

State Employment
Relations Board

WAGE SETTLEMENT 2025

For Labor Contracts with a start date between January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025



Introduction

The State Employment Relations Board (SERB) is pleased to present the 2025 Wage Settlement Report. This report analyzes the overall wage increase percentage and other monetary incentives negotiated in Ohio public-sector labor contracts that went into effect between January 1 and December 31, 2025.

Report Background & Methods

In its 35th year, the Wage Settlement Report aims to inform stakeholders about the latest trends in negotiated wage increases in labor contracts for public sector entities. The goal is to provide statistics for employer and employee organizations and promote orderly and constructive labor relationships between public employers and their employees. This report includes data extracted from negotiated labor contracts from the following public sector jurisdictions:

Table 1 - Public Sector Jurisdiction and Employer Types

Government	Schools/Libraries	Colleges/Universities	Special Districts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State • Counties • Cities • Townships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Districts (City, Local, Exempted Village) • Joint Vocational Schools & Career Centers • Educational Service Centers (ESCs) • Commuter/Charter Schools • City & County Libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Colleges • State Colleges • State Universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire & EMS Districts • Metro Housing Authorities • Port Authorities • Regional Transit Authorities • Sanitary, Water, & Sewer Districts

Report Summary

This year's report includes data extracted from 1,036 negotiated labor contracts with a start date between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2025.

- Of the 1,036 labor contracts reviewed, 949 (91.6%) included percent wage increases during the contract term. Table 3 shows that the statewide average wage increase was 3.74% in the first year (2025), 3.26% in the second year (2026), and 3.17% in the third year (2027).
- The statewide average wage increase percentage over the full contract term was 3.38%, calculated by combining all reported annual wage increase percentages across years one, two, and three for contracts that included them. Table 4 shows that the statewide average is 0.04 percent lower than last year's figure.
- Of the 1,036 labor contracts reviewed, 120 (11.6%) included one or more lump-sum payments that took effect during the contract term. Table 5 shows that the statewide average lump-sum amount was \$1,021 in year one (2025), \$924 in year two (2026), and \$922 in year three (2027). A lump sum is a one-time payment that does not increase an employee's base wage rate.
- Of the 1,036 labor contracts reviewed, 149 (14.4%) included an hourly wage increase that took effect during the contract term. A breakdown is provided in Table 2 below; a detailed breakdown is not included elsewhere in this report due to the relatively small number of contracts containing this information.

Table 2 - Negotiated Hourly Wage Increases (Cents per Hour)

Year	Minimum	Maximum	Average	#
Year 1 (2025)	\$0.25	\$5.00	\$1.49	127
Year 2 (2026)	\$0.40	\$2.25	\$0.93	74
Year 3 (2027)	\$0.25	\$2.00	\$0.80	57
#: Number of contracts.				

Average Negotiated Wage Increase Percentage

Table 3 summarizes the average wage increase percentages negotiated in labor contracts that took effect in calendar year 2025. Wage increases are organized by their effective dates and grouped according to the comparison categories listed below. Wage reopeners, lump-sum payments, and hourly increases are excluded from this table to ensure the averages reflect base-wage percentage increases only.

Table 3 - Average Negotiated Wage Increase Percentage by Calendar Year

Comparison Group	2025 Average	#	2026 Average	#	2027 Average	#
Statewide	3.74 %	808	3.26%	910	3.17%	825
Region						
(1) Akron/Canton	3.62%	142	3.19%	154	3.18%	142
(2) Cincinnati	4.28%	81	3.55%	91	3.39%	83
(3) Cleveland	3.57%	154	3.11%	185	3.18%	165
(4) Columbus	3.90%	125	3.32%	143	3.26%	132
(5) Dayton	3.51%	100	3.29%	110	3.14%	97
(6) Southeast Ohio	3.61%	37	3.14%	47	2.84%	40
(7) Toledo	3.88%	107	3.35%	114	3.19%	100
(8) Warren/Youngstown	3.58%	62	3.24%	66	2.94%	66
Jurisdiction						
City	4.06%	243	3.62%	282	3.48%	273
County	3.83%	141	3.20%	165	3.03%	149
Township	4.25%	47	3.58%	61	3.48%	60
School District	3.39%	323	2.92%	345	2.88%	294
Other	3.66%	54	3.44%	57	3.29%	49
Unit Type						
Police (Safety/Security)	4.29%	206	3.67%	251	3.47%	239
Fire	4.27%	76	3.72%	85	3.52%	82
Teacher (BOE)	3.40%	206	2.98%	209	2.91%	183
Non-Teaching (BOE)	3.37%	138	2.84%	156	2.84%	127
Blue-Collar	3.63%	61	3.23%	83	3.17%	78
Other	3.51%	121	3.17%	126	3.10%	116

#: Number of Contracts.

Note: These increases apply to most job titles in the bargaining unit and include equity/market adjustment % increases.

Note: Excluded items include wage reopener, lump sum, hourly increase, and salary schedule step increases.

Note: A description of each comparison group is on page 9.

Note: 949 out of 1,036 (91.6%) filed contracts contained a percent increase.

Note: Contracts statewide with a 0% increase at any point in the contracts' duration: 2025 = 38; 2026 = 13; 2027 = 14.

Visual Summary of Table 3: Average Negotiated Wage Increase Percentage by Calendar Year

Charts 1-4 provide visual representations of the data presented in Table 3.

