

**State of New York  
Public Employment Relations Board**

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# **Contract Analysis Program**

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***PERB's Statistical Summary of Select  
Collective Bargaining Agreement  
Provisions***

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**A Report Covering  
1995, 1996, and 1997**

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January 1999

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*Among the powers and functions granted to the Public Employment Relations Board by law was the power and function, "To make studies and analyses of, and act as a clearinghouse of information relating to, conditions of employment of public employees throughout the state."*

*Beginning with this report, we hope to fulfill this long dormant statutory function and to provide meaningful information to our clients to assist them in their collective bargaining and labor relations efforts.*

Michael R. Cuevas, Chairman  
NYS Public Employment Relations Board

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## **Background**

During fiscal year 1996, the Public Employment Relations Board initiated a major research project aimed at gathering and analyzing information contained in public sector labor agreements. Known as the Contract Analysis Program, or "CAP", this project is the only known comprehensive examination of collective bargaining agreements affecting all public employers and employee organizations covered under the Taylor Law. A questionnaire was developed to solicit data concerning health insurance costs and premium payment contributions, annual wage adjustments and several other contract provisions.

A pilot study was conducted to test the data collection instrument and to solicit comments from a limited number of public employer representatives, since the CAP methodology makes this group responsible for returning the forms. Reaction from pilot participants was favorable, especially concerning the program's objective to provide information from collective bargaining agreements on a statewide basis. Valuable suggestions regarding the survey form were incorporated into a finalized questionnaire.

The Public Employment Relations Board extends its appreciation to those that helped make this initial report possible, particularly the representatives who took the time to participate in the pilot study and all those who completed the Contract Analysis Program questionnaires.

### ***Bilateral Feature***

The survey was mailed to the chief executive officer, or a designee, for each public employer where there was a known bargaining relationship with an employee organization. To build confidence in, and accountability for the data collected, a unique feature was built into the request for information. The party remitting the form to PERB must either complete the questionnaire in concert with the employee organization that was also party to the agreement, or at least send a copy of the completed form to the employee organization so the latter can challenge the data, if necessary. The form indicates how to contact PERB to challenge submitted data. It is this feature of the data collection process that distinguishes the program from others, by controlling for actual or perceived bias. Where submitted information has not been tendered to the other party to the agreement, the information is not factored into PERB's analysis. Similarly, where submitted information is disputed, and not susceptible to resolution by PERB, that information is excluded from the CAP database.

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## Survey Responses and Methodology

Contract Analysis Program forms were mailed to 749 school district and BOCES representatives, involving 2562 bargaining units. Combined with mailings to local municipal governments, total mailings initially reached 1487 different public employers and covered 4047 contracts. A second mailing was sent to employers that failed to respond, and telephone contact was made where the responses raised questions. Subsequently, a variety of other efforts contributed to an expansion of the database.

As noted, the survey questionnaire was mailed to all public employers and required that the employee organizations either participate in the completion of the form or be provided with a copy of the completed survey being submitted to PERB. The document required the person filling out the survey to declare whether or not the employee organization had been copied or so participated, and required the declarant's name. It was made clear that failure to copy the employee organization would invalidate the use of the information for public analysis. Disputed data that could not be reconciled was also omitted. After these exclusions, nearly half of all the collective bargaining agreements between public employers under PERB's jurisdiction, and the organizations representing their employees, are included in the analysis (Table 1).

**TABLE 1 - RESPONSES BY BARGAINING UNIT TYPE**

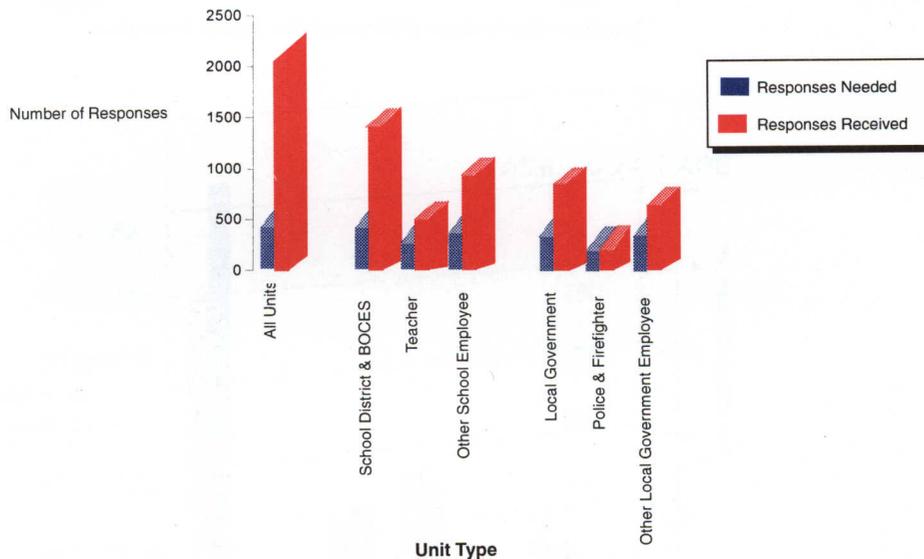
Unit Type	Contracts	Responses	Response Rate
All Units	4210	2048	48.7%
School District & BOCES	2603	1288	49.5%
Teacher	744	451	60.6%
Other School Employee	1859	837	45.0%
Local Government	1607	760	47.3%
Police & Fire Fighter	432	194	44.9%
Other Government Employee	1175	566	48.2%

