Netting Your Worth in Business Aviation

2026-2027 CABIN CREW

Full-Time & Lead/Manager Salary Benchmarks - USA

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Full-Time and Lead/Manager Salary Benchmark Survey 2026-2027 - USA

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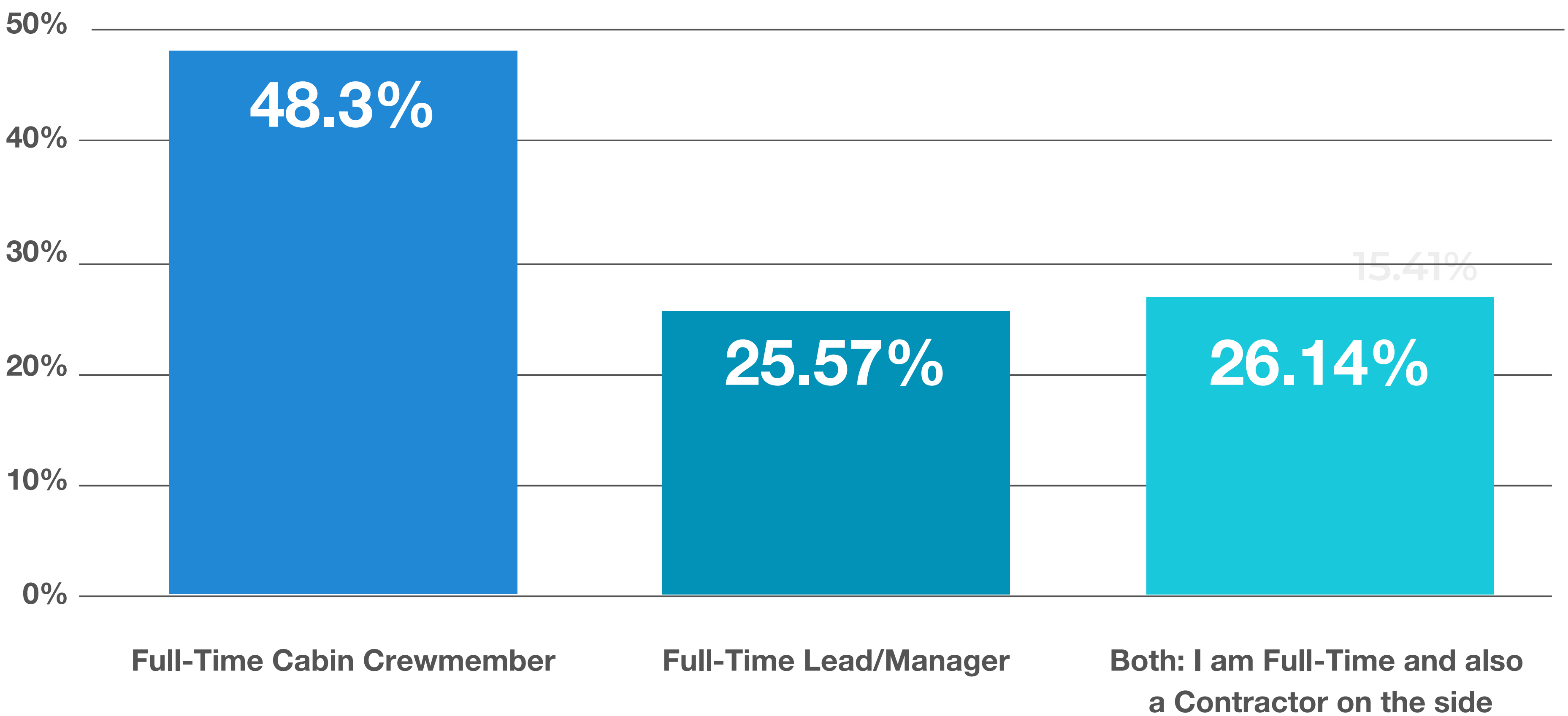
The 2026 USA Salary Benchmark Report provides an in-depth analysis of compensation for full-time Corporate Cabin Crew and Lead Cabin Crew/Managers across business aviation. Developed from industry survey responses, this report offers valuable insight into current salary trends, benchmark compensation, experience levels, operational sectors, and demographic data shaping today's market.