Chart 1 illustrates the average wage increase percentages for all contracts that began in calendar year 2025, showing the increases negotiated in years one, two, and three of the contracts when those data were available.

Chart 1 – Average Wage Increase Percentage (Statewide)

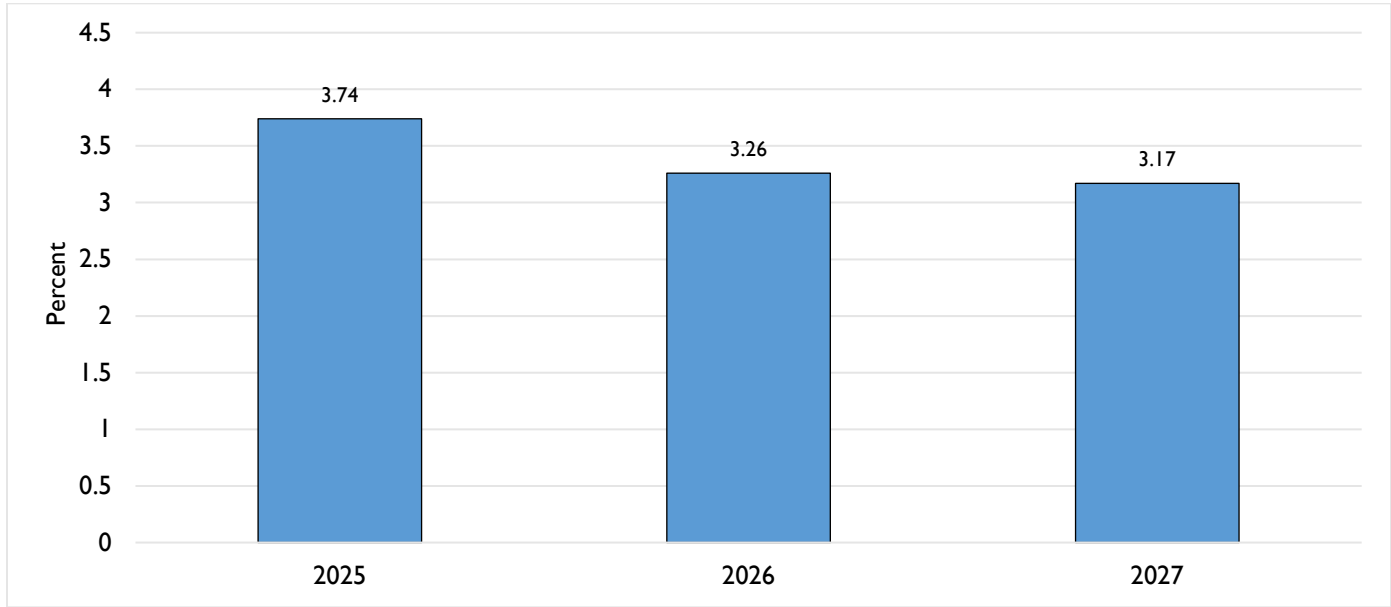


Chart 2 presents the regional breakdown of the data shown in Table 3. Each region comprises several geographically proximate counties. The specific counties included in each region are listed on page 9.

