



RECRUITING MONTANA

Big Sky Country

2026

Montana Salary Guide

Accounting & Finance

Based on findings from 2025 market activity across Montana

Our 2026 salary data is drawn from real placement activity and market intelligence gathered throughout 2025 across Montana's major markets — Bozeman, Billings, Missoula, Great Falls, Kalispell, and beyond. Demand for experienced accounting and finance talent remained strong, and compensation continued to climb across nearly every role.

01

Salaries Grew 2–4%

Starting salaries rose an average of 2–4% year-over-year across accounting and finance roles, driven by candidate shortages and intensifying employer competition across Montana.

02

Bozeman & Billings Led

The strongest compensation pressure came from Bozeman and Billings, where growth in tech, healthcare, and construction pushed Controller, FP&A, and Audit salaries notably higher.

03

Senior Roles Most Competitive

CFOs, Tax Directors, and Audit Directors proved hardest to fill. Candidates with CPA credentials and 5+ years of experience held the most negotiating leverage in 2025.



The figures below represent starting salaries compiled from 2025 placement data across all major Montana markets. They do not include bonuses, benefits, or other compensation. Use the three tiers to calibrate offers based on candidate experience, credentials, and location.

LOW

Candidate has average experience and most of the necessary skills.

Location matters most at this tier. In affordable markets like Great Falls or Billings, these figures are competitive. In Bozeman or Missoula, 'low' offers typically trend 10–20% higher due to cost of living.

Demand: Broader candidate pool

AVERAGE

Candidate has above-average experience, most or all key skills, and may hold professional certifications such as CPA, CMA, or CIA.

Figures reflect a statewide blended rate. Location adjustments of 5–20% are common when targeting specific markets like Bozeman vs. Great Falls.

Demand: High

HIGH

Exceptionally strong candidate — top 10% of peers, specialized certifications, and highly sought-after expertise.

High-end offers are most common in Bozeman and Billings where competition for senior finance talent is most intense and cost of living demands premium compensation.

Demand: Very High / Hard to find

Accounting & Finance Salaries

J2T Montana

Title	Low	Average	High
Chief Financial Officer	\$159,807	\$205,063	\$247,177
VP of Finance/Accounting	\$144,459	\$155,440	\$183,191
Director of Finance	\$110,901	\$129,971	\$151,778
Director of Accounting	\$107,732	\$128,846	\$150,401
Controller	\$120,681	\$146,571	\$168,311
Assistant Controller	\$90,351	\$109,043	\$123,218
Accounting Manager	\$87,281	\$101,281	\$115,381
Senior Accountant (3-5+ Yrs)	\$90,181	\$95,181	\$107,281
Staff Accountant (1+ yrs)	\$70,079	\$76,211	\$81,250
Accounting Assistant/Clerk	\$52,100	\$56,897	\$64,743
Tax Director	\$122,788	\$151,323	\$189,911
Tax Manager	\$94,464	\$111,464	\$130,138

Accounting & Finance Salaries

J2T Montana

Title	Low	Average	High
Senior Tax Accountant	\$73,730	\$90,214	\$103,161
Tax Accountant	\$65,181	\$73,816	\$85,617
Financial Reporting - Manager	\$93,617	\$116,276	\$139,682
Financial Reporting (1-3 Yrs)	\$76,419	\$81,680	\$87,355
Dir. Financial Planning & Analysis	\$116,868	\$129,236	\$143,339
Mgr. Financial Planning & Analysis	\$90,031	\$105,929	\$120,851
Sr. Financial Planning & Analysis	\$82,206	\$89,471	\$98,059
Financial Planning & Analysis (1-3Y)	\$70,047	\$77,413	\$81,816
Director of Internal Audit	\$128,396	\$141,538	\$154,081
Internal Audit Manager	\$96,651	\$107,954	\$120,303
Senior Internal Auditor	\$76,080	\$88,070	\$101,589
Internal Auditor (1+ Yrs)	\$68,974	\$74,016	\$80,346

Accounting & Finance Salaries

J2T Montana

Title	Low	Average	High
Accounts Payable Mgr./Supervisor	\$75,381	\$81,808	\$87,188
Accounts Payable Specialist	\$53,187	\$58,681	\$68,181
Accounts Receivable Mgr./Supervisor	\$65,181	\$71,141	\$83,117
Accounts Receivable Specialist	\$52,571	\$57,261	\$65,181
Billing Manager	\$51,743	\$62,455	\$78,110
Billing Specialist/Analyst	\$48,211	\$53,181	\$57,896
Collections / Credit Analyst	\$48,151	\$50,632	\$57,038
Payroll Manager/Supervisor	\$78,724	\$86,744	\$96,303
Payroll Admin/Coordinator	\$52,571	\$51,891	\$66,550
Bookkeeper	\$67,281	\$74,318	\$87,357

Cost of Living by City — Why Location Matters

Montana's cost of living varies significantly by city. A salary that's competitive in Great Falls may fall short in Bozeman. Use these benchmarks alongside the salary guide to ensure your offer reflects the reality of where your candidate will be living.

City	COL vs National	Median Home	Avg 1BR Rent	Context
Bozeman <i>Highest Cost</i>	+21%	\$730,000	\$2,078/mo	Fastest-growing and most expensive MT city. Salaries must reflect premium.
Missoula <i>High Cost</i>	+10%	\$569,000	\$1,432/mo	Second most expensive. Healthcare, education and outdoor sectors dominant.
Kalispell <i>Moderate-High</i>	+6%	\$552,000	\$1,350/mo	Rising costs due to Whitefish proximity. Demand for finance talent increasing.
Helena <i>Moderate</i>	+4%	\$430,000	\$1,574/mo	Government-heavy market. Stable demand, predictable salary bands.
Billings <i>Near Average</i>	+1%	\$397,000	\$1,112/mo	Most affordable large city. Strong oil, healthcare, and retail sectors.
Great Falls <i>Most Affordable</i>	-8%	\$325,000	\$1,045/mo	Most affordable of the 6 cities. Lower salary expectations generally apply.

Higher cost
 Mid cost
 Lower cost
 Sources: RentCafe, Zillow, Redfin, Salary.com, Apartments.com (2024–2025) | COL index: national average = 100

Thank You.

If you have any questions about specific roles or wish to discuss your hiring plans for 2026, we are here to support you.

Looking for help finding professionals outside of accounting & finance? We can support you there as well — just let us know what you need and we'll create a custom search strategy for your team.

Get in Touch

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