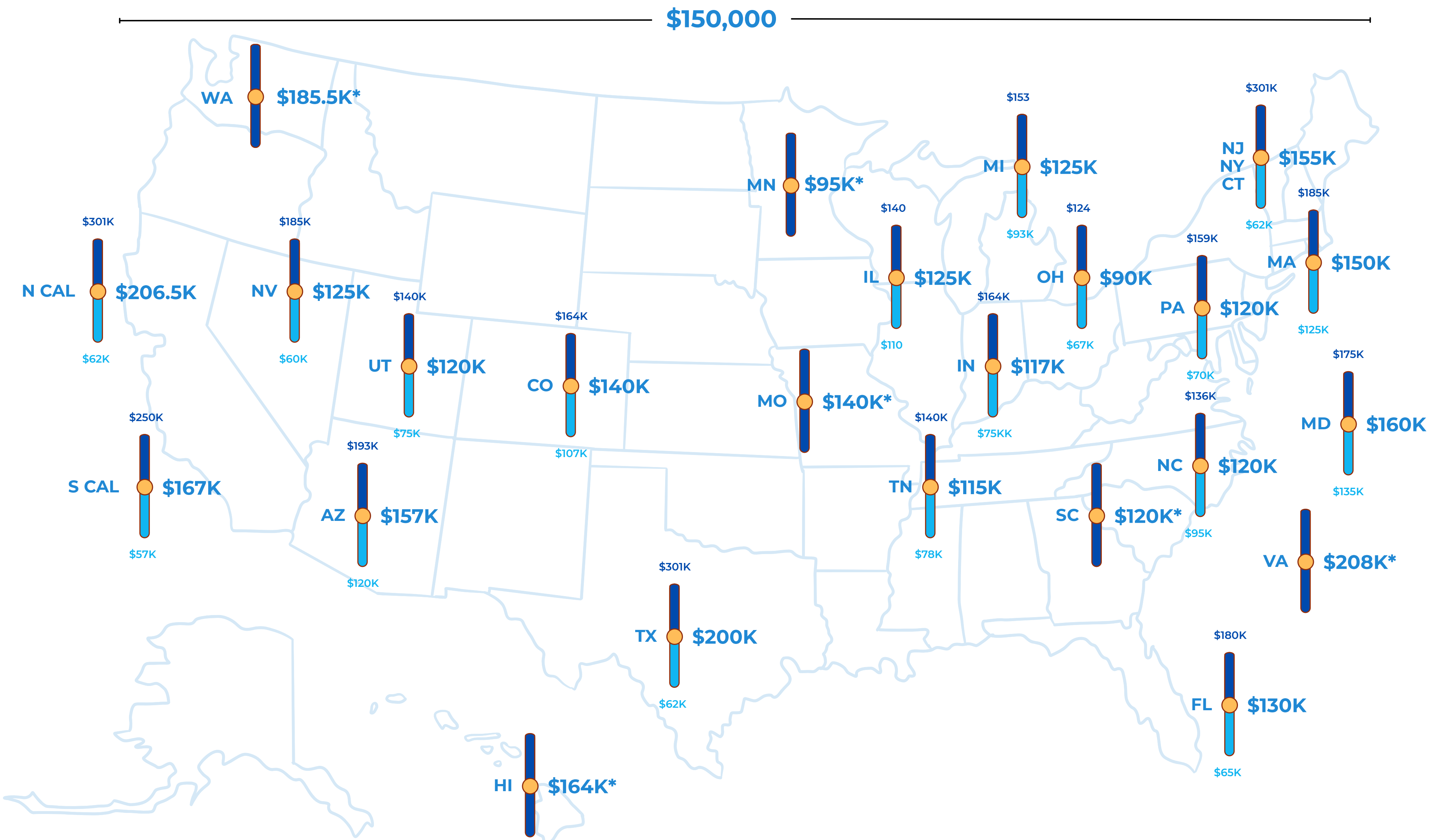
As business aviation continues to evolve, understanding competitive compensation has become increasingly important for both aviation professionals and employers. Whether negotiating a new position, evaluating internal pay structures, planning career progression, or developing hiring strategies, reliable salary benchmarking provides an essential foundation for informed decision-making.

The findings in this report identify emerging salary benchmarks while highlighting the factors that most influence compensation, including years of experience, type of operation, leadership responsibilities, and organizational structure. By presenting real-world data from professionals working throughout the United States, this report serves as a practical resource for individuals, flight departments, hiring managers, and industry leaders seeking a clearer understanding of today's compensation landscape.

