



The Rabbinical Assembly כנסת הרבנים

2021-2022 Salary Survey

**Pulpit Positions in the
United States and Canada**



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Dear Friends,

Within the Rabbinical Assembly, the RA Career Center supports rabbis across all stages of their careers, from their first jobs out of school through retirement. One of the RA's principal responsibilities is caring for the welfare and well-being of its members, and one crucial piece of this mission is to ensure fair, equitable compensation that is in line with market norms. In the changing landscape of rabbinic work and employment in general, having the tools and resources to help advocate for good pay is more important than ever. With gratitude to Emily Hendel of the RA Career Center, Rabbi Orrin Krublitz, and the Joint Placement Commission, we are thus pleased to present you with the 2021-2022 salary survey containing information from pulpit rabbis in the United States and Canada.

Many studies have shown that the best way to ensure equity in pay and employment is to be transparent with compensation and salary information. Just as our communities are more diverse than ever before, so too do our clergy and other professionals reflect this diversity of gender, race, generation, health, and relationship status. While each rabbi has a unique background and their own distinct set of skills, they are united in their love of Torah, their deep spiritual grounding in Jewish practice, and their excitement to serve God and the Jewish people. It follows that we also want to see their hard work leading and sustaining the Jewish world compensated equally and fairly.

We have not released a salary survey since before the Covid-19 pandemic, and the employment landscape has changed drastically. Specifically, in the past few years we have seen significant increases in cost of living and an increase in job transitions. In this survey, for the first time, we asked questions about length of contract and number of contracts at a single employer, as well as asking questions of our retired rabbis to create baseline data for emeritus contracts.

To gather our results, we used an online survey meant to be brief yet as specific as possible. The survey was sent on October 31, 2021, and closed on November 20, 2021. Of the 812 survey invitations sent, we received a 44% response rate overall. The information is presented in breakdowns that acknowledge job titles, gender, and benefits. One of the obstacles to attaining useful data that is applicable to our unique situations, is that the more targeted the data, the smaller the sample size. Research shows that there must be 5-10 data points in each survey category in order to be statistically significant. Therefore, while some of the categories did not glean enough responses for statistically significant data, information is presented anecdotally. For some subcategories that gleaned even fewer responses, the data is not included as a separate category so as to preserve the anonymity of our respondents.

The key to relevant and current compensation data is frequent surveys. Therefore, our goal is to improve our lines of inquiry as we learn from this survey and prepare for future ones. In that spirit, we ask for your feedback. Please tell us ways in which this information is useful, ways in which it is not, and suggestions for improvement. In the future we also hope to obtain data from rabbis working in other fields and living in other countries in order to raise up the extraordinary work being done throughout the Jewish world and to provide colleagues in diverse locations and settings with the resources that they need. We are an international organization made up of members sharing their Torah in all kinds of different and exciting ways. Our goal is to ensure that the work we all do is honored and celebrated, and that we each have the tools necessary to understand and advocate for strong, fair rabbinic compensation.

Thanks to all who took the time to complete this survey. If we can be of further help, please don't hesitate to be in touch!

Kol Tuv,

Rabbi Annie Tucker, Chair, Joint Placement Commission
Emily Hendel, Director of Career Services, Rabbinical Assembly



Contents

Introduction	3
Definitions	3
Executive Summary.....	3
Demographic Data	4
Canadian Base Compensation and Contract Length	6
Base Salary and Contract Length.....	6
Retirement Contribution	6
United States Senior / Solo / Co-Rabbi Base Compensation.....	7
United States Assistant / Associate Rabbi Base Compensation.....	8
Contract Length	9
Senior / Solo / Co-Rabbis	9
Assistant / Associate Rabbis.....	9
Insurance.....	10
Senior / Solo /Co-Rabbi Insurance Benefits	10
Assistant / Associate Rabbi Insurance Benefits	11
Professional Development and RA Dues	12
Tuition Benefits.....	13
Pension / Retirement Contributions.....	14
Senior / Solo / Co-Rabbi Retirement Benefits	14
Assistant / Associate Rabbi Retirement Benefits.....	14
All Congregational Rabbinic Retirement Benefits Combined	15
Gender.....	16
Sabbatical Benefits.....	17
Sabbatical Length & Required Years of Service.....	17
Emeritus and Retirement	19



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Introduction

The Rabbinical Assembly, via a confidential third party, emailed RA-members engaged in pulpit work in both the United States and Canada to request a response to the 2021 Salary Survey using Survey Monkey. The survey was sent on October 31, 2021, and closed on November 20, 2021. We received nearly 360 responses, which was approximately a 44% response rate. For senior, solo, and co-rabbi positions, we received enough responses to constitute meaningful data. For assistant and associate rabbis, we received 34 responses, and for rabbis in the pulpit in Canada, we received 20 responses. Both assistant/associate and Canadian categories do not have enough responses to be considered statistically significant data. The numbers and statistics on those positions are being presented below for informational and anecdotal purposes only. For rabbis employed in synagogues in other positions, we did not have enough responses to be considered reliable. The survey was also sent to rabbis serving USCJ member congregations who were not members of the RA. We received a fewer than five responses, again not enough data to be considered reliable, so those responses were excluded from the data set prior to analysis.

Definitions

The definition of compensation for the purposes of this survey is base salary. We requested total annual salary, pre-tax, paid directly to the rabbi including the money received as a parsonage allowance, which is defined in [IRS Publication 517](#), but not including the value of any other benefits.

For the purposes of this document, "rabbis" means Rabbinical Assembly members residing and working in the United States or Canada, currently employed in full-time pulpit positions.

Executive Summary

The mean compensation for pulpit rabbis serving as either a co-, solo or a senior rabbi was \$174,524.74.

The mean compensation for rabbis serving in pulpits as assistant rabbis or associate rabbis was \$135,796.58.

The range of salaries for Canadian respondents working as senior/solo/co-rabbis was \$100,000 - \$370,000 CAD, and the average salary was \$198,681. Due to the small sample size, this was not broken down by synagogue size.

