

2026

Construction Salary Survey

NATIONAL COMPENSATION BENCHMARKS
FOR CONSTRUCTION LEADERS

Maintaining Competitive Construction Salaries
in Today's Full Employment Environment



2026 edition

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The Birmingham Group

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Introduction

The 2026 Construction Salary Survey reflects a market that is still tight, still selective, and still highly competitive for proven construction talent. Base salaries moved higher again this year, but the bigger story is that the best employers are no longer competing on pay alone. They are competing on speed, leadership, project quality, career path, and credibility in the market.

Finding Skilled Talent in a Tight Market

The challenge in 2026 is not simply finding people. It is finding the right people, with the right experience, who can step into complex jobs and create value quickly. Across data centers, manufacturing, power, water, infrastructure, healthcare, multifamily, and commercial work, contractors continue to chase a limited pool of proven managers, supers, estimators, and preconstruction leaders.

The labor shortage has become more structural than cyclical. Even where certain sectors have moderated, demand for high-performing construction professionals remains strong because the industry still lacks depth in the middle and top of the org chart. Companies are not just

competing for applicants. They are competing for judgment, leadership, communication skills, technical strength, and the ability to keep jobs moving under pressure.

That pressure is especially visible in experienced talent.

Many seasoned professionals are carrying larger workloads than they did a few years ago, while a meaningful share of the workforce continues to age out of the market. Younger professionals are entering the business, but they are not replacing senior-level field and management talent fast enough. The result is a leadership gap that continues to widen in many markets.

Compensation expectations have adjusted accordingly.

Strong candidates know what the market is paying, and they are more willing to test their value when the right opportunity appears. Firms that are still anchored to outdated salary bands are losing talent, missing hires, or settling for weaker fits. In 2026, underpaying is expensive.

At the same time, hiring has become more precise.

Employers want people who can produce immediately, and candidates want clarity on scope, culture, reporting structure, travel, incentives, and long-term upside. That means vague job descriptions, slow interview cycles, and inconsistent messaging are costing companies real hires. The firms that

are winning are moving with purpose and presenting opportunities clearly.

We also continue to see a major difference between active and passive talent. The best people are often working, often performing, and often not spending time applying online.

They must be identified, approached correctly, and given a compelling reason to engage. In this environment, proactive recruiting is not optional. It is a competitive necessity.

Employers are also broadening the offer beyond base pay. Relocation support, sign-on bonuses, retention incentives, better PTO structures, field schedules that reduce burnout, and clearer advancement paths are all playing a bigger role in acceptance decisions. In many cases, candidates are weighing the total employment package, not just the salary line.

The good news is that top talent is still available to companies that know how to position the opportunity and move decisively. Contractors that treat recruiting as a strategic function rather than an administrative task are filling critical roles faster and with better long-term outcomes.

In 2026, your next hire is not just a seat to fill. It is a project, culture, and profit decision. The companies that understand

that will build stronger teams while slower, less disciplined competitors keep falling behind.

What Can Construction Firms Do Differently in 2026?

Construction firms that win in 2026 will take a more disciplined approach to retention and recruiting.

Compensation still matters, but top talent is evaluating the full employment experience. The best employers are making intentional decisions about leadership, communication, workload, development, and speed to hire.

Understand What Employees Actually Value. Pay is important, but it is rarely the only issue. Construction professionals want to work for companies where expectations are clear, leaders are credible, jobs are staffed realistically, and their time is respected. Safety, responsiveness, trust in leadership, and consistency on the job all matter more than many employers realize.

They also want stability and honesty. Employees can usually tell the difference between a company that is growing with control and one that is growing with chaos. Firms that communicate well, solve problems quickly, and treat people fairly are keeping more of their best performers.

Build Real Career Paths. Most companies talk about growth. Far fewer make it visible. In 2026, strong candidates want to know what the next step looks like, how they can get there, and whether leadership actually develops people from within.

That applies at every level, from field talent moving into broader leadership to project managers growing into executive roles. Career pathing should not be generic. It should be tied to milestones, responsibility, mentoring, and compensation progression. When employees can see a future inside your company, retention improves.

Make Compensation Market-Aware and Easy to Explain. Compensation should be competitive, but it should also make sense. Candidates want to understand base salary, bonus opportunity, vehicle allowance, per diem, travel expectations, retirement, healthcare, and any path to future earnings. Clarity builds trust and helps close strong people faster.