Total Full-Time Salary Survey Participant Classifications



USA Full-Time Cabin Crew Benchmark Salary



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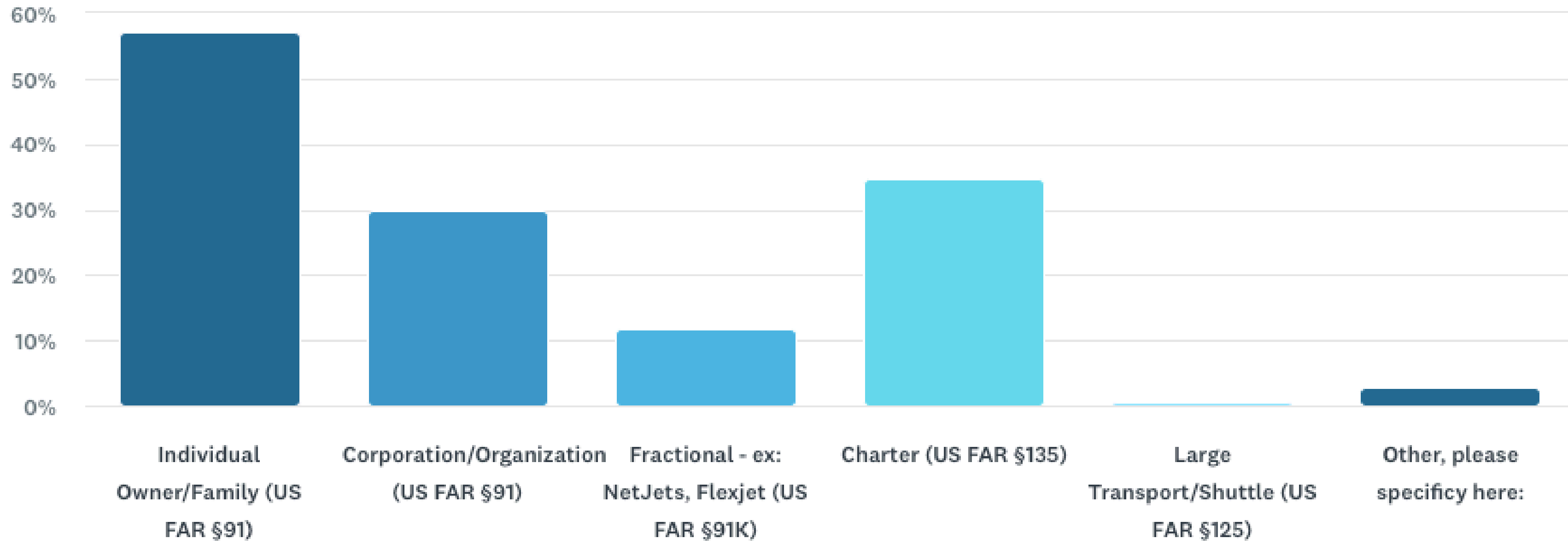
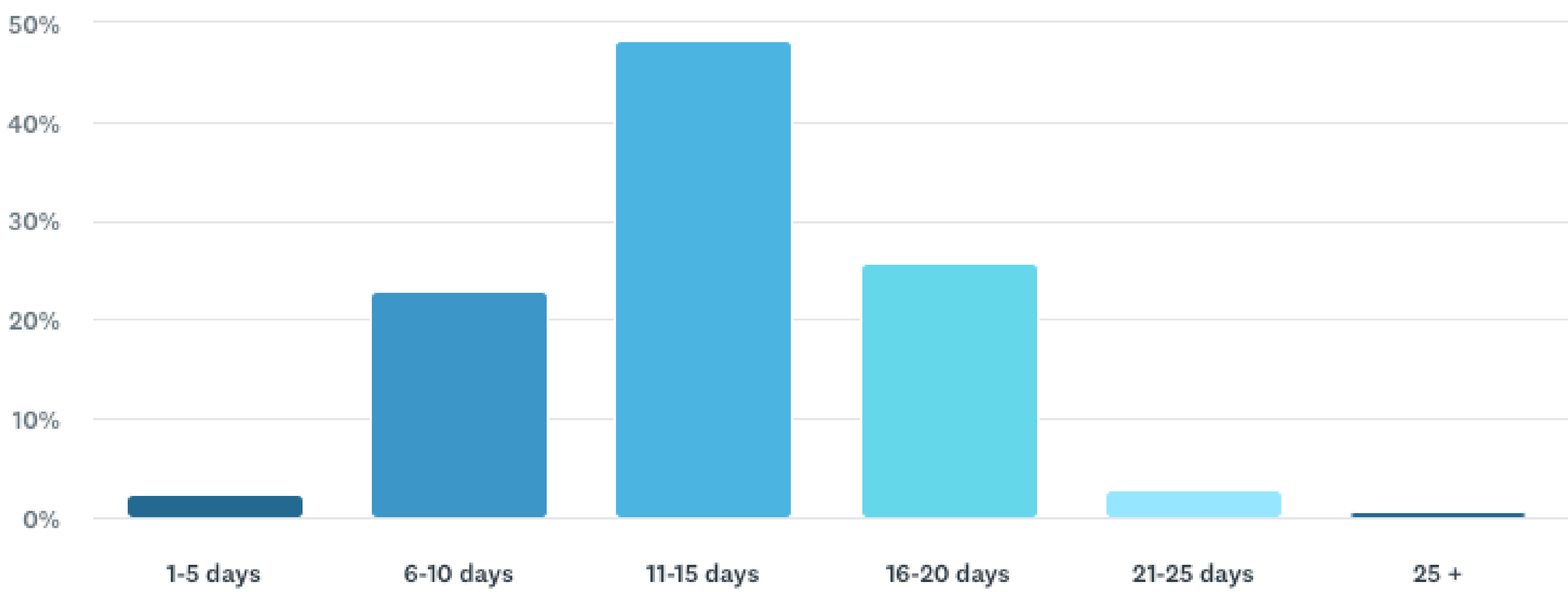
USA Full-Time Cabin Crew - Type of Flight Operation



USA Full-Time Cabin Crew - Days Flown per Monthy (average)



USA Full-Time Key Market Insights

After reviewing the full-time salary data, the market has begun to consolidate around a clear benchmark. The median of approximately $152,000 and average of approximately $151,000 indicate that $150,000 USD has emerged as the current benchmark annual salary for experienced full-time corporate cabin crew in the United States.

Benchmark Salary > $150,000 USD/year
Average Salary > $151,000/year
Median Salary > $152,000/year
Lowest Reported > $55,000
Highest Reported > $301,000

REFERENCE: Sājet Solutions first published the USA benchmark salary in 2019 = $67,000 (national low/high range: $37,500-$220,00).

Key Observations

- Part 91 corporate flight departments continue to report the highest compensation overall, with an average salary of approximately $173,000. The highest reported salary in the survey ($301,000) was earned by a respondent working in a Part 91 operation, reinforcing the premium compensation typically associated with private corporate flight departments.
- Part 91K (fractional) operators salaries ranged from $57,000 to $105,000, reflecting the more standardized compensation structures commonly found with fractional ownership programs. Among the major operational categories represented in the survey, Part 91K (fractional) operators reported the lowest salary range.
- Part 135 charter operations demonstrated considerable variability in compensation, with salaries ranging from $65,000 to $235,000 and an average salary of approximately $125,000. This wide range highlights the diversity of operators, aircraft types, and position responsibilities within the charter sector.
- Hybrid Part 91/135 operations reported salaries ranging from $55,000 to $235,000, with a median salary of $135,000. Compensation in these mixed-certificate flight departments generally falls between dedicated Part 91 corporate operations and traditional Part 135 charter operators, although several respondents reported salaries exceeding $200,000.
- Part 125 operations were represented by a limited number of responses. There was insufficient data to establish a meaningful benchmark or representative salary range for this operational category.

These figures align with the trend seen throughout the survey:

- Private Part 91 flight departments generally offer the highest compensation.
- Charter (135) compensation varies substantially depending on aircraft type, company size, and role.
- Fractional (91K) salaries tend to be more standardized and lower than private corporate departments.