Perhaps the most exciting finding in this survey was that female-identifying rabbis serving as senior, solo or co-rabbis are now making equal or more on average than their male-identifying counterparts in synagogues with fewer than 500 member units. This closing of the gender wage gap is new to this survey and a fantastic improvement. In congregations larger than 500 units, men make approximately 15% more on average. This does not include D-sized congregations 750 member units or larger, as there was only one respondent who self-identified as female for this group, which means that the data was not present to draw a conclusion.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Greater than 90% of rabbis surveyed responded that they were W2 employees. Over half of rabbis surveyed reported that their congregation paid for the rabbi's portion of FICA/SECA.

Rabbis generally receive additional funds as a percentage of their salary as a contribution to their retirement. This value ranges depending on the congregation size, with rabbis working at larger congregations generally receiving a higher percentage. However, there were rabbis at every level of congregation receiving funds ranging from 1% to greater than 10% toward retirement.

45% of senior/solo/co-rabbis surveyed receive a sabbatical benefit. While sabbaticals were more likely to be granted the larger the synagogue size, there were respondents in every size synagogue above 100 member units who received a sabbatical benefit. In synagogues above 400 member units, on average, 70% of rabbis received a sabbatical benefit.

Approximately one in five senior/solo/co-rabbis surveyed were living in a parsonage home owned by the synagogue.

Health insurance was provided in addition to base salary to 73% of rabbis employed by synagogues in pulpit positions, with 57% of rabbis receiving health insurance for both themselves and their families. Disability insurance was provided in some form to approximately 55% of rabbis serving in pulpits. The survey did not ask whether this was in the form of an allowance or a reimbursement but was clear that this was meant as an additional monetary benefit separate from base compensation.

Demographic Data

85% of assistant and associate respondents were ages 40 and younger, whereas senior, solo and co-rabbis were more evenly distributed. 6% of the latter were 35 years of age and under, and then 14-16% of respondents were evenly distributed in each subsequent age bracket 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, 51-55, 56-60, 61-65. The remainder of the respondents were over the age of 65, 7% aged 66-70, and 3% aged 71-75.

22% of our respondents were cisgender females, 74% of respondents were cisgender male, 1.5% were non-binary or gender non-conforming, and 1.5% were transgender male or female. This is roughly representative of the RA membership surveyed, with a skew toward female respondents. According to the RA directory, 15% of RA congregational rabbis in the United States and Canada are female-identifying, while 83% are male-identifying, and 2% are genderqueer, nonbinary, or choose not to denote their gender.

A large majority of total respondents were married (89%). When split by senior/solo/co-rabbi, 92% of respondents were married, versus 70% of assistant and associate rabbi respondents.

For the first time this year we surveyed RA rabbis working at non-USCJ synagogues, as well. 91% of our respondents worked for USCJ-affiliated synagogues. We also surveyed rabbis who are not members of the RA, but work for USCJ-affiliated synagogues. There were less than five respondents in this category and the data seemed in alignment with the rest of the responses, so these respondents' answers were excluded from the data set prior to analysis.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Respondents were ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary (76%), Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies (17%), Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano (1%), Schechter Rabbinical Seminary (.4%), as well as other seminaries.

Assistant and associate rabbi respondents served congregations 300 member units or above, and there were senior, solo and co-rabbi respondents serving all sizes of congregations from 0-99 family units to 900 or larger.

Rabbis from 37 US states and 5 Canadian provinces responded to the survey. The location of respondents tended to be from the coastal states with a heavy focus on New Jersey, New York, California, and Pennsylvania.

Province	
Ontario	12
British Columbia	4
Alberta	2
Manitoba	1
Quebec	1

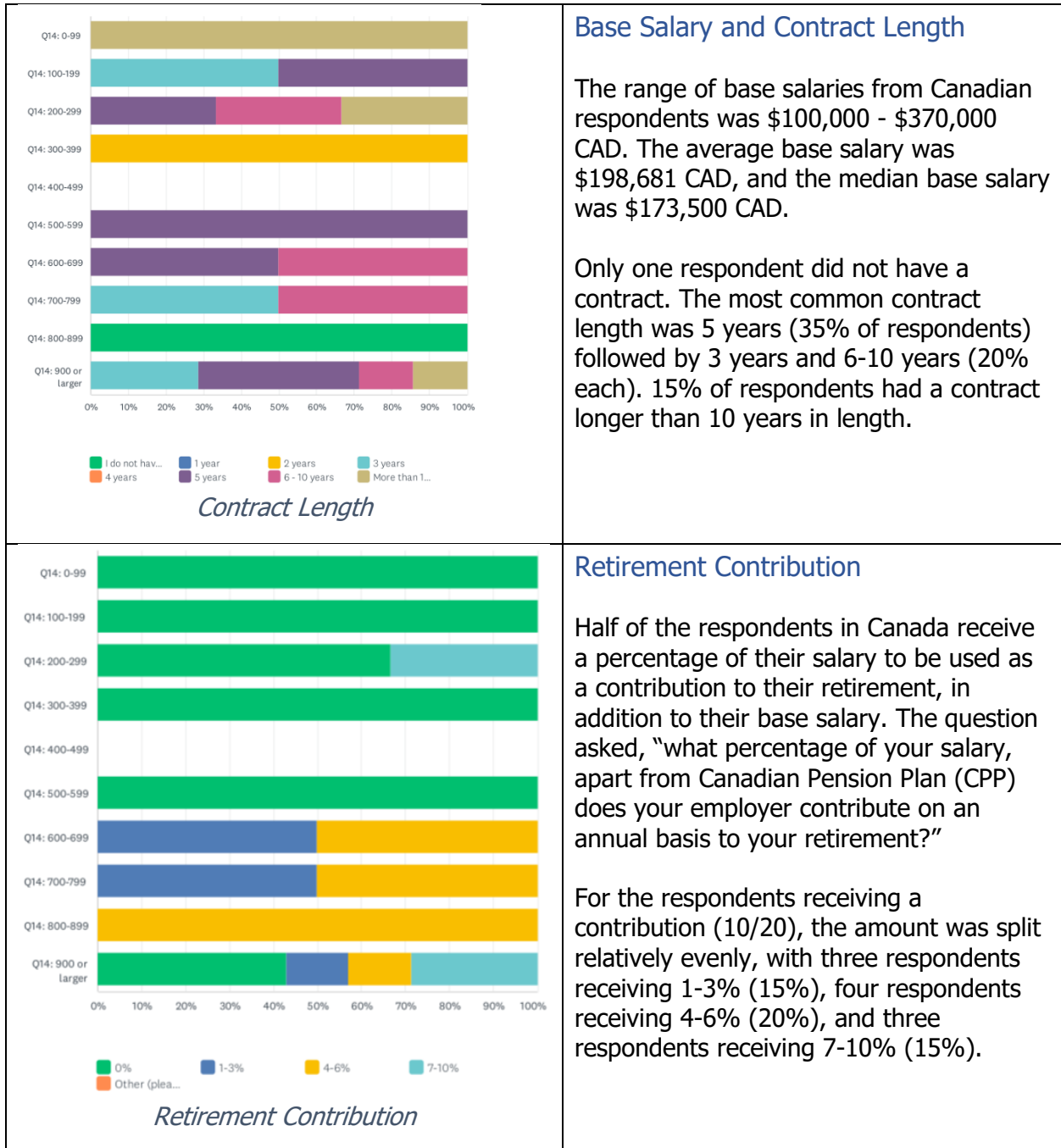
State		State		State		State		State	
New Jersey	35	Texas	9	Indiana	3	Nevada	2	Louisiana	1
New York	33	Connecticut	8	Missouri	3	Oklahoma	2	Maine	1
California	27	Georgia	8	North Carolina	3	South Carolina	2	New Hampshire	1
Pennsylvania	15	Ohio	7	Oregon	3	Tennessee	2	Rhode Island	1
Maryland	11	Michigan	6	Arizona	2	Washington	2	Wisconsin	1
Florida	10	Colorado	4	DC	2	Alabama	1		
Illinois	9	Minnesota	4	Kansas	2	Delaware	1		
Massachusetts	9	Virginia	4	Kentucky	2	Iowa	1		