The best firms are using market data to support pay decisions instead of reacting only when someone resigns. They review salary bands, understand where they sit versus competitors, and make thoughtful adjustments before they have a retention problem.

Improve the Hiring Process. In a market where many top candidates have options, delay is dangerous. Companies need faster feedback loops, fewer unnecessary interviews, and better alignment internally before launching a search. Slow, disorganized hiring sends the wrong message.

Build a Reputation Worth Joining. Employer brand is no longer fluff. Candidates are paying attention to how your company shows up in the market, how leaders communicate, what employees say, and whether your work looks stable and well run. Firms that consistently present themselves as strong operators have a real hiring advantage.

In short, construction firms cannot rely on old assumptions in a changed labor market. The firms that win in 2026 will pay competitively, hire decisively, communicate clearly, and create environments where strong people want to stay.

Construction Salaries Around the Nation for 2026

The construction labor market remains highly regional in 2026. Compensation is being shaped not only by geography, but also by project type, labor availability, cost pressure, travel demands, and the concentration of large-scale work in each market. Salary movement this year reflects another broad step up in pay, but competition remains most intense for proven leaders who can manage complexity.

High-growth regions such as the Southeast, Texas, parts of the Midwest, and selected Mountain markets continue to benefit from strong manufacturing, infrastructure, energy, mission-critical, and population-driven development. In those regions, employers often have to move quickly and pay aggressively to secure experienced superintendents, project managers, estimators, and preconstruction talent.

At the same time, salary variance inside the same title can be significant. Scope, backlog, self-perform exposure, union environment, travel requirements, client expectations, and jobsite difficulty all influence what a company needs to pay. The market is also placing a premium on professionals with safety strength, leadership presence, scheduling discipline, and experience in technically demanding work.

The salary data in the pages that follow reflects base salary benchmarks developed from The Birmingham Group's national recruiting activity and broader market insight. These figures exclude bonuses, per diem, vehicle allowances, housing, and long-term incentives. They should be used as directional ranges and interpreted in the context of project scope, company type, regional demand, and the quality of talent required.

Project Engineer/Assistant Project Manager

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$86.09	\$119.87	\$107.95	\$107.95
Mid-Atlantic	\$93.90	\$132.80	\$118.07	\$113.62
Northeast	\$93.00	\$147.61	\$126.65	\$122.94
Northwest	\$99.52	\$133.04	\$121.81	\$119.99
Southeast	\$90.18	\$121.02	\$110.53	\$107.71
Southwest	\$93.00	\$122.42	\$113.84	\$112.05

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Project Engineer/Assistant Project Manager typically supports projects in the \$5 million to \$15 million range. Most have at least 3 years of experience. This role often serves as the entry point on the project management team and helps coordinate day-to-day operations, communication, documentation, and follow-through among subcontractors, owners, field leadership, and other key stakeholders.

Project Manager

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$108.87	\$149.75	\$135.63	\$133.55
Mid-Atlantic	\$107.86	\$157.08	\$137.80	\$132.66
Northeast	\$120.84	\$183.04	\$157.73	\$157.21
Northwest	\$117.74	\$162.87	\$144.60	\$141.53
Southeast	\$108.37	\$148.85	\$134.58	\$130.97
Southwest	\$112.09	\$149.23	\$136.13	\$133.81

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Project Manager typically leads projects in the \$10 million to \$49 million range. Most have between 5 and 10 years of experience. Responsibilities are similar to those of a Project Engineer, but with greater accountability for priorities, schedule, staffing coordination, client communication, and the overall financial outcome of the job.

Senior Project Manager

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$127.26	\$178.00	\$160.06	\$158.79
Mid-Atlantic	\$129.70	\$189.58	\$162.45	\$164.62
Northeast	\$147.59	\$219.45	\$190.99	\$184.31
Northwest	\$145.40	\$199.50	\$181.08	\$181.08
Southeast	\$130.47	\$187.54	\$162.90	\$166.13
Southwest	\$126.60	\$178.63	\$160.35	\$158.93

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Senior Project Manager typically leads projects in the \$20 million to \$100 million range. Most have a minimum of 10 years of experience. Because these projects involve greater scale, staffing, and complexity, the role requires stronger leadership, broader judgment, and a higher level of accountability for operations, schedule, and financial performance.

