ARA

Pay and Benefits Transparency in New Jersey

Information current as of October 24, 2026

THE BOTTOM LINE

Since June 1, 2025, most postings for New Jersey jobs must state the pay, or a pay range, and describe the benefits. The Pay and Benefits Transparency Act is in effect and binding, and it also requires employers to tell current employees about promotion openings. A stricter set of proposed rules is not law as of October 24, 2026, and the state now proposes dropping its cap on range width. If a posting breaks the law, the remedy is a free complaint to the state, not a lawsuit.

What the law requires

Pay and benefits in every posting. The law covers any employer, public or private, with 10 or more employees in total, counted everywhere it operates, that does business, employs people, or takes job applications in New Jersey. Every posting for a new job or a transfer, outside the company or only inside it, must state the hourly wage or salary, as one number or a range, and must name the actual benefits, such as health insurance, paid time off, or a retirement plan, plus other pay such as bonuses or commissions. Vague lines like "great benefits" do not count. The posted pay is a floor, not a ceiling: an employer may offer more at hire.

Promotions. Before deciding on a promotion, an employer must make reasonable efforts to let current employees in the affected department know about the opening. Two exceptions apply: promotions given for years of experience or for performance, and promotions made in an emergency after an unforeseen event.

Temp and consulting firms. A staffing firm advertising to build a pool of applicants for future openings may leave pay out of that ad, but it owes the details at the interview or hire for a specific job.

What is law and what is only a proposal

The statute above is binding law. On September 15, 2025, the state Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) also proposed detailed rules that would go further. As first written, the proposal would cap how wide a posted range can be, with the top no more than 60 percent above the bottom; on October 19, 2026, after employer objections, NJDOL proposed dropping that cap. Open-ended ranges such as "$17 an hour and up" would still be banned, and a clearly labeled link to the full details could comply.

Comments on dropping the cap are due December 18, 2026, and the proposal would expire if not adopted by March 15, 2027. As of October 24, 2026, the rules have not been adopted: they are not law, though the state calls them instructive and cautious employers are advised to follow them. This summary labels every one of them as proposed.

The numbers behind the law

By the numbers. These figures come from federal agencies, peer-reviewed studies, and state records, cited in full in the report:

81 cents	**What women working full time, year round were paid in 2024 for every dollar paid to men,** per Census Bureau data, down from 83 cents in 2023. Black women were paid 65 cents, and white, non-Hispanic women 77 cents, per dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.
78 cents	**New Jersey's own gap, wider than the nation's.** In 2023, New Jersey women working full time earned a median $1,168 a week, against $1,497 for men, per the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

13 to 30%	**How much earlier transparency policies narrowed gender pay gaps.** A Danish disclosure law cut the gap in affected firms by about 13 percent; Canadian laws that made university salaries public cut faculty gaps 20 to 30 percent. New Jersey's law is too new to measure.
59%	**Share of U.S. job postings on Indeed that showed pay by May 2025,** roughly triple the early 2020 share. Postings that show pay draw 3.8 times as many applications.
$300 / $600	**The maximum state penalties:** up to $300 for a first violation and $600 for each one after, counted per opening, so 50 faulty openings mean 50 penalties. Workers cannot sue under this law.

Posted pay matters most for people who never had inside information: workers changing industries, workers without professional networks, and workers job hunting in a second language. The state takes complaints regardless of immigration status, offers help in multiple languages, and lets a trusted person, such as a union or community group, file for a worker.

Both sides of the question

Consistent with ARA's nonpartisan mandate, the report presents the case for and against on equal terms. **Supporters**, including the law's sponsors and NJDOL, say posted pay lets people judge a job before applying, helps current workers check whether their own pay is in line, and works against the gaps shown above. **Employer groups** mostly accepted disclosure itself; their concerns aim at the proposed add-ons, mainly that a fixed 60 percent cap fits some jobs poorly and that rules for outside job boards must stay workable for small businesses (NJDOL has since proposed dropping the cap). **The research record** carries a caution for both sides: one major study found average pay about 2 percent lower under one kind of transparency policy, because employers bargain harder when every raise is visible. The report states both sets of facts and lets readers weigh them.

Where New Jersey stands

Enforcement has started, and so far it fixes rather than fines. In its first initiative, announced March 18, 2026, NJDOL worked with 42 large employers, including nationally known companies and school districts, to fix faulty postings; penalties were waived because they cooperated.

If a posting for a New Jersey job leaves out the pay or benefits, save a copy showing the date and web address, since online ads disappear, then file a free complaint with NJDOL online, by mail, or by fax; in the online form, choose Other and describe the problem. No lawyer is needed.

Jersey City has its own stricter rule. Since 2022, employers headquartered there with five or more workers, counting independent contractors, must post both a minimum and a maximum plus benefits. An employer covered by both must follow both.

Related rights already exist. New Jersey law protects workers who ask about or discuss pay, and since 2020 most employers may not ask applicants for salary history. Federal law has protected private sector workers who discuss pay since 1935, but no federal law puts pay in postings; fourteen states and D.C. do, and bills in Congress remain in committee.

A practical step for any year

Postings are now public information you can use. Compare offers before applying, and treat the posted figure as a starting point, since employers may pay above it. If you already work, check postings for jobs like yours to see whether your pay is in line. Small employers, including nonprofits, should count their whole workforce against the 10-employee threshold, put real numbers and named benefits in every posting, and keep copies of what they post. The state's free guide, in English and Spanish, is at nj.gov/labor under My Work Rights.

About this summary. Agard Research Associates Inc. (ARA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research institute in New Jersey. This document summarizes the full ARA report, Pay and Benefits Transparency in New Jersey Employment (updated October 2026), which contains complete citations for every figure above. It neither supports nor opposes any party, candidate, or legislation, and it is general information, not legal advice. Version 1.1, October 2026.

Pay and Benefits Transparency in New Jersey © 2026 by Agard Research Associates Inc. is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/