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Canadian Base Compensation and Contract Length

The sample size of Canadian respondents was 20 rabbis, therefore all numbers below are presented as anecdotal data. Of the 20 respondents, 35% (7) respondents were solo rabbis with the title "Rabbi," 25% (7) were Senior Rabbis, and 30% (6) had a title of Co-Rabbi, Associate Rabbi, or "other." There were respondents in all sizes of congregations, with the exception of 400-499 member units. 35% of respondents were serving congregations 900 member units or larger.





Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

United States Senior / Solo / Co-Rabbi Base Compensation

As expected, there was a vast range of compensation. To analyze the data more thoroughly, we correlated and scrutinized base compensation based on size of congregation. The numbers below are United States averages, representing both salaries in large urban areas as well as suburban and rural areas with lower costs of living.

Average Salary By Size of Congregation		
0-99	15	\$89,553.00
100-199	35	\$109,835.00
200-299	39	\$139,806.00
300-399	31	\$170,098.00
400-499	23	\$200,317.00
500-599	16	\$218,201.00
600-699	8	\$249,069.00
700-799	13	\$224,305.00
800-899	6	\$248,667.00
900+	13	\$332,183.00

Congregational Size	Range of Salaries
0-99	51,700 - 125,000
100-199	60,000 - 172,000
200-299	90,000 - 191,654
300-399	100,000 - 260,000
400-499	140,000 - 340,000
500-599	175,000 - 280,000
600-699	138,350 - 450,000
700-799	101,000 - 340,000
800-899	210,000 - 345,000
900+	218,000 - 900,000

The mean compensation for all rabbis in the USA serving as either a solo or a senior rabbi in their congregation was \$174,524.74.

The survey requested specific salary amounts from respondents. These charts summarize the average and range of all salaries that senior, solo and co-rabbis reported in each congregational size. The data shows that, in general, the larger the congregational size, the greater the salary.

In addition, the data shows that rabbis with more years of experience have larger salaries. Without controlling for synagogue size, the average salary for a rabbi with fewer than 5 years of experience was \$114,701, the average for 5-10 years was \$154,456, and the average for 10+ years in the field was \$182,574.

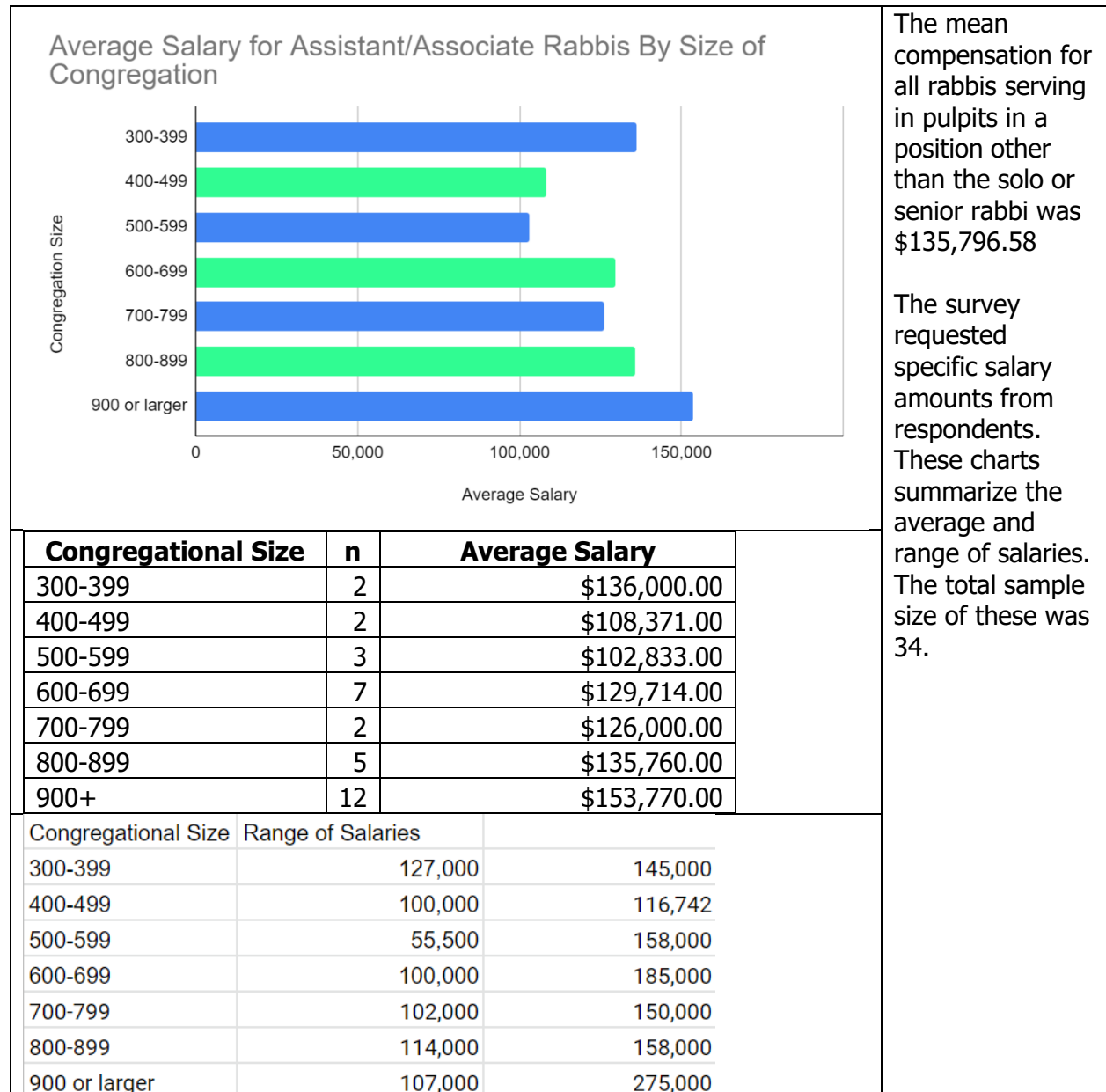
Only 2% of respondents did not have a contract. The most common contract lengths were 5 years (26%) followed by 3 years (24%). 21% of respondents had a contract 6-10 years in length.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