Project Executive/Project Director

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$152.13	\$208.19	\$189.88	\$189.26
Mid-Atlantic	\$159.34	\$228.18	\$201.88	\$201.61
Northeast	\$186.15	\$273.67	\$240.17	\$235.14
Northwest	\$169.28	\$230.74	\$207.69	\$203.81
Southeast	\$156.63	\$226.12	\$198.80	\$195.19
Southwest	\$150.70	\$217.23	\$189.88	\$189.63

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Project Executive/Project Director is typically responsible for projects in the \$100 million to \$250 million range. Most have 10 to 15 years of experience. Responsibilities are similar to those of a Senior Project Manager, but with broader oversight across budget, schedule, staffing, client communication, and project strategy. At this level, complexity increases materially and requires an exceptional ability to manage multiple variables at once.

Project Director / Executive II

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$186.56	\$255.78	\$230.07	\$228.11
Mid-Atlantic	\$208.82	\$282.16	\$255.78	\$256.70
Northeast	\$224.28	\$325.00	\$288.98	\$274.96
Northwest	\$209.08	\$276.75	\$249.36	\$252.84
Southeast	\$193.76	\$273.30	\$245.63	\$241.90
Southwest	\$203.28	\$266.07	\$238.30	\$241.38

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Project Director/Executive II is typically responsible for projects exceeding \$250 million. Most have at least 20 years of experience. Responsibilities are similar to those of a Project Executive, but with a greater executive decision-making component. These leaders often oversee large teams managing different segments of the work while maintaining responsibility for the full picture, including budgets, timelines, client relationships, and overall project complexity.

Junior Estimator

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$72.42	\$95.04	\$83.87	\$81.39
Mid-Atlantic	\$73.35	\$90.11	\$81.00	\$80.61
Northeast	\$74.36	\$98.94	\$86.86	\$79.71
Northwest	\$73.35	\$86.47	\$82.82	\$81.66
Southeast	\$75.03	\$86.59	\$83.22	\$79.33
Southwest	\$76.20	\$96.73	\$87.37	\$86.47

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Junior Estimator is an entry-level estimating role that typically requires a BS or MS degree in construction, engineering, or a related field. This position works under the close supervision of a Senior Estimator and performs general or routine estimating duties while building technical depth.

Estimator I

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$88.58	\$115.70	\$104.50	\$104.50
Mid-Atlantic	\$92.90	\$125.32	\$108.65	\$102.66
Northeast	\$89.24	\$186.44	\$116.71	\$111.92
Northwest	\$92.36	\$116.21	\$107.34	\$103.82
Southeast	\$92.50	\$117.37	\$105.65	\$104.88
Southwest	\$92.50	\$117.52	\$104.10	\$103.95

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Estimator I typically requires a minimum of 2 years of experience. Responsibilities are similar to those of a Junior Estimator, but this level usually brings at least one developing area of specialty that adds value to the estimating team. The role generally works under the supervision of a Senior Estimator while performing routine estimating duties.

Estimator II

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$111.80	\$149.67	\$131.86	\$131.19
Mid-Atlantic	\$110.63	\$151.62	\$132.10	\$126.25
Northeast	\$125.08	\$184.82	\$155.92	\$146.30
Northwest	\$134.32	\$171.80	\$153.97	\$143.55
Southeast	\$112.85	\$156.17	\$134.96	\$130.66
Southwest	\$115.19	\$152.79	\$137.44	\$131.59

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Estimator II typically requires a minimum of 4 years of experience. Responsibilities are similar to those of an Estimator I, but with a higher level of independence, accountability, and often more than one area of specialty. This role may also help guide Junior Estimators while continuing to work under the leadership of a Senior Estimator.

Senior Estimator

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$134.20	\$177.03	\$157.29	\$157.94
Mid-Atlantic	\$137.44	\$189.74	\$164.44	\$162.34
Northeast	\$164.16	\$224.78	\$199.61	\$196.11
Northwest	\$153.91	\$195.45	\$172.08	\$168.20
Southeast	\$132.76	\$181.68	\$161.96	\$162.34
Southwest	\$137.83	\$179.23	\$159.12	\$160.41

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Senior Estimator typically requires a minimum of 10 years of experience. This is a lead-level role that requires multiple areas of estimating strength and a strong command of advanced estimating concepts. The position often supervises and provides technical direction to Junior Estimators while reporting directly to and assisting the Chief Estimator.

