

Salaries of Staff Working in Archives

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The *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey*, the Society of American Archivists' (SAA) *A*CENSUS*¹ survey and the U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) all have salary information and occupation definitions for positions in archives (see sidebars). The definition in the *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey* includes most of the tasks mentioned in the other two resources, stating that a staff member working in archives or special collections “manages and maintains collection; identifies and appraises records, authenticates, describes and documents, facilitates access and use, preserves and conserves, and exhibits collection”.

Table 1
Available Salary Data for Positions in Archives

Salary Source	Position	Average Annual Salary
BLS	Archivist	\$40,850
	Librarian	\$49,110
	Library Technician	\$26,940
SAA	Archivist	\$46,544
ALA (MLS)	Librarian	\$56,259
ALA (non-MLS) Public Libraries	Associate Librarian of Archives & Special Collections	\$30,329
	Library Technical Assistant of Archives & Special Collections	\$34,651
	Archives & Special Collections Clerk	\$26,640
ALA (non-MLS) Academic Libraries	Associate Librarian of Archives & Special Collections	\$40,445
	Library Technical Assistant of Archives & Special Collections	\$31,149
	Archives & Special Collections Clerk	\$26,424

Position Definitions

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Archivists - Appraise, edit, and direct safekeeping of permanent records and historically valuable documents. Participate in research activities based on archival materials.

Librarians - Administer libraries and perform related library services. Tasks may include selecting, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, circulating, and maintaining library materials; and furnishing reference, bibliographical, and readers' advisory services. May perform in-depth, strategic research, and synthesize, analyze, edit, and filter information. May set up or work with databases and information systems to catalogue and access information.

Library Technicians - Assist librarians by helping readers in the use of library catalogs, databases, and indexes to locate books and other materials; and by answering questions that require only brief consultation of standard reference. Compile records; sort and shelve books; remove or repair damaged books; register patrons; check materials in and out of the circulation process. Replace materials in shelving area (stacks) or files.

¹ “The 2004 A*CENSUS (Archival Census & Education Needs Survey in the United States) was conducted by a team of researchers from the Society of American Archivists (SAA) in conjunction with other archivist organizations” (*A*CENSUS 2004: Data Collection Methodology Report*, 2005, p. 2)



Salaries of those working in archives vary from over \$56,000 to under \$27,000, depending on the position (see Table 1). For example, according to the *ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries*, the average salary for an MLS Librarian is \$56,259 (regardless of library type) whereas a non-MLS Archives and Special Collections Clerk (in an academic library) earns on average \$26,424 annually.

The training and education needed to be a professional archivist is usually similar to that of a librarian. However, according to the BLS, archivists typically earn \$8,260 less annually than librarians. There is a larger difference in the salary data collected from professional associations. The SAA's *A*CENSUS* survey found that the average annual salary of archivists is \$46,544, this is \$9,715 less than the ALA average for librarians.

The *2006 ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey* asked participating public and academic libraries to provide salary information specifically for Library Technical Assistants and Clerks. In archives, the average annual salary for Library Technical Assistants was \$34,651 and Clerks earned \$26,640 in public libraries (see Chart 1). The survey results indicate that both positions earn less in academic libraries. Library Technical Assistants in academic libraries earned an average salary of \$31,149 which is \$3,502 less than those in public libraries. Clerks in academic libraries earned almost \$400 less than those in public libraries.

Position Definitions

Society of American Archivists

Archivist

1. An individual responsible for appraising, acquiring, arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to records of enduring value, according to the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control to protect the materials' authenticity and context.
2. An individual with responsibility for management and oversight of an archival repository or of records of enduring value.

Chart 1
ALA Average Annual Salaries of Library Technicians and Clerks in Archives and Special Collections



Associate Librarians of Archives and Special Collections are non-MLS positions which may perform managerial and administrative duties, according to the *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey*. Of these Associate Librarians in public libraries, 128 reported their education levels. Eight reported they had a master's degree, however, of the 45 in academic libraries who reported their education levels 12 had master's degrees and 3 had doctoral degrees.

The average annual salary of Associate Librarians of Archives and Special Collections is \$30,329 in public libraries and \$40,445 in academic libraries. When these salaries are compared to the SAA & BLS average annual salaries, Archivists (MLS) earn between \$16,215 to \$10,521 more than Associate Librarians (non-MLS) in public libraries and \$6,099 to \$405 more than those in academic libraries (see Table 1).

Both MLS and non-MLS positions in archives may perform similar tasks at different professional levels. However, salaries for positions in this field range widely. Average annually salaries for Non-MLS positions are less in academic libraries than public libraries. While the BLS data suggests that an archivist earns more than 20 percent less than the average annual salary of a librarian.

Sources:

Grady, J. & Davis, D. (2006). *ALA-APA Non-MLS Salary Survey: A Survey of Library Positions Not Requiring an ALA-Accredited Mater's Degree*. American Library Association – Allied Professional Association.

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Society of American Archivists. (2005). *A*CENSUS*. Available at: <http://www.archivists.org/a-census/index.asp> .

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Position Definitions

American Library Association

Archives and Special Collections (non-MLS positions) - manages and maintains collection; identifies and appraises records, authenticates, describes and documents, facilitates access and use, preserves and conserves, and exhibits collection.

Associate Librarian (non-MLS degreed) - Provides assistance to patrons including topical research and material location. Assists patrons with the use of library resources and equipment. Screens the collection for outdated or used materials following established guidelines. May perform managerial and administrative duties.

Library Technical Assistant - Provides basic assistance to patrons referring patrons to Librarian professional assistance. Locates materials and information for patrons. May complete routine copy cataloging. Assists with special programming.

Clerks - Performs routine duties required the use of a variety of forms, reports or procedures. Provides basic patron assistance: sets up computer stations, locates materials, provides information. Maintains departmental or area records. Performs miscellaneous clerical duties such as filing, typing, sorting, or photocopying.

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