United States Assistant / Associate Rabbi Base Compensation

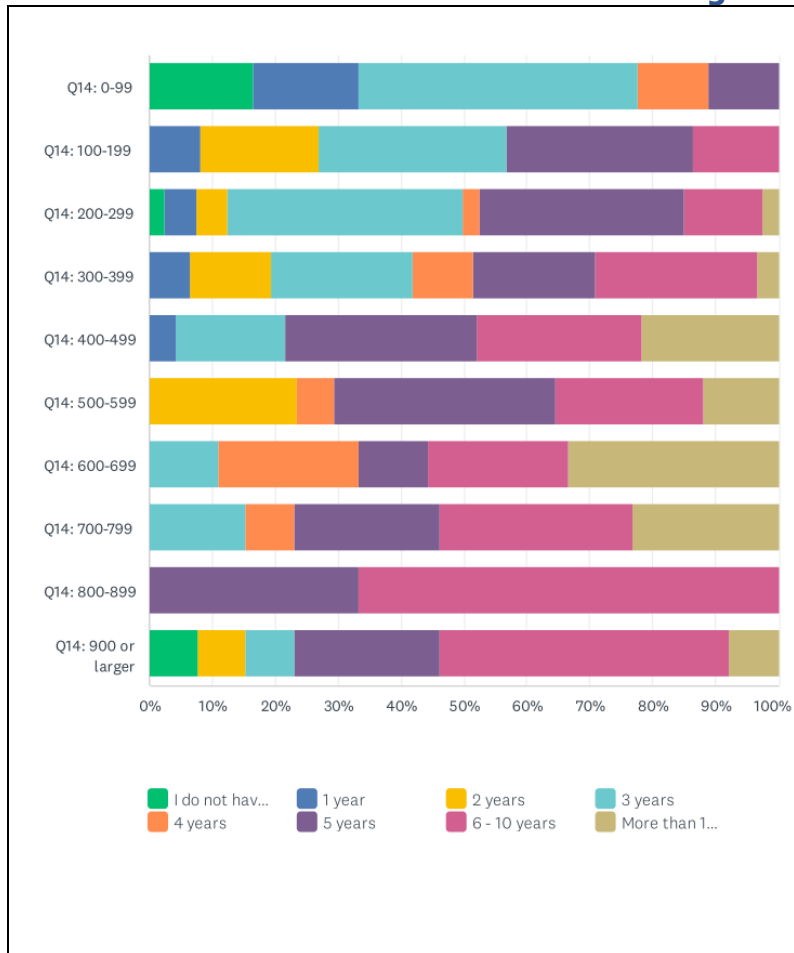
The data below breaks down assistant, associate and other pulpit rabbinic position compensation (not including senior, solo or co-rabbi) by size of congregation, in 100-member-unit increments. Please note that the sample size for these respondents was smaller than the sample size of solo or senior rabbis. Again, we asked respondents to fill in their total annual salary, pre-tax, paid directly to the rabbi including the money received as a parsonage allowance, but not including the value of any other benefits. The numbers below are United States averages, representing both salaries in large urban areas as well as suburban and rural areas with lower costs of living.





Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Contract Length

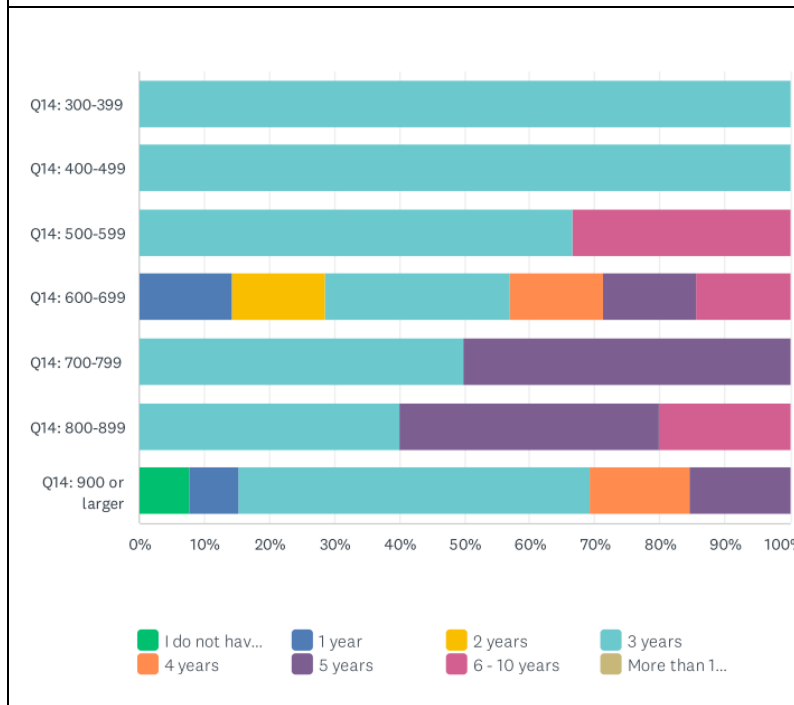


Senior / Solo / Co-Rabbis

Only 2% of respondents did not have a contract. The most common contract lengths were 5 years (26%) followed by 3 years (24%). 21% of respondents had a contract 6-10 years in length. **For rabbis in their first ever contract, the most common contract length was 3 years.**

44% of all respondents had been working at their current congregation for 11 years or more. 20% had been working at their current congregation for 6-10 years.

Only 4% of respondents were in their first contract since ordination, and 22% of respondents were in their first congregation at their current congregation.



Assistant / Associate Rabbis

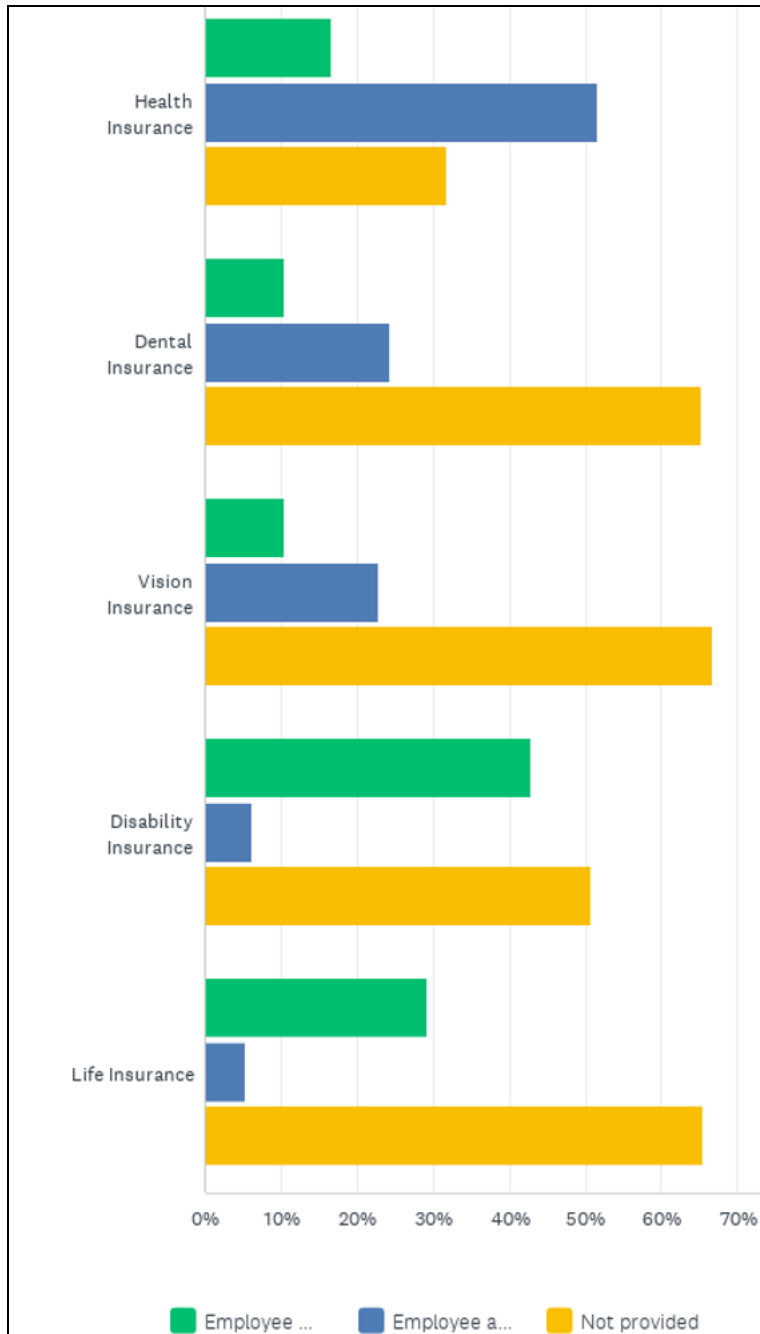
Only one respondent did not have a contract. The most common contract length by far was 3 years (53%). The next most common length was 5 years (18%), and longer contracts were more common in larger congregations.

27% of all respondents were in their first contract since ordination.

One third of all respondents were in their first contract at their current congregation, while two-thirds were not.



Insurance



Senior / Solo /Co-Rabbi Insurance Benefits

16% received health insurance for themselves.

51% received health insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **67% of rabbis receive health insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

10% received dental insurance for themselves.

24% received dental insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **34% of rabbis receive dental insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

10% received vision insurance for themselves.

22% received vision insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **32% of rabbis receive vision insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

44% received disability insurance for themselves.