Chief Estimator

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$167.64	\$209.78	\$188.00	\$188.26
Mid-Atlantic	\$184.88	\$235.31	\$209.40	\$202.77
Northeast	\$194.75	\$268.78	\$235.99	\$234.16
Northwest	\$197.85	\$234.56	\$224.94	\$216.91
Southeast	\$170.51	\$236.23	\$203.30	\$202.28
Southwest	\$161.28	\$220.54	\$192.93	\$192.93

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Chief Estimator typically requires 12 to 15 years of experience. This position demands strong command of large and complex projects and may involve overseeing multiple pursuits simultaneously. Chief Estimators must also possess strong leadership and communication skills because they are responsible for leading, directing, and developing estimating staff.

General Foreman

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$87.89	\$114.56	\$104.93	\$107.51
Mid-Atlantic	\$89.04	\$111.10	\$98.80	\$99.94
Northwest	\$101.22	\$118.67	\$112.14	\$103.80
Southeast	\$70.56	\$95.84	\$84.04	\$84.67
Southwest	\$72.87	\$96.35	\$91.33	\$83.40

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

General Foreman typically has at least 3 years of experience as a Foreman. This role supervises and coordinates the activities of junior foremen and labor crews. General Foremen are usually onsite daily and work closely with superintendents to help keep budget, production, quality, specifications, schedule, and safety requirements on track.

Junior Project Field Engineer

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$74.12	\$87.63	\$81.05	\$81.83
Mid-Atlantic	\$72.82	\$86.59	\$80.67	\$80.54
Northeast	\$75.52	\$88.90	\$83.64	\$82.60
Northwest	\$77.47	\$90.19	\$84.64	\$81.71
Southeast	\$74.12	\$86.07	\$80.54	\$78.88
Southwest	\$72.69	\$87.12	\$80.30	\$79.64

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Junior Project Field Engineer is an entry-level role that typically requires a BS or MS degree. This position supports field and cost engineering functions while working as an assistant to more senior engineering personnel.

Project Field Engineer I

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$80.83	\$96.43	\$90.50	\$89.74
Mid-Atlantic	\$79.26	\$100.03	\$91.78	\$91.78
Northeast	\$83.41	\$103.63	\$96.43	\$93.97
Northwest	\$84.30	\$100.03	\$93.59	\$91.27
Southeast	\$81.21	\$95.91	\$89.22	\$89.07
Southwest	\$84.70	\$98.73	\$92.29	\$92.68

*Salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Project Field Engineer I typically requires 2 years of experience as a Junior Project Field Engineer. This role assists senior engineering staff with expediting material deliveries, estimating and processing change orders, preparing monthly pay requests, and managing shop drawings and related project documentation.

Project Field Engineer II

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$90.67	\$109.02	\$102.10	\$100.29
Mid-Atlantic	\$95.94	\$115.97	\$106.97	\$92.96
Northeast	\$96.57	\$125.60	\$115.19	\$111.47
Northwest	\$87.58	\$112.76	\$101.21	\$101.32
Southeast	\$88.35	\$111.60	\$100.54	\$98.74
Southwest	\$85.01	\$105.81	\$93.88	\$91.82

*Salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Project Field Engineer II typically requires 4 years of experience as a Junior Project Field Engineer. Responsibilities are similar to those of a Project Field Engineer I, but with greater independence and a broader support role to the Senior Project Engineer.

Senior Project Engineer

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$105.90	\$148.55	\$129.97	\$122.80
Mid-Atlantic	\$110.26	\$151.99	\$133.29	\$130.35
Northeast	\$126.90	\$187.33	\$159.55	\$154.68
Northwest	\$97.44	\$139.95	\$124.22	\$117.80
Southeast	\$109.36	\$152.50	\$135.10	\$129.46
Southwest	\$89.62	\$125.88	\$111.40	\$104.73

*Salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Senior Project Engineer typically requires 7 years of experience in field engineering. This role often helps manage junior field engineers and is responsible for technical direction, estimating support, cost control, forecasting, risk analysis, investment appraisal, and coordination between the engineering and construction management functions.