Figure 1 illustrates that for all but one bargaining unit type, more than enough surveys were returned to yield a 95 percent confidence level for the reported statistics.<sup>1</sup> The distribution of responses received from different geographic regions of the state corresponds with the geographic distribution of existing contracts. In the western, central, northern/capital district and southern regions, there is less than a 2% difference, on average, between the proportion of contracts in existence and proportion of responses received in each area. Of the 1542 public employers that have collective bargaining relationships, 53.4% returned valid questionnaires with 60% of school districts and BOCES responding, and 47.2% of local governments. Response rates for bargaining units range from 44.9% to 60.6% by specific groups (Table 1).

All reports in this study are based on individual collective bargaining agreements as being the appropriate unit of analysis. For purposes of the statistics presented herein, the agreements have *not* been weighted according to bargaining unit size. Presentations of health insurance premium contribution rates and overall annual wage adjustments are made with standard levels of predictability.

**FIGURE 1**

**Responses Needed for 95 Percent Confidence Level**



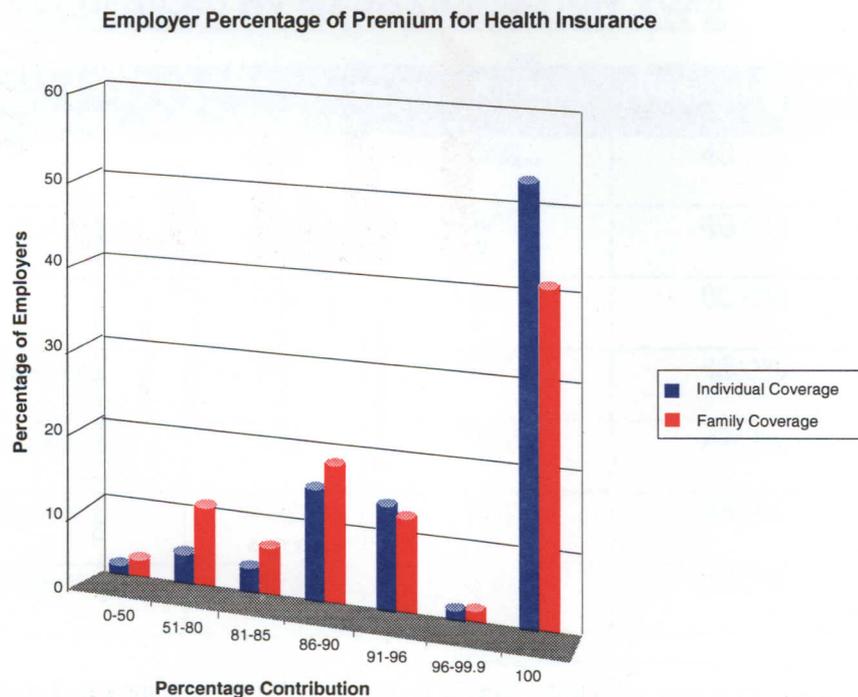
<sup>1</sup> Sample sizes were sufficiently large as to permit predictability at the stated confidence level based upon the full universe of bargaining relationships within any given category, whether or not a contract was in effect for the year(s) being measured.

## Health Insurance Premium Contributions

A total of 1899 records offered some type of health insurance information. This represents 45.1% of the 4210 collective bargaining relationships under PERB's jurisdiction. The person filling out the form was asked to respond based upon the health plan selected by the greatest percentage of unit employees. If unknown, they were to respond based on the selection by a majority of the overall workforce.