Chart 2 – Average Wage Increase Percentage by Region

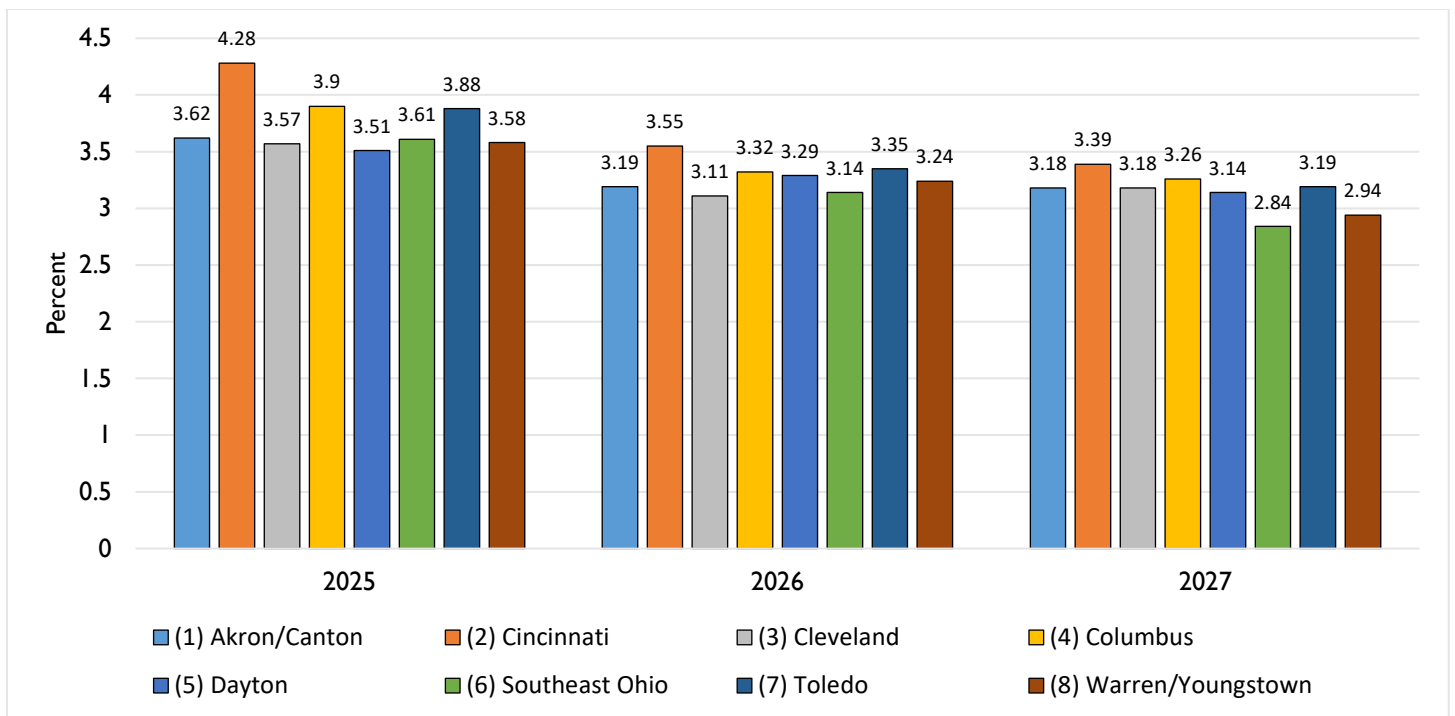


Chart 3 presents the jurisdiction-level breakdown of the data shown in Table 3. It groups wage increase information by employer type. A detailed list of employer type categories included in each jurisdiction appears on page 9.

Chart 3 – Average Wage Increase Percentage by Jurisdiction

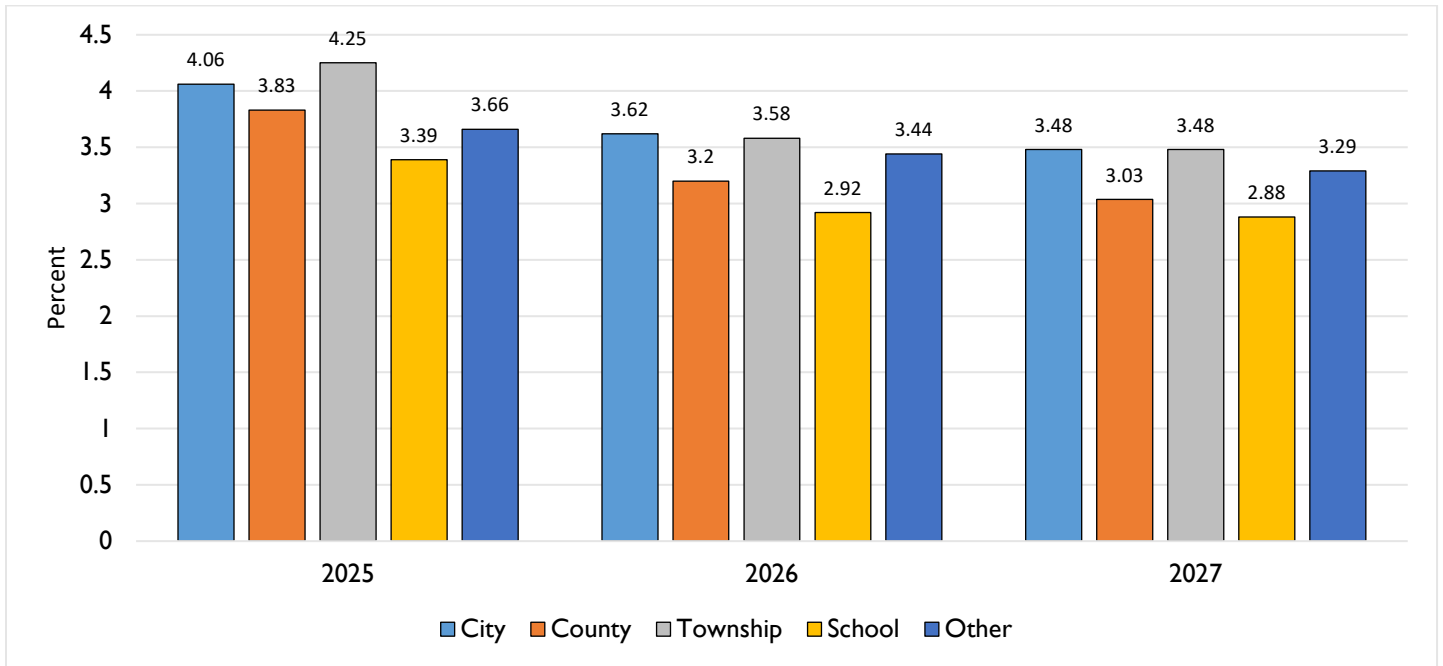
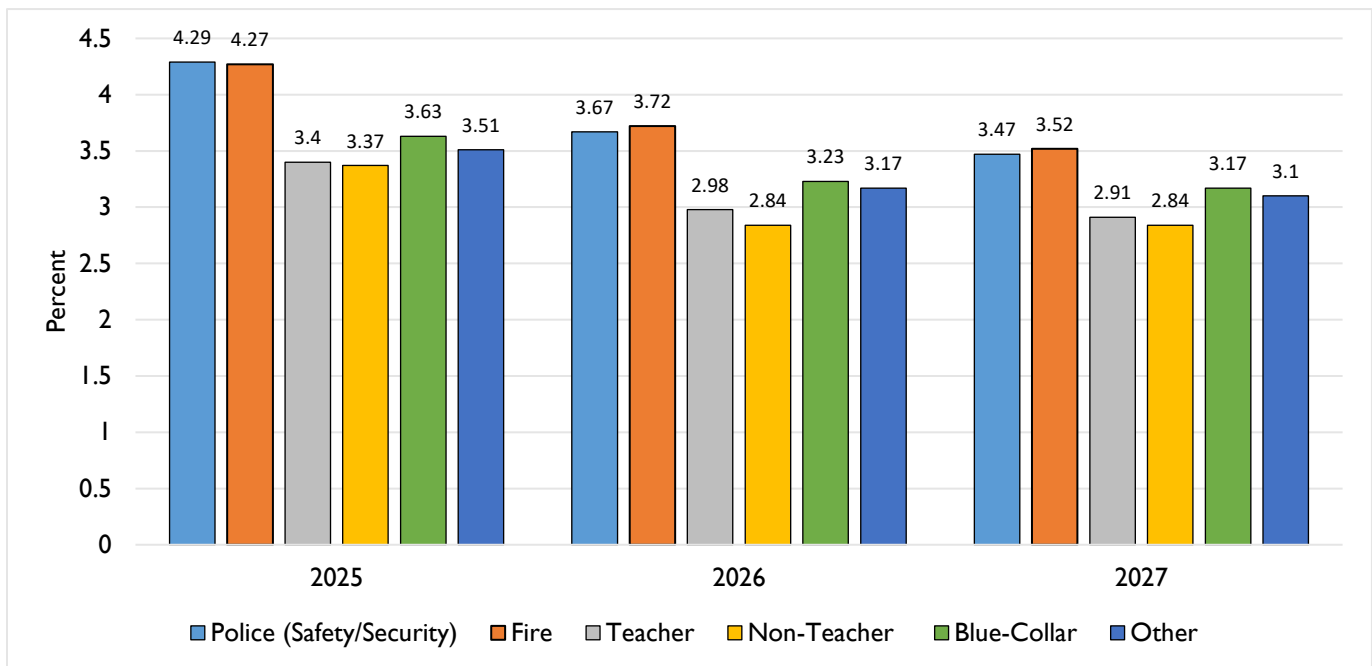