Comparision - 2024 Benchmark Salaries by Type of Operation:

Part 91 - $82,000-$220,000
Part 91K - $48,500-$95,000
Part 135 - $37,500-$112,500

Salaries Range vs Years of Experience

1 year or less	> $55,000–$80,000	(average salary: $70,000)
1-2 years	> $62,000–$175,000	(average salary: $88,900)
3-5 years	> $60,000–$220,000	(average salary: $119,906)
6-9 years	> $57,000–$215,000	(average salary: $152,491)
10-15 years	> $67,000–$301,000	(average salary: $158,733)
16-20 years	> $85,000–$225,000	(average salary: $164,927)
21-25 years	> $95,200–$235,000	(average salary: $174,600)
26+ years	> $78,000–$230,000	(average salary: $145,000)

Key Findings: Years of Experience vs Salary

- Compensation generally increases with experience, with the most significant salary growth occurring after five years in business aviation.

- Cabin crew with 6-9 years of experience have, on average, reached the 2026 benchmark salary of approximately $150,000, demonstrating that significant earning potential can be achieved relatively early in a business aviation career.

- The highest average salary was reported by professionals with 21-25 years of experience, averaging $174,600annually.

- The highest individual salary reported in the survey ($301,000) came from a respondent with 10-15 years of experience, illustrating that factors such as the type of operation, employer, aircraft, and responsibilities can have a greater influence on compensation than tenure alone.

- While salaries generally trend upward with experience, the 26+ years category reported a slightly lower average salary than the 21-25 years group, suggesting that compensation is influenced by multiple factors beyond years of service, including the diversity of roles and employers represented within the survey.

USA Full-Time Schedules/Rotations

Scheduling Practices

The survey highlights the wide variety of scheduling models used across corporate flight departments - there is no standard roster system in business aviation.

Schedules are largely influenced by the needs of the principal, aircraft utilization, department size, and company culture. Respondents reported everything from fully on-demand operations to structured rotations with predictable time off.

Scheduling Models Reports

On-Demand/On-Call Operations (Most Common)

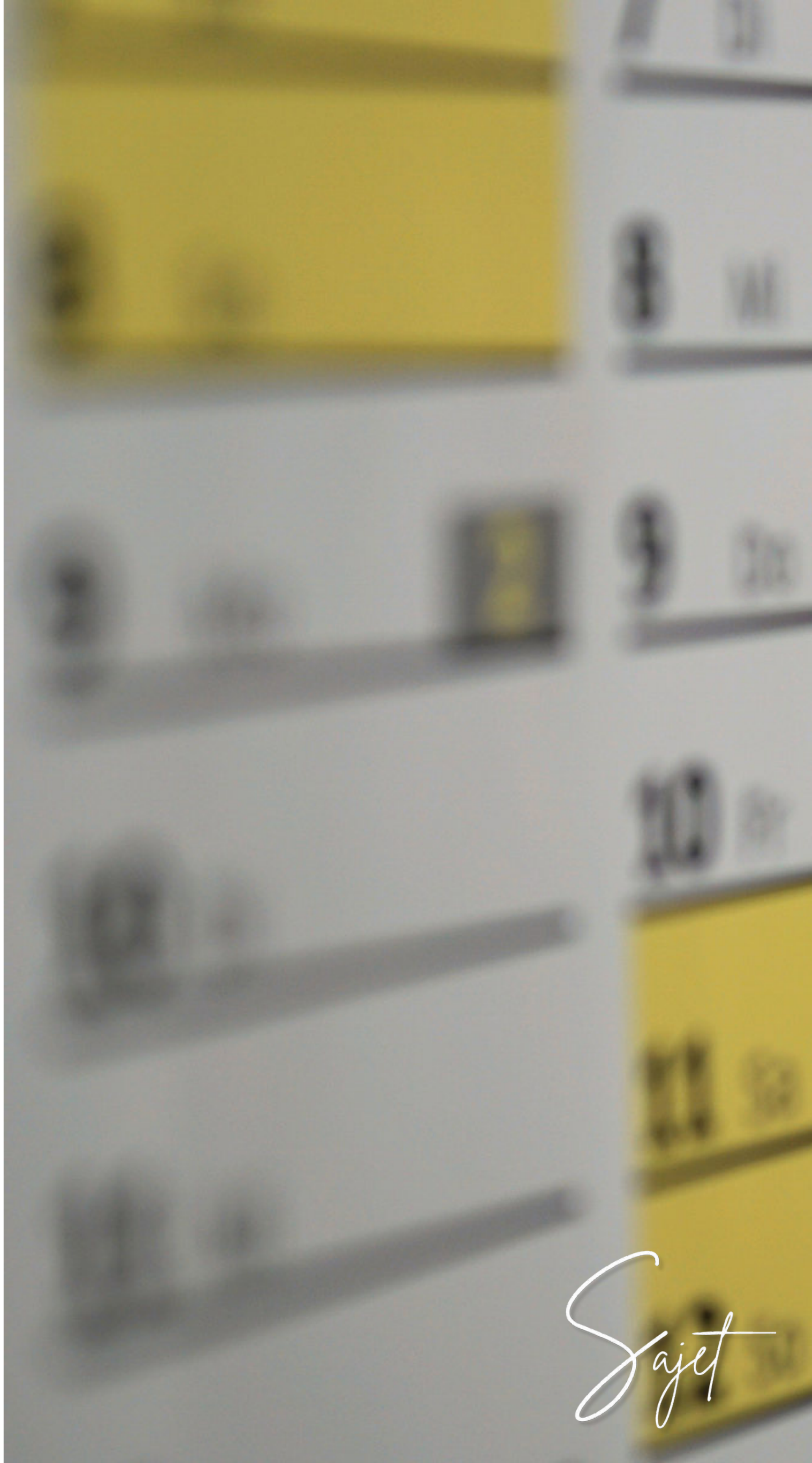
The most frequently reported scheduling model was on-demand, with cabin crew available as trips arise rather than working from a fixed roster.