Of the 1899 responses, 1610 collective bargaining agreements were analyzed for employer health insurance contribution rates. The 289 omitted records contained missing, incomplete or redundant health insurance data. The information utilized was the most recent arrangement between the parties, as it was reported. The 95 percent confidence interval establishes the range within which the population's actual mean falls. The "actual" mean value for employer premium contributions to **individual** health insurance falls within a range of 93.1% to 94.4%, with an average of **93.7%**. For **family** coverage, the mean is **90.7%** with a mean range between 90.0% and 91.4%. Figure 2 and Table 2 present the distribution of premium contributions made by employers for individual and family health insurance.

**FIGURE 2**



It is again to be noted that the contribution rates reflect those made on behalf of the *majority* of unit employees. Some 330 or 20% of the responses indicated the contracts contained "tiered" health insurance rates, or otherwise contained a different rate of contribution for other employees within a bargaining unit. In 186 of these instances, employers paid 100% of health insurance premiums for the unit majority, but obtained contributions from the unit minority on one of a variety of bases, including hire date, hours worked, salary, length of service, or type of health plan selected by the employee.

**TABLE 2 – EMPLOYER PREMIUM CONTRIBUTIONS**

Range of % paid by Employer      Number of Employers      Percentage of Employers

**INDIVIDUAL COVERAGE**

0 to 50%	37	2.3
51 to 80%	86	5.4
81 to 85%	84	5.2
86 to 90%	250	15.6
91 to 95%	237	14.8
96 to 99.9%	54	3.5
100%	857	53.4

**FAMILY COVERAGE**

0 to 50%	59	3.7
51 to 80%	190	11.8
81 to 85%	126	7.8
86 to 90%	306	19.0
91 to 95%	212	13.2
96 to 99.9%	50	3.1
100%	667	41.4

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## Overall Annual Wage Adjustments

Survey respondents were asked to provide the overall percentage change in wages for each calendar year of the contract for which information was being supplied. The "overall change" is defined as the percent change in base salaries for the bargaining unit, *including any annual increment or step increases* from the last such adjustment. The effective date of these percentage wage adjustments was also submitted. From these two pieces of information the overall annual percentage wage adjustments included in collective bargaining agreements for calendar years 1995, 1996, and 1997 are generated.<sup>2</sup> Additional information regarding wage adjustments was included in the responses, e.g. if so-called "split" increases took place at multiple times during the year.<sup>3</sup>

### Statewide Analysis

For calendar year **1995**, 1088 bargaining units reported overall annual percentage wage adjustments with a mean value of **3.83%**. In **1996**, 1183 contracts produced a mean of **3.58%**. For **1997** the overall adjustment was **3.62%** covering 1051 units. The actual mean wage adjustment for all collective bargaining agreements covering calendar year **1997** falls within the range of **3.54% to 3.70%**. Corresponding information for calendar years 1995 and 1996, as well as for specific categories of contracts is presented in Table 3 and displayed in Figure 3.

### Regional Analysis

At this point, in order to preserve the standard 95% confidence level otherwise used throughout this analysis, sample sizes dictate that only a limited regional breakdown can be reported. In the future, higher levels of response within geographic or occupational areas will permit more detailed reporting. Responses were sufficient, however, to allow for an upstate-downstate comparison.

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<sup>2</sup> To be factored into the calendar year analysis, the adjustment need not take effect on January 1, but may be effective at any date during the calendar year. Thus, for an employer on a July fiscal year that negotiates a 4% increase effective July 1, the entire scheduled increase will be factored into calendar 1997, even though 2% of the cost accrues in calendar year 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Again, because the analysis measures percentage change and not cost, the total percentage change obtained by summing the "splits" is treated as the calendar year increase, even if a portion of the rate increase accrues in the following calendar year.

**TABLE 3 – OVERALL ANNUAL WAGE INCREASES**

1995	All	Schools	Teachers	Non-Teachers	Local Gov't	Fire & Police	Non-Fire & Police
Units	1088	728	244	484	360	102	258
Mean	3.83	3.90	3.93	3.88	3.69	3.77	3.65
Mean range	3.75-3.91	3.80-3.99	3.79-4.08	3.75-4.00	3.55-3.82	3.55-3.99 <sup>4</sup>	3.49-3.82
Median	3.90	3.90	4.00	3.75	3.75	4.00	3.50