7% received disability insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **51% of rabbis receive disability insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

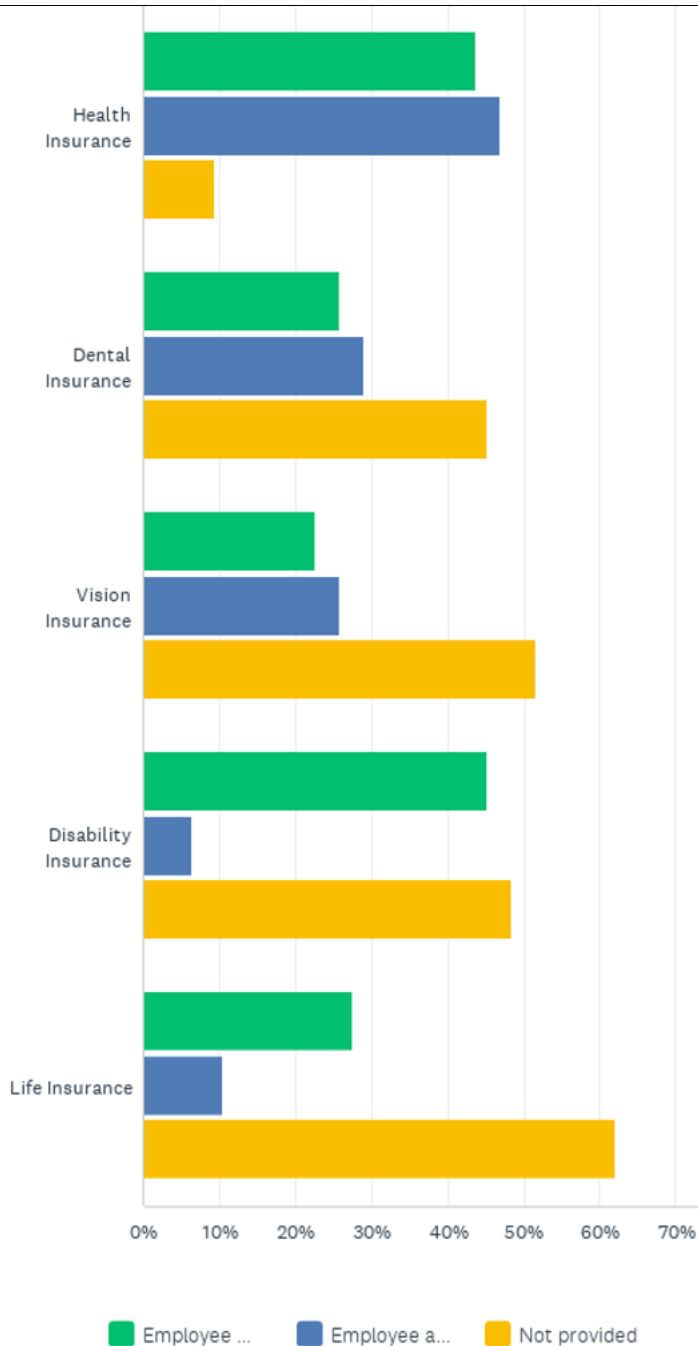
30% received life insurance for themselves.

5% received life insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **35% of rabbis receive life insurance in addition to their base compensation.**



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER



Assistant / Associate Rabbi Insurance Benefits

44% received health insurance for themselves.

47% received health insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **91% of rabbis receive health insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

26% received dental insurance for themselves.

29% received dental insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **55% of rabbis receive dental insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

23% received vision insurance for themselves.

26% received vision insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **49% of rabbis receive vision insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

45% received disability insurance for themselves.

6% received disability insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **51% of rabbis receive disability insurance in addition to their base compensation.**

28% received life insurance for themselves.

10% received life insurance for themselves and their family.

This means a total of **38% of rabbis receive life insurance in addition to their base compensation.**



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Professional Development and RA Dues

The numbers below are representative of aggregate data across all congregation sizes.

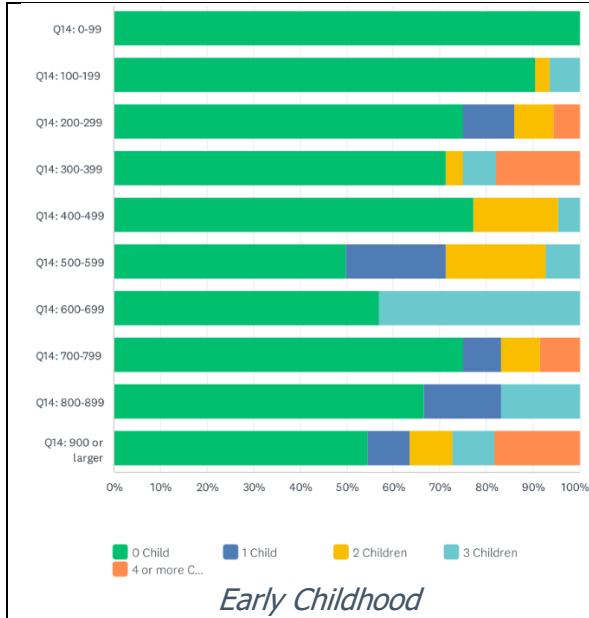
	<p><u>Senior / Solo / Co- Rabbis</u></p> <p>20% of respondents received less than \$1,000 22% received \$1,001-\$2,500 37% received \$2,501-\$5,000 22% received \$5,001+</p>
	<p><u>Assistant / Associate Rabbis</u></p> <p>6% of respondents received less than \$1,000 41% received \$1,001-\$2,500 44% received \$2,501-\$5,000 9% received \$5,001+</p>
	<p>When combined for all pulpit rabbinic positions, the most common amount of professional development and RA dues range given in addition to salary was \$2,501-5000 (38% of respondents).</p> <p>18% of all respondents received less than \$1,000 24% received \$1,001-\$2,500 20% received \$5,001+</p>



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

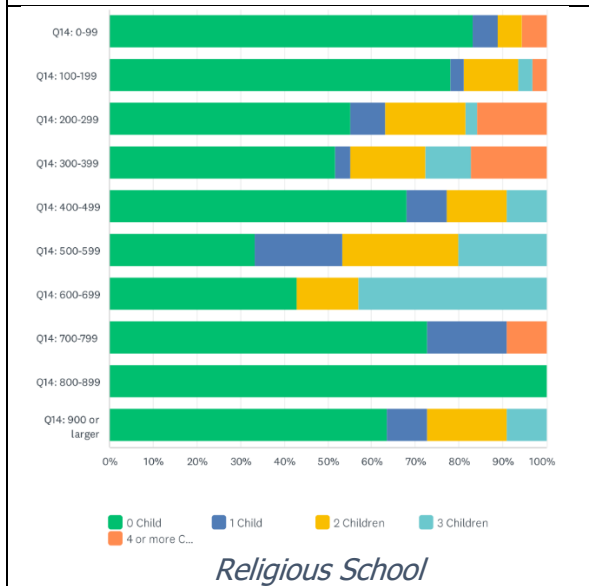
Tuition Benefits

When asking about tuition benefits, the survey did not ask if the rabbi had children of age to receive these tuition benefits. This lack of data point may have skewed the result. The results are presented below as a whole for all rabbis surveyed regardless of title.



