

The Union Advantage – March 2009

The Union Advantage at a Glance

	All Private Sector Workers		Goods-Producing Industries		Service-Producing Industries	
	Union	Nonunion	Union	Nonunion	Union	Nonunion
Wages and Salaries	\$22.76	\$19.06	\$23.36	\$21.19	\$22.44	\$18.64
Benefits	\$13.82	\$7.33	\$15.64	\$9.46	\$12.87	\$6.91
* Supplemental Pay (e.g., overtime, shift, some bonuses)	\$1.14	\$0.73	\$1.56	\$1.12	\$0.93	\$0.66
* Paid Time Off	\$2.70	\$1.77	\$2.32	\$2.02	\$2.90	\$1.72
* Insurance	\$4.43	\$1.88	\$5.01	\$2.51	\$4.13	\$1.75
* Retirement and Savings	\$2.42	\$0.79	\$3.09	\$1.08	\$2.06	\$0.73
* Legally-Required (e.g., FICA and UI)	\$3.13	\$2.17	\$3.66	\$2.73	\$2.86	\$2.05
TOTAL (may not equal sum of individual items because of rounding)	\$36.59	\$26.39	\$39.00	\$30.65	\$35.31	\$25.55

- Union members earn substantially more in pay and benefits than nonunion workers. The union advantage holds true both in goods-producing industries, like manufacturing and construction, and the service sector. It's biggest in the service sector, where pay and benefits are more than 38 percent higher for union workers than their nonunion counterparts.
- Union members receive significantly more time off, better insurance coverage and more toward their retirement. The differences in insurance and retirement are especially striking: union members in the private sector get more than 2.3 times as much in employer-provided health insurance, and more than three times as much in retirement and savings plans, as the average nonunion worker. (No statistics are available for public sector workers.)
- All told, total compensation for union members in the private sector is 38.7 percent higher than for nonunion workers.

The full Bureau of Labor Statistics report on Employer Costs for Employee Compensation can be found at:

<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecec.pdf>

Next release: Data for June 2009 will be available September 10, 2009.