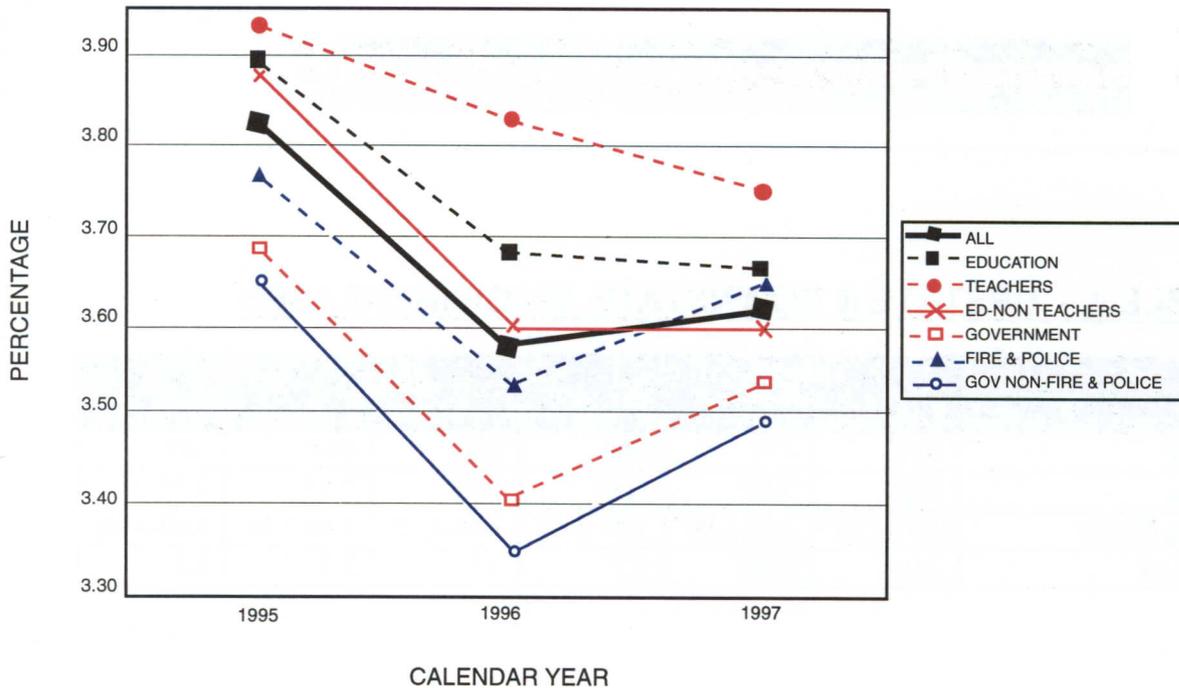
1996	All	Schools	Teachers	Non-Teachers	Local Gov't	Fire & Police	Non-Fire & Police
Units	1183	744	262	482	439	126	313
Mean	3.58	3.68	3.83	3.60	3.41	3.54	3.35
Mean range	3.51-3.65	3.59-3.77	3.70-3.96	3.49-3.72	3.27-3.54	3.30-3.77 <sup>4</sup>	3.19-3.51
Median	3.50	3.60	3.81	3.50	3.50	4.00	3.20

1997	All	Schools	Teachers	Non-Teachers	Local Gov't	Fire & Police	Non-Fire & Police
Units	1051	657	236	421	394	100	294
Mean	3.62	3.67	3.75	3.60	3.54	3.65	3.50
Mean range	3.54-3.70	3.58-3.76	3.62-3.89	3.50-3.74	3.40-3.68	3.39-3.92 <sup>4</sup>	3.34-3.66
Median	3.50	3.50	3.70	3.50	3.28	3.60	3.10

<sup>4</sup> Utilizes 93% rather than 95% confidence level.