Assistant Superintendent

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$95.23	\$122.14	\$111.64	\$107.01
Mid-Atlantic	\$87.30	\$118.18	\$104.72	\$102.15
Northeast	\$94.07	\$129.46	\$117.02	\$110.48
Northwest	\$105.48	\$134.19	\$126.50	\$120.22
Southeast	\$87.69	\$110.35	\$100.74	\$99.60
Southwest	\$92.66	\$114.58	\$105.88	\$105.88

*Salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Assistant Superintendent is typically responsible for projects in the \$5 million to \$15 million range. Most have 3 to 5 years of experience as a General Foreman or Assistant Superintendent. The role requires strong communication, leadership, and technical knowledge. Responsibilities include supervising labor, helping organize the work, supporting schedule and cost control, and working closely with field leadership to keep the project efficient and on track.

Superintendent I

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$117.01	\$149.97	\$135.37	\$133.29
Mid-Atlantic	\$115.86	\$156.77	\$137.54	\$132.41
Northeast	\$129.82	\$182.04	\$157.55	\$156.90
Northwest	\$126.24	\$158.70	\$144.33	\$140.49
Southeast	\$110.34	\$142.29	\$128.55	\$127.01
Southwest	\$111.10	\$141.90	\$126.50	\$126.90

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Superintendent I is typically responsible for projects in the \$5 million to \$49 million range. Most have 5 to 10 years of combined experience as a Junior Superintendent and/or Foreman. This role manages assistant staff, foremen, and field labor while driving schedule, coordination, production, and quality to keep the project aligned with specifications and budget.

Superintendent II

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$133.80	\$176.12	\$157.14	\$158.93
Mid-Atlantic	\$134.08	\$184.05	\$159.71	\$159.31
Northeast	\$142.66	\$214.69	\$180.06	\$176.37
Northwest	\$106.90	\$179.71	\$148.29	\$128.30
Southeast	\$138.43	\$183.54	\$164.94	\$160.34
Southwest	\$116.64	\$157.27	\$138.17	\$157.27

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Superintendent II is typically responsible for projects in the \$10 million to \$100 million range. Most have 10 to 15 years of combined experience working up through field leadership. The responsibilities are similar to those of a Superintendent I, but the larger budgets, staffing levels, and complexity require stronger leadership, time management, and attention to detail.

Superintendent III

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$151.56	\$210.25	\$179.29	\$177.02
Mid-Atlantic	\$144.79	\$203.32	\$174.72	\$173.17
Northeast	\$163.95	\$212.66	\$189.53	\$192.73
Northwest	\$161.27	\$200.79	\$184.94	\$185.70
Southeast	\$150.17	\$196.94	\$176.24	\$174.33
Southwest	\$151.18	\$196.69	\$180.72	\$179.29

*Salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Superintendent III is typically responsible for projects in the \$50 million to \$250 million range. Most have 10 to 15 years of combined experience progressing through the field ranks. Responsibilities are similar to those of a Superintendent II, but with larger teams, broader scope, and increased need for delegation, leadership effectiveness, and operational discipline.

Superintendent IV/General Superintendent

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$181.91	\$219.02	\$199.68	\$199.95
Mid-Atlantic	\$183.07	\$234.25	\$208.77	\$210.06
Northeast	\$177.57	\$271.97	\$229.50	\$234.74
Northwest	\$174.12	\$250.85	\$226.95	\$233.60
Southeast	\$173.60	\$248.81	\$210.06	\$212.24
Southwest	\$174.74	\$245.24	\$207.37	\$209.68

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Superintendent IV is typically responsible for projects exceeding \$250 million. Most have 20+ years of combined experience progressing through superintendent roles. The job is similar to Superintendent II and III but involves far greater project complexity, larger staffing levels, and often additional executive-level responsibilities. Success at this level requires exceptional leadership, delegation, judgment, and attention to detail.