Chart 4 presents the unit type breakdown of the data shown in Table 3. It displays wage increase information by bargaining unit type. A detailed list of the unit types included in each group appears on page 9.

Chart 4 – Average Wage Increase Percentage by Unit Type



Average Wage Increase Percentage 10-Year Trend

Table 4 reports the average wage increase percentages negotiated in labor agreements over the past ten years. These percentages reflect all base-wage increases that went into effect over the full length of the contract. The data is organized by the year the contract began and includes increases applied in contract years one, two, and three, whenever available. Wage reopeners, lump-sum payments, and hourly increases are excluded to ensure the averages represent only percentage-based wage adjustments.

Table 4 – Average Wage Increase Percentage 10-Year Trend

Comparison Group	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Statewide	2.18%	2.20%	2.31%	2.31%	2.26%	2.33%	2.79%	3.24%	3.42%	3.38%
Region										
(1) Akron/Canton	2.00%	2.31%	2.24%	2.26%	2.28%	2.25%	2.85%	3.24%	3.14%	3.32%
(2) Cincinnati	2.41%	2.37%	2.63%	2.42%	2.47%	2.41%	2.86%	3.17%	3.64%	3.73%
(3) Cleveland	2.04%	2.15%	2.04%	2.07%	2.11%	2.15%	2.59%	3.10%	3.29%	3.26%
(4) Columbus	2.30%	2.19%	2.63%	2.60%	2.49%	2.65%	2.97%	3.43%	3.66%	3.49%
(5) Dayton	2.20%	2.33%	2.29%	2.55%	2.38%	2.33%	2.92%	3.26%	3.34%	3.31%
(6) Southeast Ohio	2.49%	2.03%	2.39%	2.18%	2.36%	2.61%	2.70%	3.31%	3.67%	3.18%
(7) Toledo	2.30%	2.32%	2.29%	2.25%	2.14%	2.27%	2.87%	3.40%	3.59%	3.48%
(8) Warren/Youngstown	1.61%	1.66%	2.15%	2.16%	1.91%	1.95%	2.56%	3.07%	3.03%	3.23%
Jurisdiction										
City	2.22%	2.16%	2.30%	2.44%	2.47%	2.35%	2.92%	3.41%	3.79%	3.70%
County	2.23%	2.26%	2.33%	2.43%	2.19%	2.37%	2.95%	3.42%	3.35%	3.35%
Township	2.24%	2.22%	2.65%	2.34%	2.56%	2.63%	3.05%	3.34%	3.70%	3.73%
School District	2.09%	2.20%	2.21%	2.17%	1.88%	2.23%	2.52%	2.92%	3.13%	3.06%
Other				2.11%	2.43%	2.54%	3.10%	3.04%	3.31%	3.46%
Unit Type										
Police (Safety/Security)	2.36%	2.20%	2.50%	2.51%	2.44%	2.51%	3.04%	3.50%	3.76%	3.78%
Fire	2.34%	2.23%	2.32%	2.41%	2.62%	2.51%	3.01%	3.28%	4.02%	3.82%
Teacher (BOE)	2.04%	2.23%	2.30%	2.17%	1.83%	2.24%	2.57%	2.96%	3.17%	3.10%
Non-Teaching (BOE)				2.16%	1.99%	2.21%	2.46%	2.86%	3.07%	3.01%
Blue-Collar				2.26%	2.28%	2.29%	2.84%	3.26%	3.17%	3.33%
Other	2.03%	2.18%	2.17%	2.26%	2.26%	2.25%	2.89%	3.28%	3.36%	3.25%
Contracts Reported	496	626	643	811	746	954	943	908	976	1,036
<p>Contracts Reported: Count of all labor contracts included statewide</p> <p>Note: These increases apply to most job titles in the bargaining unit and include equity/market adjustment % increases.</p> <p>Note: Excluded items include wage reopener, lump sum, hourly increase, and salary schedule step increases.</p> <p>Note: The Jurisdiction "Other" category was added in 2019; therefore, previous reports omitted this information.</p> <p>Note: The Unit Type "Non-Teaching" and "Blue-Collar" categories were added in 2019. This data was included in the "Other" category in previous reports.</p>										