Common characteristics included:

- On-demand scheduling
- On-call 24/7/365
- No published schedule
- As needed
- Schedule changes frequently
- Trips assigned based on operational demand
- Vacation or PTO required for guaranteed time off

Many respondents also indicated they receive a minimum number of "hard days off" each month despite remaining primarily on-demand.

37.6% > On-Demand / On-Call / No Fixed Schedule
28.8% > Rotation Schedule
08.8% > Monthly Published Schedule
06.4% > Flexible / Team-Managed / Shared Schedule
18.4% > Other / Mixed / Insufficent Detail



Monthly Scheduling
A significant number of respondents receive a monthly published schedule, often created by a lead cabin attendant or department manager.

Comments included:

- Monthly schedule issued in advance
- Schedule available by the 15th of the previous month
- Flying schedule known weeks or months ahead
- Scheduled flights with advance notice

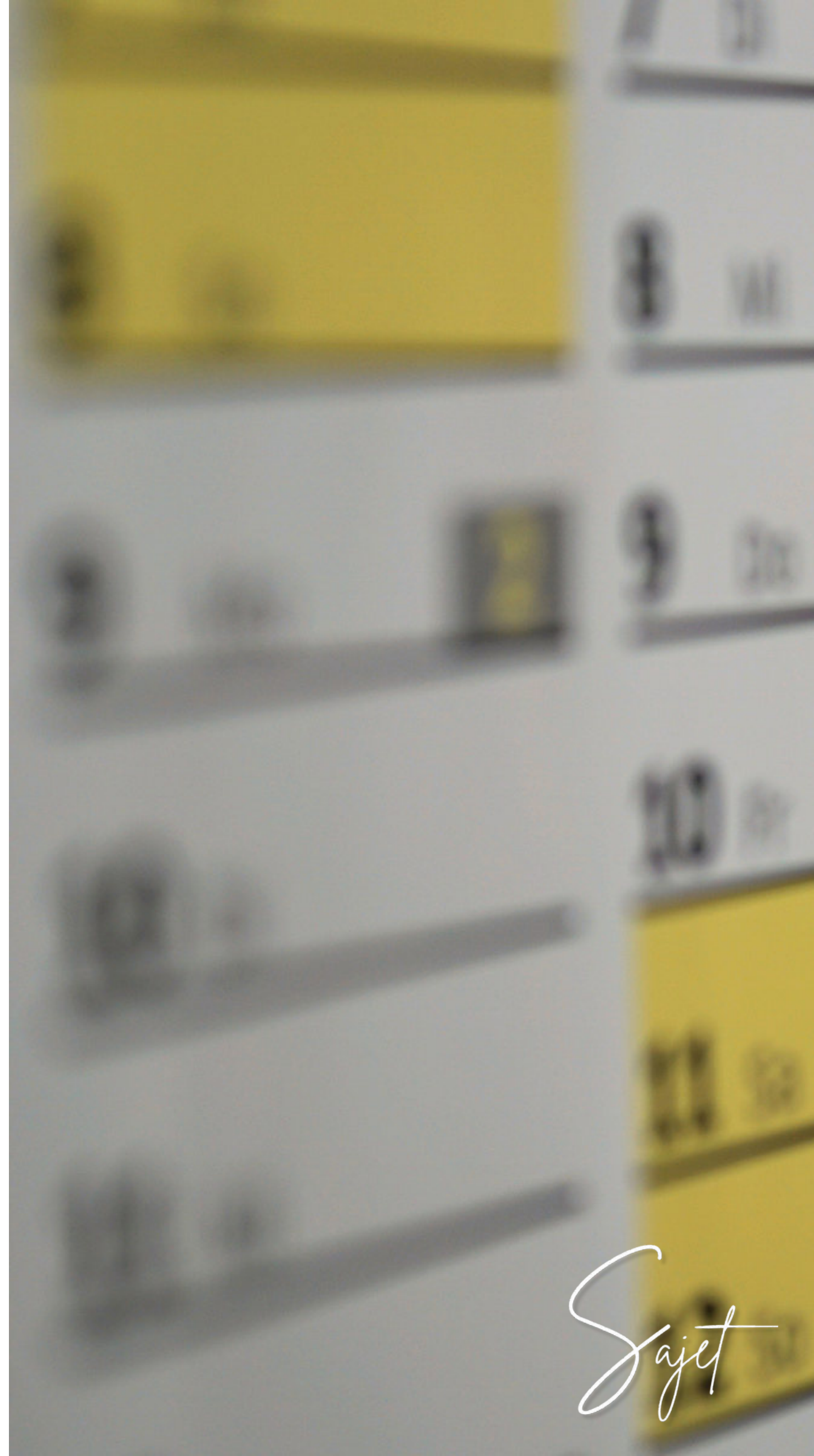
These departments generally reported greater schedule predictability than fully on-demand operations.

Flexible Team Scheduling
Several flight departments described collaborative scheduling practices where cabin crew coordinate coverage among themselves.

