Your staff pay ladder

Write down the pay for each step so your team can see a path up. Review it every January, before minimum wage changes.

Facility _____ Date reviewed _____ Local minimum wage ($/hr) _____

STEP 1

Attendant

Typical: about $15–$22/hr

Tracks the local minimum wage

OUR PAY

$ _____ to $ _____ /hr

TO MOVE UP TO THE NEXT STEP

_____

_____

BENEFITS AT THIS STEP

☐ Paid time off ☐ Bonus

☐ Medical insurance ☐ Tips

Other: _____

STEP 2

Lead

Typical: about $20–$28/hr

Lead or kennel manager range

OUR PAY

$ _____ to $ _____ /hr

TO MOVE UP TO THE NEXT STEP

_____

_____

BENEFITS AT THIS STEP

☐ Paid time off ☐ Bonus

☐ Medical insurance ☐ Tips

Other: _____

STEP 3

Kennel manager

Typical: about $20–$28/hr

Often with bonuses and paid time off

OUR PAY

$ _____ to $ _____ /hr

TO MOVE UP TO THE NEXT STEP

_____

_____

BENEFITS AT THIS STEP

☐ Paid time off ☐ Bonus

☐ Medical insurance ☐ Tips

Other: _____

STEP 4

General manager

Typical: about $25–$30/hr

Or $50,000–$90,000 a year

OUR PAY

$ _____ to $ _____ /hr

WHAT THE ROLE COVERS

_____

_____

BENEFITS AT THIS STEP

☐ Paid time off ☐ Bonus

☐ Medical insurance ☐ Tips

Other: _____

MANAGER GAP CHECK

Keep managers clearly above the team. In examples boarding and daycare owners shared, the gap was $8 to $9 an hour.

Manager pay $ _____ − next-highest pay $ _____ = gap $ _____

Aim for $8+/hr

When starting pay goes up, raise everyone above it, or experienced staff find out from your job ad.

Typical ranges are figures boarding and daycare owners reported about their own facilities, not industry standards. Pay depends heavily on your state and city. Not legal, tax, or financial advice.

Can I afford this hire?

Total labor (wages, employer payroll taxes, and benefits) usually runs 35% to 50% of revenue for a dog daycare or boarding business. Check it every pay period.

A. YOUR LABOR % THIS MONTH

		YOURS	EXAMPLE
A	Monthly revenue	$ _____	$40,000
B	Wages	$ _____	$14,000
C	Employer payroll taxes and benefits	$ _____	$2,000
D	**Total labor (B + C)**	$ _____	**$16,000**
E	**Labor % (D ÷ A × 100)**	_____ %	**40%**

Mark your labor % here



B. ADD A NEW HIRE

$ _____ × _____ × 52 ÷ 12 = $ _____

hourly rate · hours a week · new monthly wages (F)

+ estimated payroll taxes and benefits for the hire $ _____ (G)

New labor % = (D + F + G) ÷ A × 100 = _____ %

If labor rises, the new hire needs to bring in more dogs or longer hours to pay for themselves.

EXAMPLE

$20/hr × 30 hrs a week
× 52 ÷ 12 ≈ $2,600 a month
in wages, before taxes

($16,000 + $2,600) ÷ $40,000
≈ 46%, before the hire's taxes

When to hire your first helper

One boarding owner's rule of thumb: about 10 dogs a day can support paid help, and each extra 1 or 2 dogs a day pays for a couple more hours.

Plan for January raises

If minimum wage goes up every January, so should your rates. Re-run this page before you set next year's prices.

NOTES