**FIGURE 3**

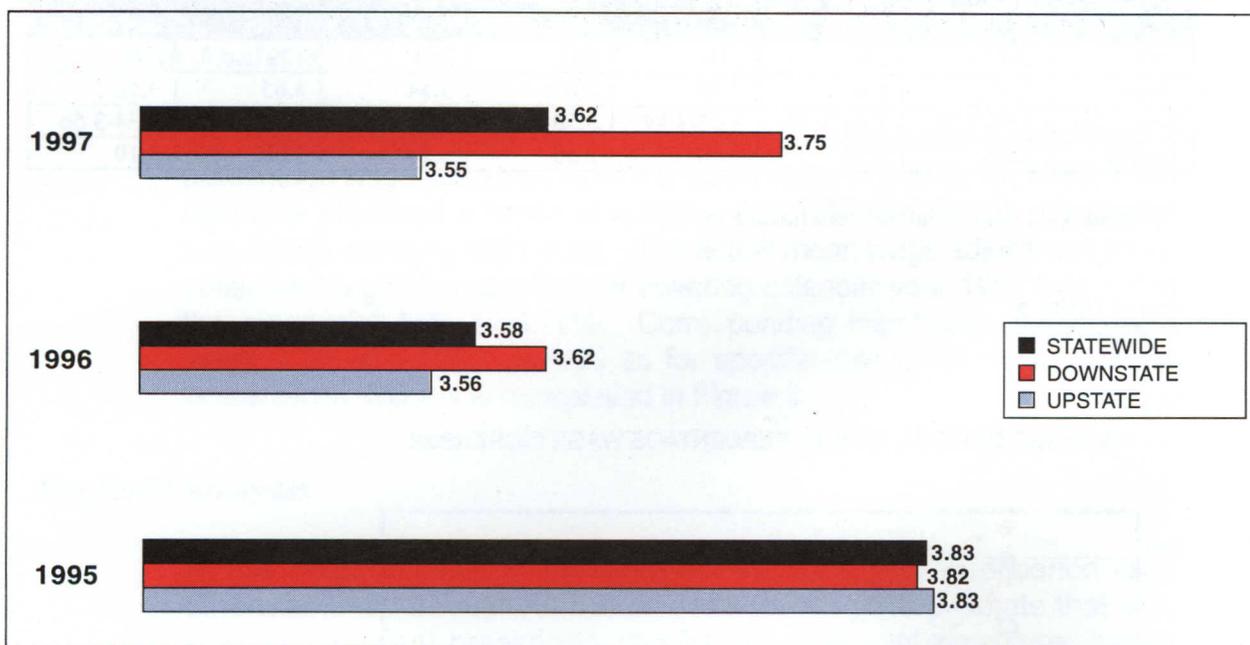
AVERAGE OVERALL ANNUAL PERCENTAGE WAGE INCREASES



For purposes of this report, "upstate" and "downstate" are defined according to the four geographic zones utilized by PERB in connection with contract identification. Three "upstate" zones consist of the 48 counties not listed as "downstate." The "downstate" zone includes the following counties: Bronx, Dutchess, Kings, Nassau, New York, Orange, Putnam, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Suffolk, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester.

As depicted in Figure 4 and Table 4, for 1997, the mean upstate wage increase was 3.55%, with a mean range of 3.46% to 3.64%, while the mean downstate wage increase was 3.75%, with a mean range of 3.60% to 3.90%. Comparable statistics are provided for 1995 and 1996.

**FIGURE 4 Overall Annual Wage Increases: Upstate & Downstate**



**TABLE 4 – UPSTATE & DOWNSTATE WAGE INCREASES**

	1995		1996		1997	
	Upstate	Downstate	Upstate	Downstate	Upstate	Downstate
Units	673	415	747	436	684	367
Mean	3.83	3.82	3.56	3.62	3.55	3.75
Mean Range	3.74-3.92	3.68-3.96	3.47-3.65	3.48-3.75	3.46-3.64	3.60-3.90
Median	3.9	3.88	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

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## Conclusion

This is just the first of what PERB hopes will be a series of reports from the Contract Analysis Program. The request for data will continue with regular solicitations for contracts and completed Contract Analysis Program questionnaires. In January 1999, all public employers that have not submitted contracts including calendar year 1999 or data forms with information pertaining to that year, will be mailed surveys and letters requesting that information. After the general canvass, mailings will be made to local municipal governments in July and school related public employers in January.

Continued and expanded cooperation by management and labor representatives will help augment what can be accomplished by the Contract Analysis Program. While we are extremely pleased with the level of response and interest thus far, increased participation will produce sample sizes sufficient to generate a wider and more detailed scope of analysis, including: more localized geographic breakdowns; annual wage adjustments for additional categories of bargaining units; specific wage rates for selected classifications of employees; and special wage supplements, *e.g.* shift differentials or graduate credit hour payments.

We hope you have found this report valuable, and will continue to support the CAP effort with your ongoing participation.

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## **Inquiries**

Questions, comments and/or suggestions regarding any aspect of this report, or the Contract Analysis Program in general, are welcome. Inquiries should be directed to PERB's Office of Conciliation, 80 Wolf Road, Albany, New York 12205-2604, or by calling (518) 457-2690, FAX (518) 457-2664.

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## **Copies**

Additional copies of this report are available at a postage charge of \$1.50 each. Requests should be made to Executive Director, New York State PERB, 80 Wolf Road, Albany, New York 12205-2604, or by calling (518) 457-2676, FAX (518) 457-2664. Checks or vouchers should be made out to "New York State PERB".

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