Visual Summary of Table 4: Average Wage Increase Percentage 10-Year Trend

Charts 5-8 provide visual representations of the data presented in Table 4.

Chart 5 shows the ten-year historical trend in the statewide average wage increase percentages reported in Table 4. The data is organized by the year the contract began and includes increases applied in contract years one, two, and three, whenever available.

Chart 5 – Average Wage Increase Percentage Statewide

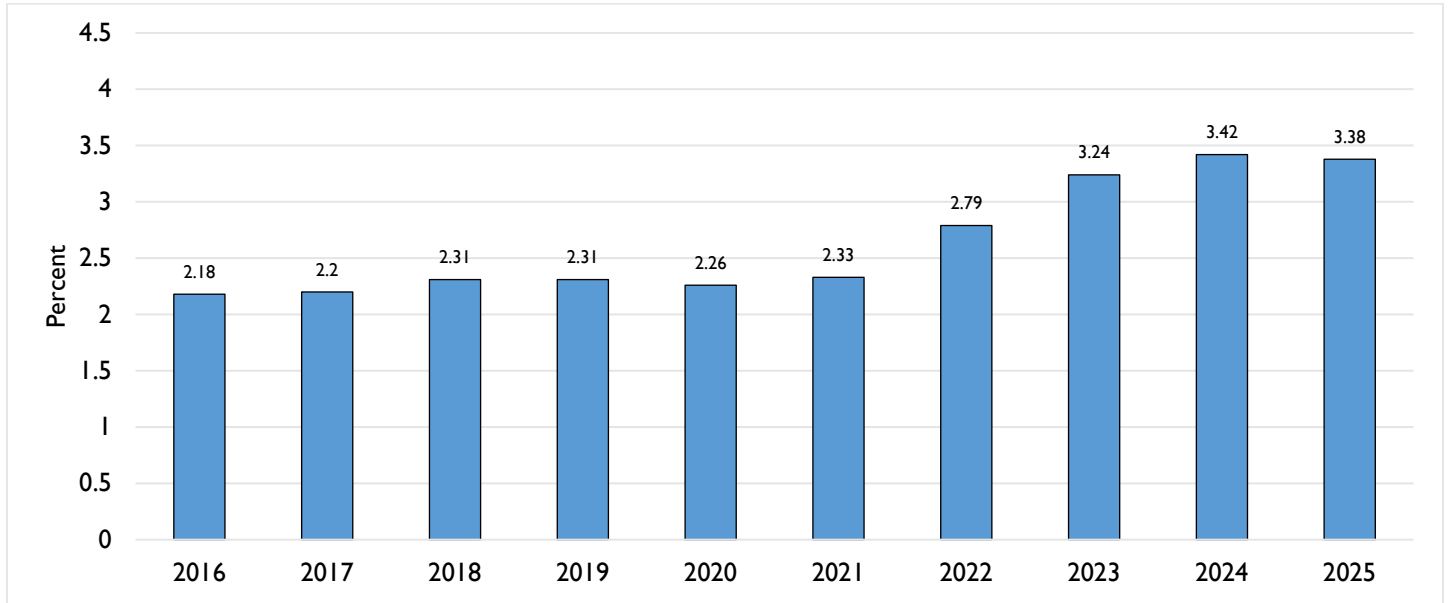


Chart 6 presents the regional breakdown of the data shown in Table 4. Each region comprises several nearby counties. The counties included in each region are listed on page 9.