Tuition was not a very common benefit. We surveyed rabbis about camp, college, day school, early childhood, and religious school tuition benefits. The two most commonly given were early childhood and religious school tuition.

For early childhood, an average of 24% of respondents received early childhood benefits for at least one child, and 80% of the rabbis who received this benefit received it for two or more children. Religious school was the most common tuition benefit, with approximately 37% of respondents receiving some type of benefit for at least one child, but again 80% of rabbis receiving this benefit received it for two or more children.



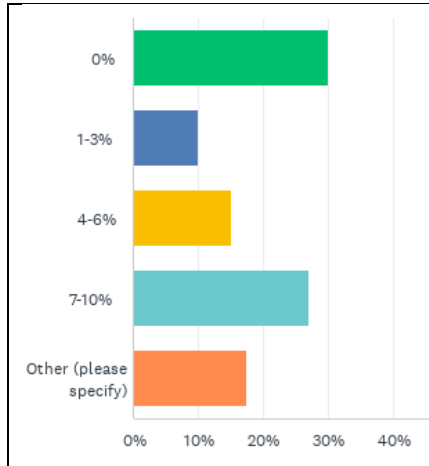
Day school tuition was a benefit for 9% of respondents, with a large majority serving in congregations of 500 member units or more. Camp tuition was a benefit for 10% of respondents. College tuition was rarely a benefit, with only one respondent receiving it.

Rabbis in Canada were less likely to receive tuition benefits than their colleagues in the United States, but the sample size was too small to draw conclusions, with only 16 respondents.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Pension / Retirement Contributions



Senior/Solo/Co-Rabbis

Senior / Solo / Co-Rabbi Retirement Benefits

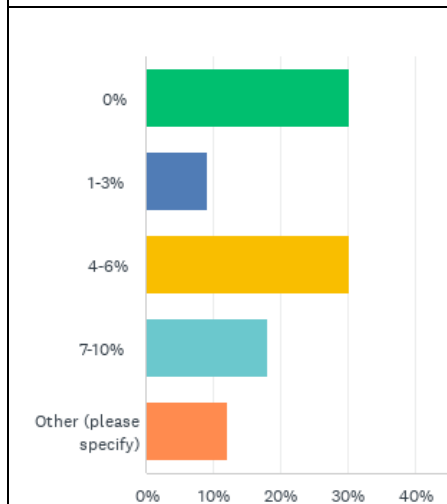
A large majority of rabbis receive a percentage of their salary to be used as a contribution to their retirement.

For senior/solo/co-rabbis, of the 199 respondents, 70% received a contribution to their retirement. The most common the percentage was an additional 7-10% in their retirement, with 27% of respondents receiving this.

10% of respondents received 1-3% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

15% of respondents received 4-6% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

For the "other" responses, the range was 11-33% in addition to their salaries, and the average was 18.66%.



Assistant/Associate Rabbis

Assistant / Associate Rabbi Retirement Benefits

For assistant and associate Rabbis, of the 33 respondents, 70% received a contribution to their retirement. The most common the percentage was an additional 4-6% in their retirement, with 30% of respondents receiving this.

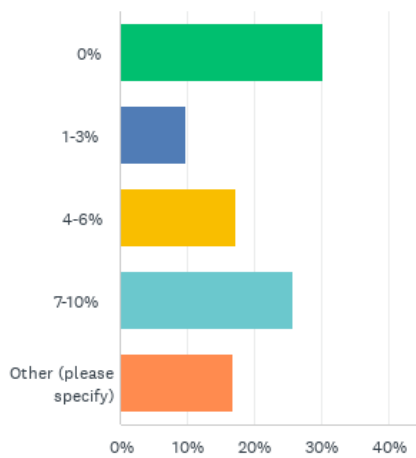
9% of respondents received 1-3% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

18% of respondents received 7-10% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

For the "other" responses, the range was 14-15% in addition to their salaries, and the average was 14.3%.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER



All Pulpit Rabbis Combined

All Congregational Rabbinic Retirement Benefits Combined

On average, 70% of all respondents received additional compensation toward retirement.

9% of respondents received 1-3% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

17% of respondents received 4-6% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

26% of respondents received 7-10% of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.

17% of respondents received 11% or more of their salary into their retirement in addition to their salary.



Gender

We separated compensation data by self-identifying gender. For senior/solo/co-rabbi positions, we had 37 cis-gender female respondents, 19% of our total response pool, spanning the ages of 26-70. A majority of the demographic data including age was comparable across genders, with the exception of marital status. 16.2% of females surveyed were single, whereas only 2.56% of male respondents were single. The most exciting finding in this survey was that female-identifying rabbis serving as senior, solo or co-rabbis are now making equal or more on average than their male-identifying counterparts in synagogues with fewer than 500 member units. This closing of the gender wage gap is new to this survey and a fantastic improvement. In congregations larger than 500 units, men make approximately 15% more on average.

Major Differences (over 5% difference):

- **Sabbatical:** 31% of females receive sabbatical benefits, and 50% of males receive this benefit.
 - One should note a confounding variable, which was that 60% of female respondents have been working at their current congregation 0-5 years, whereas 30% of males have been working at their current congregation 0-5 years. This means male respondents have been at their congregations longer, which leads to a higher possibility of sabbatical benefit.
 - The average length of sabbatical for females was 4 months, whereas the average length of sabbatical for males was 4.25 months.
- **Parsonage Home:** 9% of females have a home or apartment provided, whereas 26% of males have a home or apartment provided.
- **Health, Vision, and Life Insurance:** 59% of females receive health insurance benefits, whereas 70% of males receive this benefit. 28% of females receive vision insurance, whereas 35% of males receive this benefit. 26% of females receive life insurance coverage, whereas 35% of males receive this benefit.

