





State payroll climbs to \$7.2 billion last year

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## **By Matt Rocheleau**

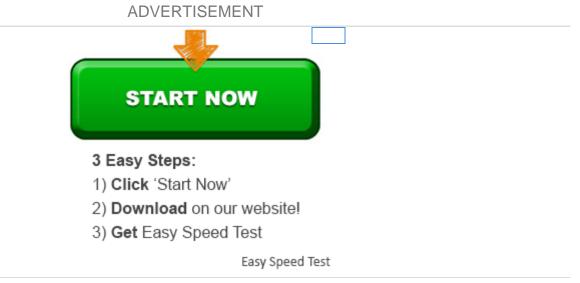
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The Massachusetts state payroll climbed to \$7.2 billion last year, an increase of 2.5 percent over the previous year, according to new data from the state comptroller's office, with the highest-paid employees being in the state's university system.

The number of state workers earning six figures grew by about 14 percent <u>from 2017</u>, according to <u>the</u> <u>data</u>. Last year, more than 13,500 people took home \$100,000 or more, up from 11,900 the previous year. Twenty-four workers made upward of \$100,000 in overtime pay alone.

Overall, overtime spending ballooned to \$290 million, an increase of about 6 percent from 2017.



Eileen McAnneny, president of the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, said the spike in six-figure earners raised questions, as did the increases in overtime spending.

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"Having 24 workers make over \$100K in overtime, and the bump in overtime costs more generally, suggests that the state may need to think of hiring additional workers to reduce the amount of overtime it is paying," McAnneny said via e-mail.

None of these figures account for spending by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which has historically been accounted for separately, or spending by quasi-public state agencies, such as the Massachusetts Port Authority, which handle their payrolls separately and for the most part have not yet released figures covering all of 2018.

The list of the highest-paid state workers last year was dominated by University of Massachusetts employees, as it has been in previous years.

The highest-paid employee was UMass Medical School chancellor and senior vice president for health sciences Michael Collins, who made \$1,069,751 last year, a 2.5 percent increase from what he took home in 2017.



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He was followed by:

■ Terence Flotte, UMass Medical School dean, provost, and executive deputy chancellor, who made \$946,537;

■ James Glasheen, UMass Medical School executive vice chancellor for innovation and business development, who made \$671,268;

■ Martin Meehan, UMass system president, who made \$659,167; and

■ Mark Klempner, UMass Medical School executive vice chancellor for MassBiologics and a professor of medicine, who made \$640,263.

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UMass system spokesman Jeff Cournoyer said those pay rates are designed to be competitive in the higher education world and "the vast majority of UMass employees at the top of the list are faculty members who are experts in their fields and hold PhDs or other terminal degrees "

The UMass system is by far the largest state department in terms of the number of people it employs and the most costly in terms of payroll.

Overall, the UMass system's payroll grew by about 2.2 percent last year, which amounted to a \$32 million increase in payroll spending for the five campuses — the largest year-over-year increase in state government.

Cournoyer said UMass mostly uses funding sources other than taxpayer dollars to cover payroll costs. Only 22 percent of the university's revenue comes from state tax dollars, he said.

"We generate \$6.2 billion in annual economic impact in the Commonwealth and educate more Massachusetts residents than the top eight private colleges and universities in the state combined," Cournoyer added.

The next largest payroll spending jump at any agency, \$28.8 million, was at the Department of Children and Families, which saw a 10 percent increase. That agency has been undergoing a <u>rebuild</u> in recent years that has included hiring more social workers.

The median pay for all state workers last year was \$57,106, compared with \$54,906 in 2017. And the highest-paid state worker outside UMass was the chief medical examiner, Mindy Hull, who collected \$375,000.

The state's payroll, which represents about 17 percent of Massachusetts' overall \$42 billion budget, has risen virtually every year for nearly two decades.

Workforce reductions caused payroll spending to <u>dip slightly in 2016</u> — which marked the first decrease in at least 16 years.

Since taking office in 2015, Governor Charlie Baker, a fiscally conservative Republican, has taken steps to rein in state spending and help close budget gaps.

"The Administration will continue to pursue policies to protect taxpayer funds and reduce bureaucracy across state government," Baker spokeswoman Sarah Finlaw said in an e-mail.

However, much of the payroll isn't under the governor's direct control. For example, state colleges and

\$7.2 billion

universities account for large chunks of the payroll, while the pay rates of many other state workers are dictated by union contracts.

Over the next year, Baker plans to <u>give</u> an array of top deputies, from members of his Cabinet to dozens of department heads, a 5.5 percent pay raise, a first for many since Baker took office.

Baker and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito also plan to collect pay hikes they'd previously turned down. Baker's pay <u>will jump</u> from \$151,800 in 2018 to \$250,000 this year. Polito's will climb from \$122,058 to \$165,000.

Also, legislative leaders <u>collect</u> three pay increases this month thanks in part to controversial legislation they passed nearly two years ago tying parts of their paychecks to the state's wage levels.

Matt Stout of the Globe staff contributed to this report. Matt Rocheleau can be reached at matthew.rocheleau@globe.com. Follow him on Twitter @mrochele

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