th to 90th Percentile and Weighted Average Salaries
Worksheet of Salaries and Bonus Information Highlights

Company Contributions Toward Core Group Insurance Plans
Less than half of participating employers (45%) report offering 100 percent paid healthcare for their employees’ single coverage. The average percentage employers contribute toward healthcare premiums is 87 percent for single coverage and 56 percent for employee plus family coverage. Average plan costs paid by employers toward core insurance (medical, dental, vision, short-term and long-term disability and life insurance) is included in the survey. Employer contributions to Health Savings Accounts (HSA’s) is also reported. Companies report an average increase of 6.6 percent charged by carriers at their last medical plan renewal. The average increase passed on to employees for single coverage is 4.2 percent.

Average Projected Base Salary Increase 2020 by Job Group
Employers report an overall projected increase of 3.4 percent to base salaries in 2020. However, when those employers projecting a zero percent increase are taken out of the calculation, the following projected increases by job group result.

Competing for Engineering Talent
This year’s survey asks employers to rate the effectiveness of various recruiting practices in attracting professional engineering candidates and other “perks” included with employment offers. As of July, 2019, when the survey is conducted, Colorado’s unemployment rate is 2.9 percent and Denver’s unemployment is at 2.7 percent. Employers anticipate adding 114 professional engineers to their staff in 2020, an increase of 44% over last year’s anticipated number of new hires.

Flexible Start / End Times and Remote Work from Home on Occasion Now the Norm
Eight in ten engineering firms offer variable start and end times around their core business hours. Another seven in ten allow remote work from home on occasion. Two in ten allow remote work from home on a regular basis. Sixteen percent now offer remote work from home on a full-time basis. The survey includes other flexible work scheduling and related practices to accommodate individuals’ interests are reported.
What’s Included...

Surveyed Positions
This year’s ACEC Colorado survey report includes base salaries and bonus information for 82 positions considered common to engineering companies. Data was collected as of July 1, 2019. Salary information is reported by geographic region, employment size, revenue size and by engineering discipline and years in the engineering profession. Regional salaries for Arizona and Utah is also reported. Surveyed employee groups include:

- Entry-Level Engineers
- Professional Engineers
- Executive / Engineering Principals
- Planners
- Drafters and BIM /Designers
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Surveyors, Technicians, Inspection, Construction Management and Project Managers
- Environmental Science and Laboratory Staff
- Geology / Geoscience
- Professional / Administrative Staff

Spot Check on Employee Benefits, Human Resources and Business Practices
This section concentrates on costs associated with core employee benefit plans, recruiting practices, staffing, salary administration, flexible work schedules and telecommuting, paid parental leave practices, employee turnover, training and development and select financial calculations and revenue projections.

Every three years ACEC Colorado surveys its members to collect in-depth information on a variety of employee benefits, human resources and business practices. The expanded survey was last conducted in 2017. Please contact ACEC Colorado if you wish to purchase the 2017 report. The next expanded survey of employee benefits and business practices is scheduled for next year, 2020.

The survey report is supplemented with an E-Survey Report, an Excel spreadsheet version of the Salaries and Bonuses section. The spreadsheet can be used for exporting information to your firm's compensation database or copied into your own spreadsheets for further analysis. Please note, the E-Survey is for the private use of those purchasing the ACEC Colorado Salary, Benefit and Business Practices Survey.


Or, call ACEC Colorado: 303.832.2200

Pricing
Member Survey Participant: $175
Member: $425
Non-member: $725