Examples included:

- Trips divided equally among cabin attendants
- Shared scheduling between two cabin crew
- Float positions supporting multiple aircraft
- Dedicated aircraft assignments with float coverage
- Contractors utilized to cover time off

These models provide greater operational flexibility while helping balance workload across the team.



Rotation Schedules

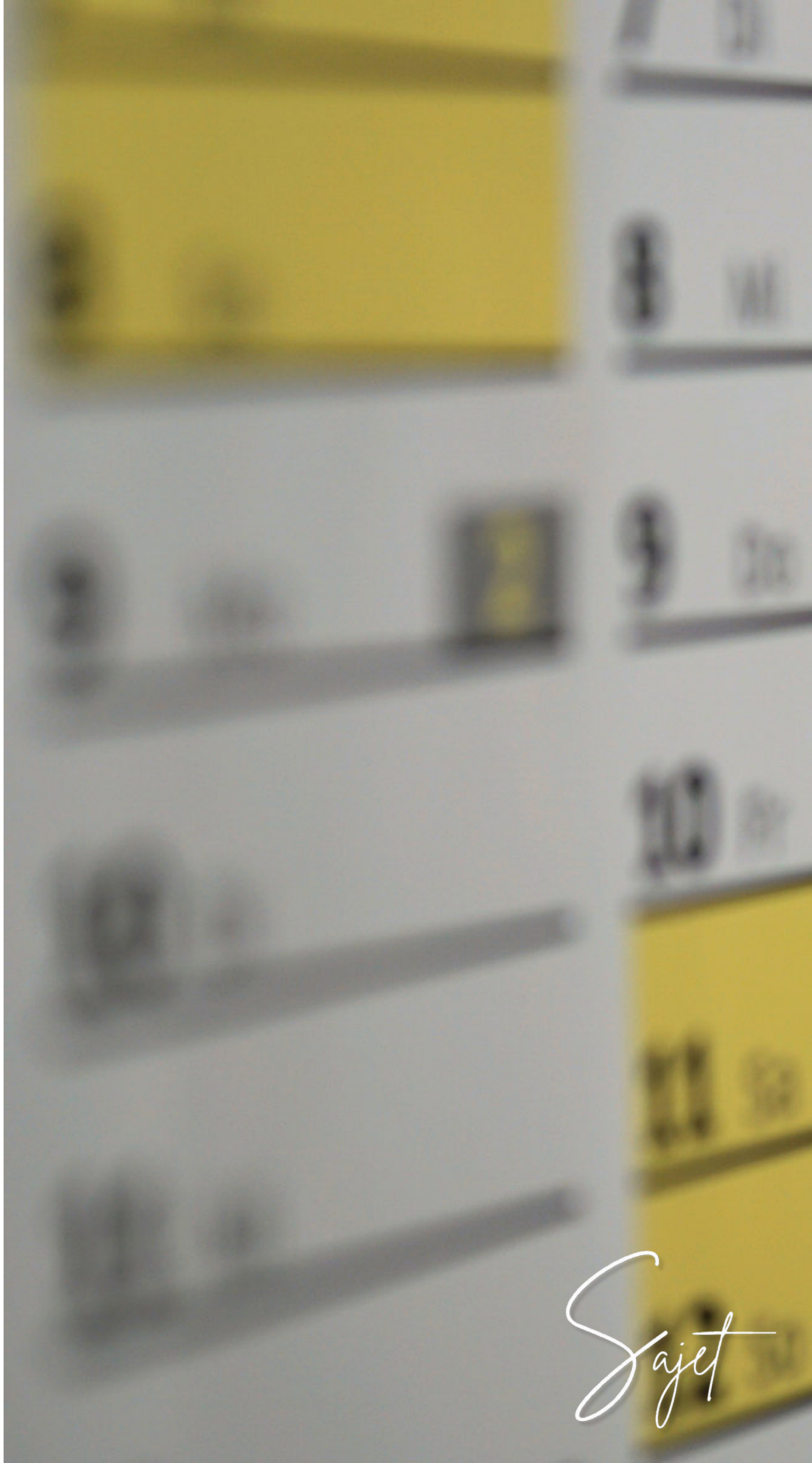
Many corporate departments have adopted structured rotations that provide predictable work-life balance.

19% > 15 days on / 13 days off
19% > 07 days on / 07 days off
17% > 08 days on / days 06 off
11% > 02 weeks on / 02 weeks off
06% > 16 days on / 16 days off
03% > 20 days on / 10 days off
03% > 21 days on / 07 days off
03% > 17 days on / 14 days off
03% > 11 days on / 09 days off
17% > other unique rotations

Time Off

Most departments reported structured time-off benefits, including:

- Hard days off each month (typically 5–10 days)
- Approximately 10–15 days off per month
- Four weeks annual vacation
- Unlimited PTO (reported by one respondent)
- Additional overtime pay after exceeding scheduled workdays
- Contractor support to preserve scheduled days off



Key Takeaways

38% of full-time cabin crew continue to work primarily on-demand or on-call schedules.