Preconstruction Manager

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$121.46	\$171.38	\$145.09	\$138.34
Mid-Atlantic	\$116.00	\$171.24	\$139.25	\$134.58
Southeast	\$154.60	\$183.07	\$165.90	\$170.34
Southwest	\$125.21	\$165.01	\$148.24	\$148.75

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Preconstruction Manager is typically responsible for multiple projects totaling no more than \$50 million. Most have a minimum of 7 years of experience, often having advanced from estimating roles. This position often supervises junior and senior estimators and manages budgeting, estimating, scheduling, design coordination, value engineering, procurement support, and client relationships.

Preconstruction Director

Region	20 th Percentile	80 th Percentile	Mean	Median
Midwest	\$167.38	\$203.04	\$189.18	\$179.30
Mid-Atlantic	\$183.22	\$222.47	\$197.10	\$197.72
Southeast	\$184.37	\$227.03	\$210.94	\$209.15
Southwest	\$158.56	\$206.28	\$183.06	\$191.76

*salaries do not reflect bonuses

**Percentile multiplied by \$1000 reflects annual salary

Preconstruction Director is typically responsible for multiple projects in excess of \$50 million, or for smaller but highly complex work. Most have between 12 and 15 years of experience, often rising through estimating and preconstruction leadership. The role encompasses all core preconstruction responsibilities while adding broader oversight of team leadership, strategy, process, and execution.

Why Construction Salaries Vary

The salary ranges and role descriptions in this guide provide strong market benchmarks, but no two contractors are structured exactly alike. Company size, project mix, geography, backlog, client profile, self-perform exposure, and internal org design all affect compensation.

For example, one contractor may operate with several layers of project management or field leadership, while another may run leaner and expect fewer people to carry broader responsibility. Both models can work, but they create very different salary expectations at the same title level.

1. Organizations with deeper leadership benches often create better succession planning, training capacity, and long-term retention. That added structure can improve consistency and reduce risk, especially on larger or more complex work.
2. Leaner organizations may pay more for fewer people because each hire carries a wider scope. In those environments, experience, judgment, and independence become even more valuable, which can push compensation materially higher than a generic title benchmark would suggest.

The right structure depends on the company. What matters is aligning compensation with true responsibility. Understaffing critical leadership roles may look efficient on paper, but it often creates hidden costs in schedule pressure, turnover, rework, burnout, and safety risk.

Technology is also changing what high performers can manage. Better project controls, scheduling tools, communication platforms, and field reporting systems can improve productivity, but they do not eliminate the need for strong people. On complex projects, technology works best when paired with experienced leadership.

Taking a Strategic Approach to Construction Salaries

Salary matters, but the strongest recruiting and retention strategies go beyond salary alone. Construction professionals evaluate the full opportunity: leadership quality, backlog stability, project quality, advancement potential, commute or travel burden, bonus structure, benefits, and whether the company is set up for long-term success.

HR and operations leaders should approach compensation strategically, not reactively. That means reviewing pay ranges regularly, benchmarking against the market, studying turnover patterns, and listening closely to candidate and employee feedback. The companies that do this well make better hiring decisions, close stronger talent, and retain more of their top performers.

Brian Binke of The Birmingham Group

The Birmingham Group has served the construction industry since 1967. Brian Binke took over the firm in 1995 and has since personally placed more than 1,200 construction managers and senior leaders with employers ranging from growing regional contractors to some of the largest ENR-ranked firms in the country.

Brian is widely recognized for his ability to identify and recruit high-impact construction talent. He has been ranked the No. 1 international billing owner in construction for his own personal production, was recognized for years as one of the Top 10 international billing owners out of roughly 800 offices worldwide, and has built a national reputation for delivering hard-to-find talent in competitive markets.

For more than two decades, Brian has been regarded as a thought leader in construction recruiting and compensation. His market insight has been featured by major business and industry publications, and his work has helped construction companies think more strategically about hiring, retention, and leadership planning.

CBS News MoneyWatch, Construction Today, Construction Dive,

United Rentals, Fast Company, Entrepreneur, American Express, Builder Magazine, and Human Resource Executive, among others.

"I believe companies are a lot like sports teams. The team with the best players usually wins. It is my passion to deliver the absolute best talent to my client companies - the market's top performers, the talent that every company wants to hire but which seldom seems available. To put it simply, I thrive on helping my clients build their Dream Team."

- Brian Binke, The Birmingham Group

For more information related to the complexities of construction salaries and construction recruiting, please contact Brian Binke or The Birmingham Group.