Chart 6 – Average Wage Increase Percentage by Region

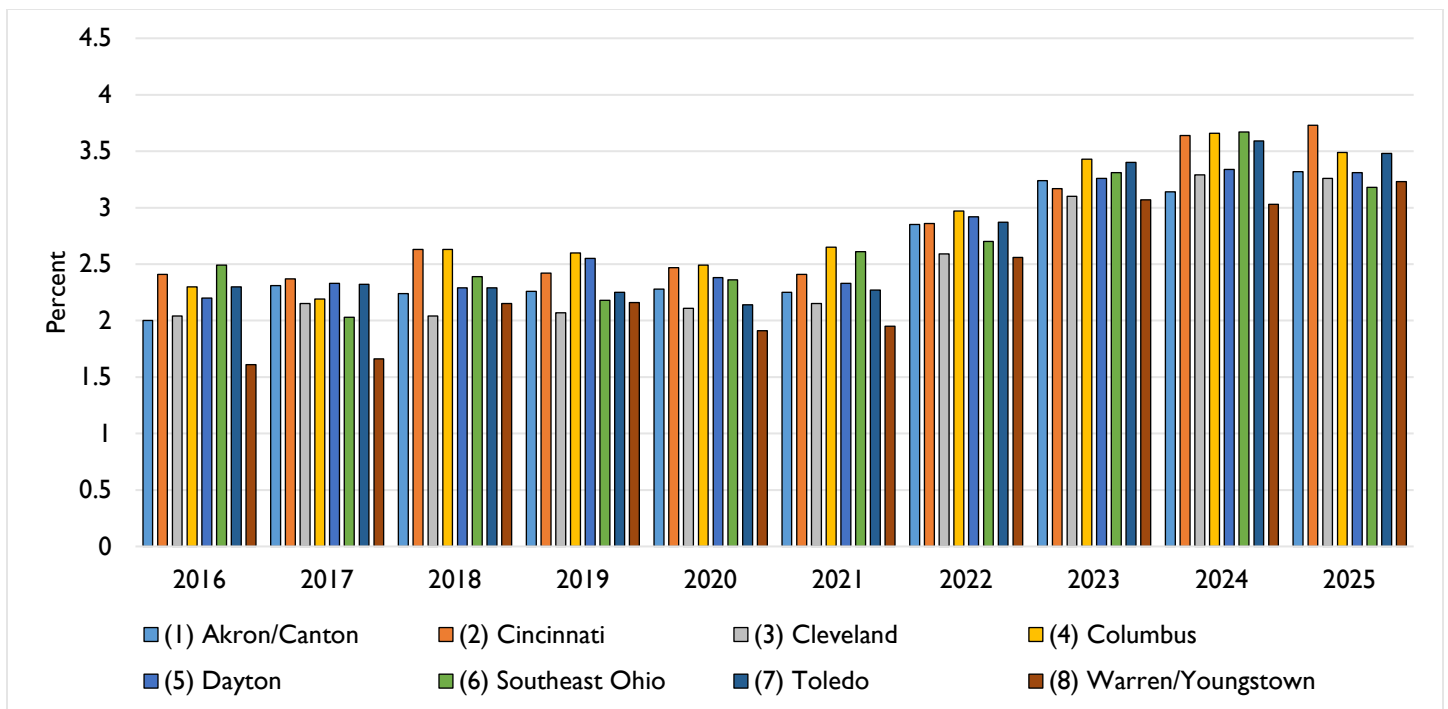


Chart 7 presents the jurisdiction-level breakdown of the data shown in Table 4. It displays wage increase information by employer type. A detailed list of employer type categories for each jurisdiction is provided on page 9.