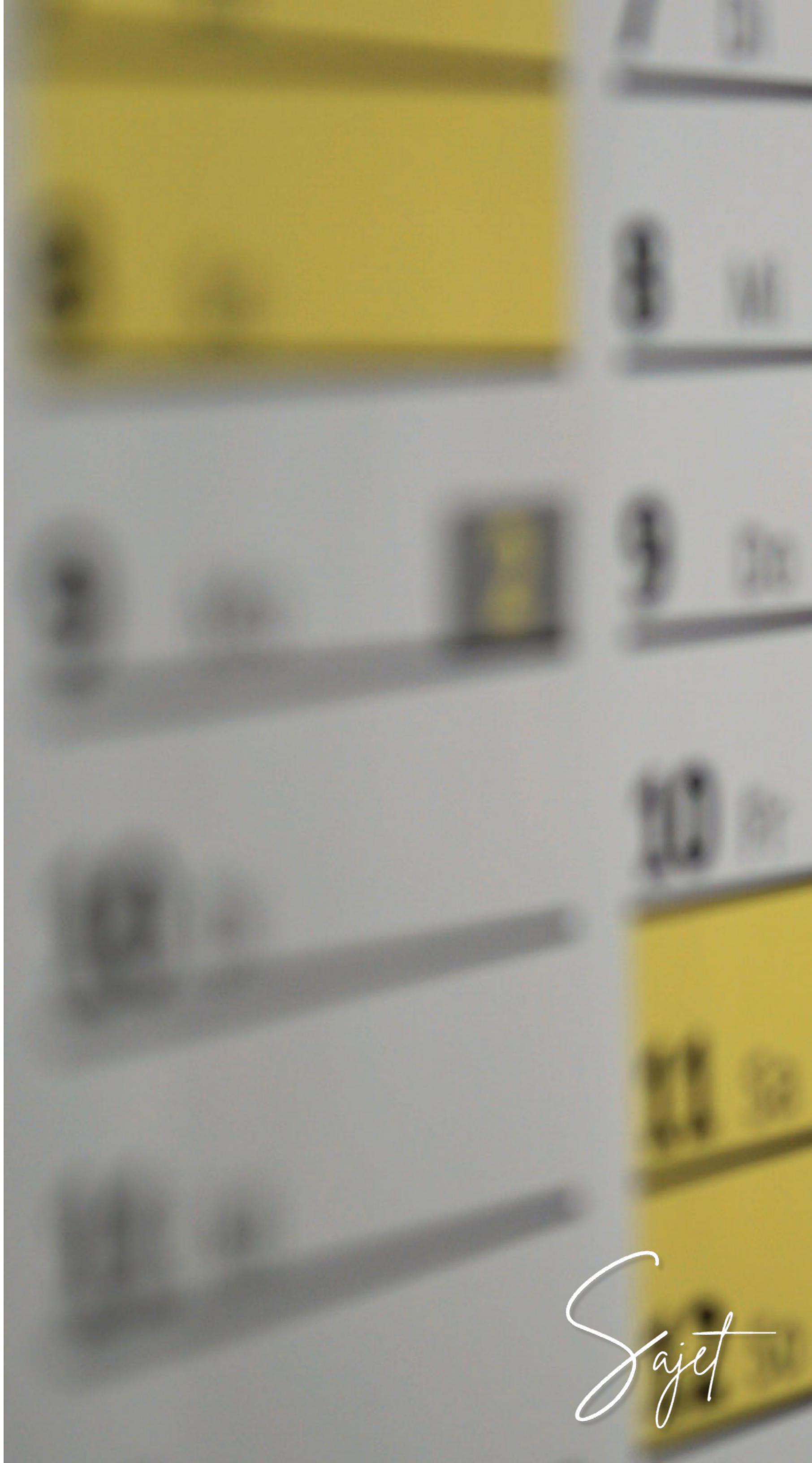
Nearly 29% now work under a structured rotation, highlighting the industry's shift toward more predictable schedules.

The most common rotations are:

1. 15 days on / 13 days off
2. 7 days on / 7 days off
3. 8 days on / 6 days off

About 9% of respondents receive a monthly published schedule, providing greater advance notice and predictability.

A smaller but notable 6% reported collaborative or team-managed scheduling, where crew members coordinate coverage and time off.



USA Full-Time Annual Raises, COLA & Bonuses

The survey indicates that while base salary remains an important measure of compensation, many employers also provide annual salary increases, cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), performance-based raises, bonuses, overtime incentives, and additional financial benefits.

Overall Breakdown

68% > Annual Raise / Cost of Living Increase
Most common benefit reported

58% > Annual Bonus
Performance or discretionary bonuses frequently reported

45% > Both Raise & Bonus
Nearly half receive both annually

22% > No Annual Increase or Bonus
Respondents reported no formal compensation increases

10% > Unsure / New Employee / N/A
Too new to determine benefits

Annual Salary Increases

The majority of respondents reported receiving annual salary adjustments, most commonly between:

- 2-3% annual increases (most common)
- 3-5% annual increases
- 4-6% performance increases
- 8-10% raises (reported by a small number of respondents)

Several respondents also noted:

- Merit-based raises tied to annual reviews
- Scheduled longevity increases
- Salary adjustments of 10-15% after several years of employment
- Fixed annual salary increases (e.g., $5,000-$15,000)

MOST COMMON RAISE PERCENTAGES

03% increase > Most frequently reported

02% increase > Common

04-06% increase > Fairly common

08-10% increase > Limited number of premium employers

Annual Bonuses

Bonus structures varied considerably across operators.

Reported bonus types included:

- Annual performance bonus
- Company performance bonus
- Holiday/Christmas bonus
- Profit sharing
- Owner discretionary bonus
- Longevity bonus
- Stock options
- Holiday pay incentives

Common Bonus Amounts:

- 5-10% of salary
- 10% annual bonus
- 14% annual bonus
- 15-20% annual bonus
- $1,000-$5,000
- $10,000
- $20,000
- $25,000
- One respondent reported a $40,000 annual bonus.