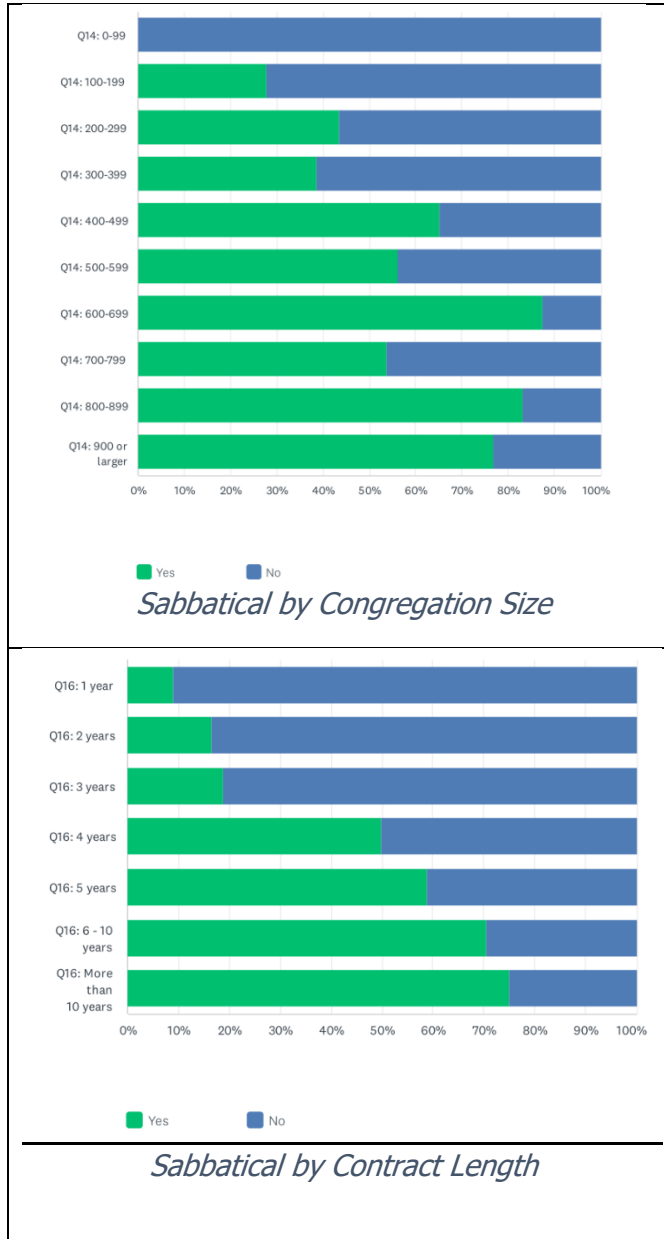
Gender and Base Compensation:

The overall average salary reported for male-identifying respondents was \$156,526.00, whereas the average salary for female-identifying respondents was \$182,446.00. However, when parsed by size, it becomes more comparable, with females receiving higher compensation in synagogues with fewer than 500 member units. The data for 800+ member units is not presented because there was only one female respondent in the category.

	Female Range	Male Range	Female Average	Male Average
0-199 Member Units	\$51,700 - 150,155	\$59,000 - 172,000	\$105,712.00	\$103,261.00
200-499 Member Units	\$140,000 - 340,000	\$120,000 - 260,000	\$189,800.00	\$178,315.00
500-799 Member Units	\$160,000 - 239,427	\$101,000 - 450,000	\$200,085.00	\$231,590.00
OVERALL	\$51,700-340,000	\$71,410-900,000	\$156,526.00	\$182,446.00



Sabbatical Benefits



Senior/Solo/Co Rabbis

45% of senior/solo rabbis surveyed receive a sabbatical benefit. While sabbaticals were more likely to be granted the larger the synagogue size, there were respondents in every size synagogue above 100 member units who received sabbatical benefits. In synagogues above 400 member units, on average, 70% of rabbis received a sabbatical benefit.

Sabbatical benefits were more likely to be found in longer contracts, with an average of only 15% of rabbis receiving a sabbatical benefit if their contract was 3 years or fewer. In longer contracts, that number jumped drastically, with 50% of rabbis receiving a sabbatical benefit during a 4-year contract, 59% in a 5 year contract, 70% in a 6-10 year contract, and 75% of rabbis in a longer than 10 year contract.

Assistant/Associate Rabbis

For assistant rabbis, despite a small sample size of 28 respondents, 21% of respondents received a sabbatical benefit, with an average of 3 months given. Only one rabbi surveyed had a required amount of time of service prior to taking their sabbatical.

Sabbatical Length & Required Years of Service

We asked respondents how many months of sabbatical they received and analyzed that data by both contract length and synagogue size. Sabbatical length varied from 1-6 months for contracts under 6 years, and from 1-12 months for contracts 6 years and above. For contracts 1-5 years in length, the average sabbatical length was 3-4 months, whereas the average sabbatical length for contracts 6+ years was 5 months.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

When broken down by synagogue size, the average sabbatical length for synagogues 100-599 member units was 4 months, and for synagogues 600+ member units, the average was 4.5 months.

When asked about mandatory years of service prior to taking a sabbatical, there was a wide range from zero (no mandatory service prior to a sabbatical) to 25 years. On average, for rabbis in congregations with fewer than 800 member units, the number of years served before a rabbi could take a sabbatical was 5 years. For rabbis in larger synagogues, 800+ member units, the range was 0-10 years, and the average years of required service before taking a sabbatical was 2 years. We analyzed this data by contract term length as well, and found that on average, notwithstanding the contract length, an average of 4.5 years of service was required before a sabbatical was granted.



Rabbinical Assembly CAREER CENTER

Emeritus and Retirement

This year we surveyed retired rabbis for the first time and had 57 respondents. All but one respondent was over the age of 55, with 93% of respondents over the age of 65. 75% of respondents graduated from JTS, 3.5% from Ziegler, and 21% from other seminaries such as HUC, Academy for Jewish Religion, and Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and others.

The survey was missing controlling variables such as size of congregation and length of service before retirement. Our anecdotal conversations suggest that the larger the congregation and the more years served at the congregation prior to retirement, the more benefits conferred.

