

BUSINESS

# Could salary ranges soon be required in NJ job postings? Lawmakers just took another step

*3-minute read*



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Negotiating pay — it’s one of the most delicate dances when applying for a new job. You may not know how much your employer will pay. How much can you ask for?

For anyone seeking employment in New Jersey, the compensation question could get a little bit easier, thanks to a bill state lawmakers approved during a Thursday committee hearing.

The proposed Senate Bill 2310 requires New Jersey businesses with 10 or more employees to include wage or salary information, or a compensation range, in a job posting, as well as a description of all job benefits.

State lawmakers approved the measure, also called a pay transparency law, by a 9-1 vote during the Thursday Assembly Labor Committee hearing. It was also approved by the Senate Labor Committee in a 4-0 vote on May 6.

“The hiring process largely wastes a lot of time between employers and employees, who do this kabuki dance where you bring people and have interviews and if you like them they come back for another interview and not until you make an offer do people actually find out what the job entails in terms of compensation,” said the bill’s sponsor, State Sen. Paul Moriarty, D-Gloucester. “It seems like a large waste of time.”

In the state Senate, the measure next goes for a vote before the Budget and Appropriations Committee at an unspecified date.

Violations of the law, if it is enacted, would carry a \$300 fine for a first-time offense and \$600 for any offenses afterward. In previous versions of the bill, the violations carried much steeper penalties, as high as \$10,000 in some instances.

Moriarty said that even with the lower fines, the bill would still have teeth.

“Besides fines, you open yourself up to civil litigation,” he told NorthJersey.com. “You can’t just thumb your nose to the law.”

“In the beginning people may not understand the law and they could end up with some really large fines,” he said.

Mike Egenton, executive vice president of government relations and a lobbyist with the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, said it was the lower fines that ended the trade group’s opposition to the bill, though the group still doesn’t necessarily support the measure.

“I have faith in my members, that they’re good actors and they do the right thing,” he told Assembly lawmakers on Thursday.

This latest version marks the second attempt by lawmakers to pass the bill. A previous iteration of the legislation only saw movement in an Assembly Committee in December last year.

## **Salary ranges in job-postings in Jersey City already**

Jersey City in 2022 adopted its own pay transparency ordinance, which applies to employers of at least five workers. The City Council and mayor rolled out a public awareness campaign last year.

Councilman Yousef Saleh, who sponsored the provision, said the focus of the ordinance has gone from its enactment to education and now enforcement.

"It's been education," he said, for both the obligation of employers and the rights of job seekers.

Advocates say the measures evens the playing field for job seekers and can help close the wage gaps faced by women and minorities.

“Think of going to a grocery store — you don’t have to negotiate with the checkout clerk. There’s a clear price and you pay the price,” Christopher To, an assistant professor of

human resources management at Rutgers University, said in a 2022 interview. "With pay transparency, companies are required to make the first offer, and employees can simply walk away if they don't like it.

"Will there still be salary negotiations? Sure. But you're reducing the 'how much do you want?' dance by making your information public," To said.

## **New York's law**

New York City got its own pay disclosure law in 2022, followed by New York state this year. Connecticut added one in 2021.

But some New York City employers have used loopholes in the pay requirement law. In some cases, they've included huge salary ranges as wide as \$2 million, a CNBC report said. Still, labor analysts say the trend is catching on around the country.

Indeed Hiring Lab reported that as of August 2023, half of U.S job postings had "at least some employer-provided salary information," which was "the highest share yet recorded" on the job posting website.

Between August 2022 and 2023, the percentage of postings in New York State that featured some level of pay disclosure doubled from 31% to 61%, Indeed Hiring Lab reported.

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