Chart 7 - Average Wage Increase Percentage by Jurisdiction

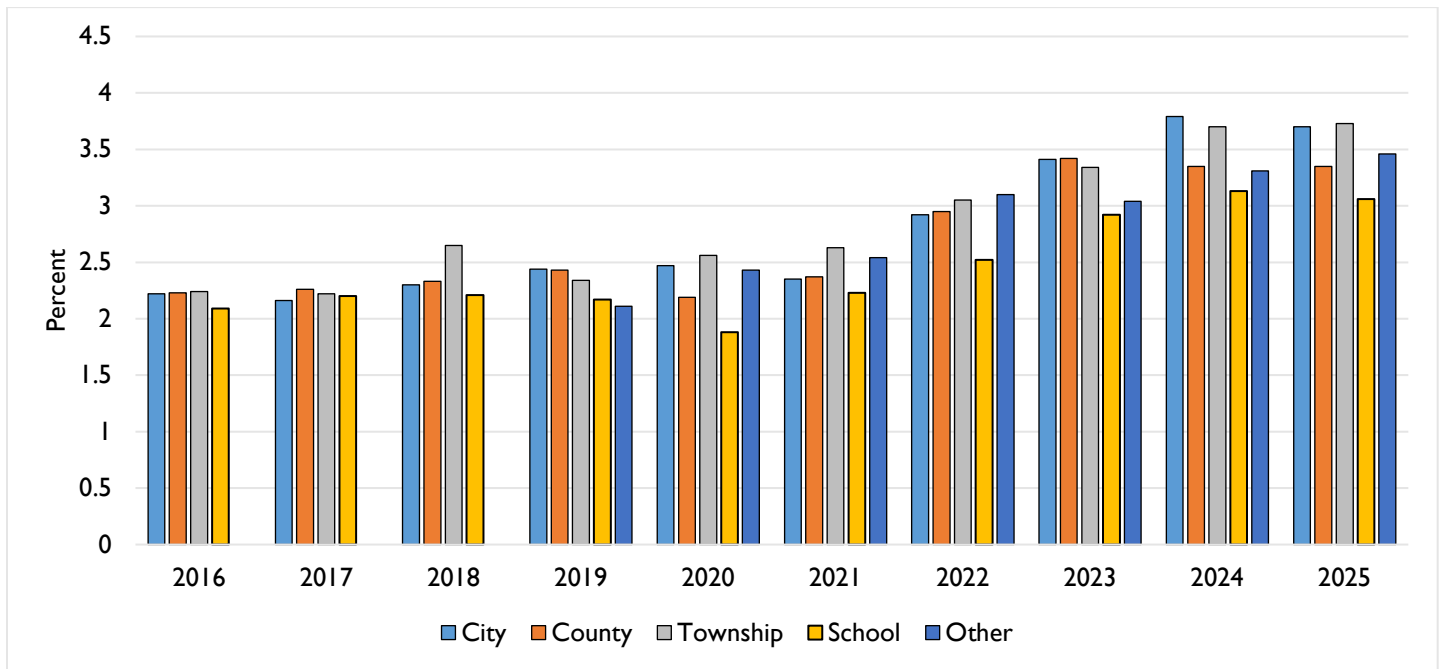
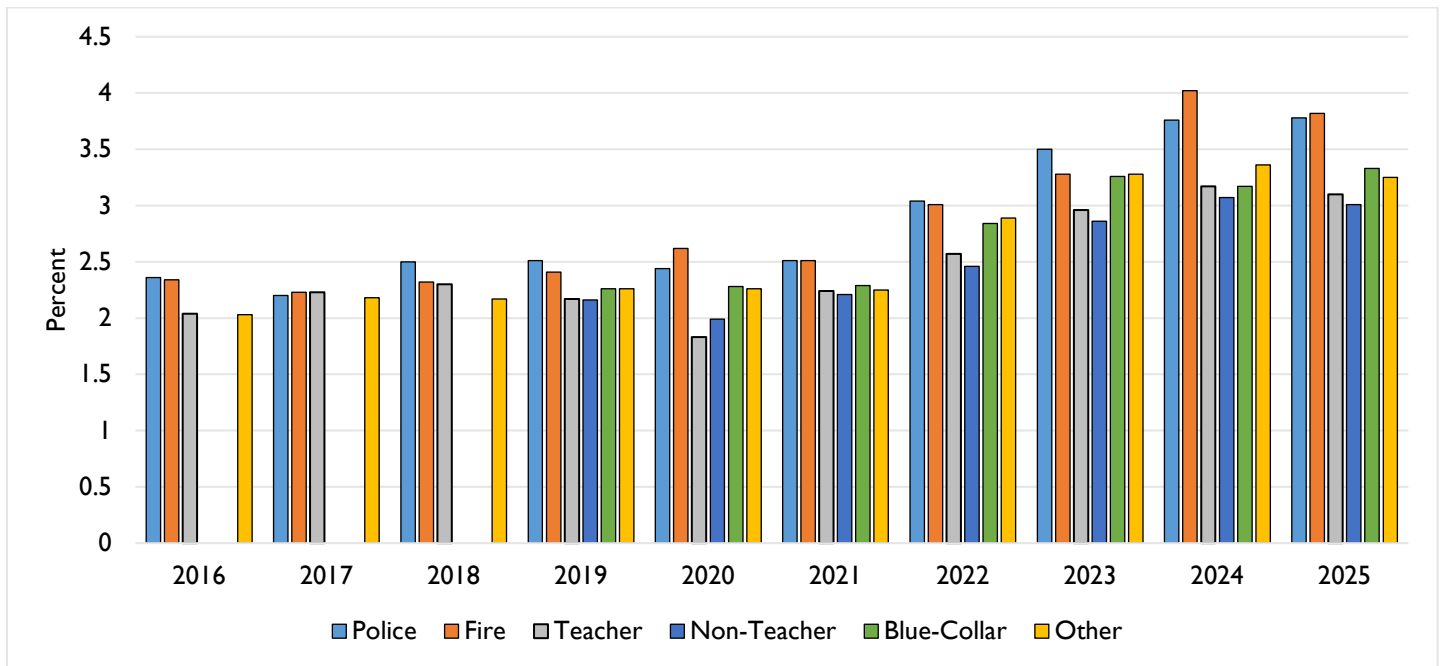


Chart 8 presents the unit-type breakdown of the data shown in Table 4. It displays wage increase information by bargaining unit type. A detailed list of the unit types included in each group is provided on page 9.

Chart 8 - Average Wage Increase Percentage by Unit Type



Lump Sum Wage Increases

Table 5 displays the average lump sum negotiated in labor contracts that went into effect in 2025. A lump sum is a one-time dollar amount that is not added to the wage scale. In many cases, this is a signing bonus.

Table 5 – Average One-Time Lump Sum by Contract Year

Comparison Group	2025 Min	2025 Max	2025 Avg	2025 #	2026 Min	2026 Max	2026 Avg	2026 #	2027 Min	2027 Max	2027 Avg	2027 #
Statewide	\$60	\$4,500	\$1,021	113	\$100	\$4,500	\$924	40	\$150	\$4,500	\$922	17
Jurisdiction												
City	\$60	\$4,200	\$1,230	19	\$600	\$2,000	\$1,114	7	\$750	\$1,000	\$833	3
County	\$350	\$4,500	\$1,280	32	\$250	\$3,000	\$730	9	\$320	\$500	\$410	2
Township	\$250	\$250	\$250	1	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	2	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	2
School District	\$150	\$4,500	\$855	51	\$200	\$4,500	\$959	16	\$150	\$4,500	\$1,035	10
Other	\$250	\$1,500	\$720	10	\$100	\$1,250	\$875	6	-	-	-	0
Unit Type												
Police (Safety)	\$60	\$4,500	\$1,449	22	\$250	\$1,000	\$614	5	\$320	\$1,000	\$733	3
Fire	\$60	\$1,150	\$737	3	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	0
Teacher (BOE)	\$150	\$4,500	\$1,023	24	\$500	\$4,500	\$1,283	6	\$500	\$4,500	\$1,440	5
Non-Teacher (BOE)	\$200	\$2,500	\$735	30	\$200	\$1,500	\$765	10	\$150	\$1,000	\$630	5
Blue-Collar	\$250	\$1,500	\$636	7	\$600	\$1,250	\$886	7	\$750	\$750	\$750	1
Other	\$300	\$3,500	\$1,121	27	\$100	\$3,000	\$1,029	12	\$500	\$1,000	\$750	3
Header Labels: Minimum (Min), Maximum (Max), Average (Avg), Number of Contracts (#)												
Note: These lump sums apply to most job titles in the bargaining unit.												
Note: Equity/Market adjustments are excluded unless they were one-time payments not added to the base salary.												
Note: 120 out of 1,036 (11.6%) total labor contracts with a start date in 2025 contained at least one lump sum.												
Note: 96 out of 120 contracts (80.0%) with a lump sum contained both a lump sum and a percent or monetary increase.												

Wage Reopeners

Fifty-seven of the 1,036 labor contracts filed included at least one wage reopener. Among these, 34 wage reopeners occurred in year two of the contracts and 55 in year three. A "wage reopener" allows the parties to postpone bargaining over wages until a later year within the contract term.

SERB Regions

Each region consists of several nearby counties. The county groupings, initially developed by SERB's Bureau of Mediation to develop fact finder and conciliation panels, are as follows:

- 1 – **Akron/Canton:** Ashland, Carroll, Coshocton, Harrison, Holmes, Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas, and Wayne.
- 2 – **Cincinnati:** Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Highland, and Warren.
- 3 – **Cleveland:** Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Huron, Lake, and Lorain.
- 4 – **Columbus:** Crawford, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Pickaway, Pike, Richland, Ross, Scioto, Union, and Wyandot.
- 5 – **Dayton:** Auglaize, Champaign, Clark, Darke, Greene, Logan, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby.
- 6 – **Southeast Ohio:** Athens, Belmont, Gallia, Guernsey, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Vinton, and Washington.
- 7 – **Toledo:** Allen, Defiance, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Van Wert, Williams, and Wood.
- 8 – **Warren/Youngstown:** Columbiana, Jefferson, Mahoning, and Trumbull.



Jurisdiction

Employers are grouped according to the political subdivision.

City – This includes municipalities in Ohio with 5,000 or more in population.

County – This includes all county-level employers. Examples include County Commissioners, Job and Family Services, Auditor, Recorder, Treasurer, Sheriff, Corrections, Mental Health, and Board of DD.

Township – This includes townships in Ohio with 5,000 or more in population.

School District – This includes City, Local, and Exempted School Districts, Joint Vocational/Career and Technical Schools, and County Educational Service Centers.

Other – This includes all other jurisdictions. Examples include State of Ohio departments and agencies, libraries, regional transit authorities, port authorities, metro housing authorities, fire districts, park districts, water and sewer districts, and colleges/universities.

Unit Type

Below is a list of bargaining units included in each category.

Police (Safety/Security) – This includes bargaining units containing uniformed police officers, sergeants, lieutenants, captains across all jurisdictions, county sheriff deputies, corrections officers, security guards, and park rangers. It also includes safety dispatchers and 911 dispatchers.

Fire – This includes all fire suppression or fire prevention (firefighter) bargaining units.

Teacher (BOE) – This unit type includes teaching and teaching mixed (teaching and non-teaching) bargaining units in public school districts, educational service centers, and joint vocational schools.

Non-Teaching (BOE) – This unit type includes non-teaching bargaining units in public school districts, educational service centers, and joint vocational schools.

Blue-Collar – This unit type includes bargaining units comprised of individuals who perform skilled or unskilled manual labor. These employees do not typically work in an office environment.

Other – This unit type includes all other bargaining units not listed above. Examples include white-collar workers who work primarily in an office environment, nurses, and healthcare workers.

What We Do

SERB provides comparable reports detailing labor provision information extracted from public-sector labor agreements.

Available Clearinghouse Reports

- Benchmark Report:** Compares annualized entry-level and top-level salaries for more 300+ job classifications. Note: Hourly rate is used for Board of Education non-teaching classifications.
- Benefits Report:** Provides an array of economic and non-economic benefit data.
- Wage Increase Report:** Shows negotiated across-the-board wage adjustments.
- Health Insurance Report:** Insurance data from the survey taken by public employers.
- Contract List Report:** Lists collective bargaining agreements on file with SERB.

Available on Website

- [Wage Settlement Report:](#)** Published in March of each year, it provides a negotiated across-the-board wage adjustment.
- [Annual Healthcare Report:](#)** Published August 1 of each year, provides public sector insurance statistics.

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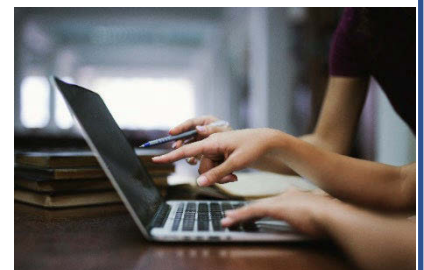
[Clearinghouse Guidebook](#)

About Clearinghouse Database

The SERB Clearinghouse database contains information on all public employers in Ohio and their collective bargaining agreements dating back to 1984. The data extracted from these agreements is available upon request.

Questions?

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