Several respondents also reported bonuses tied to:

- Flight hours
- Overtime
- Extended duty days
- Holiday flying
- Flight Duty Pay (FDP)
- Pension contributions
- Enhanced 401(k) matching
- Stock options

Additional Compensations

Many respondents indicated they receive supplemental compensation beyond salary and bonuses, including:

- Overtime pay
- Flight Duty Pay (FDP)
- Extended day pay
- Holiday premium pay
- Retainer pay
- Pension plans
- Enhanced 401(k) matching
- Stock options
- Longevity bonuses
- Additional compensation in lieu of vacation

Key Findings

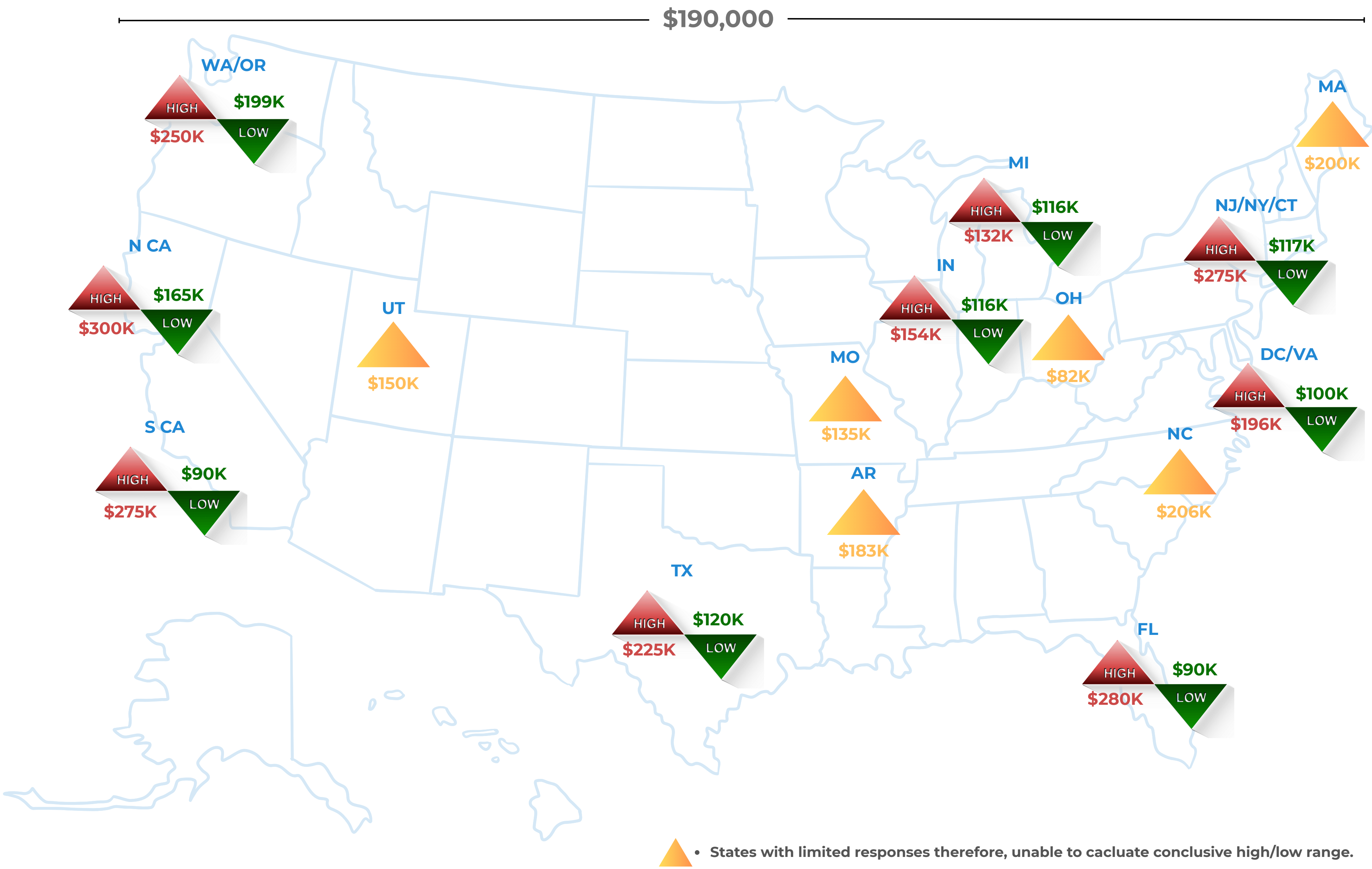
Approximately two-thirds of respondents reported receiving an annual salary increase or cost-of-living adjustment, with 3% emerging as the most common annual increase.

Nearly 60% indicated they receive some form of annual bonus, although the structure and amount varied widely.

Almost half of respondents benefit from both annual raises and bonuses, demonstrating that total compensation often extends beyond base salary.
Premium flight departments frequently supplement salary with performance incentives, overtime, Flight Duty Pay, retirement contributions, and other financial benefits, significantly enhancing overall compensation.

Conversely, approximately one in five respondents reported receiving no annual raises or bonuses, highlighting the continued variation in compensation practices across business aviation.

USA Lead/Manager Cabin Crew Benchmark Salary



- States with limited responses therefore, unable to cacluate conclusive high/low range.

USA Lead/Manager Benchmark Statistics

The 2026 USA Lead Flight Attendant Salary Survey provides one of the most comprehensive snapshots of compensation for Lead Flight Attendants and Cabin Managers working in business aviation today.

The survey identified an annual median salary of approximately $190,000–193,000, establishing $190,000 as the 2026 benchmark salary for experienced Lead Flight Attendants and Cabin Managers in the United States.

Based on survey responses from flight departments across the United States, annual compensation ranged from $82,000 to $300,000, with a median salary of $190,000.

$115,000-$135,000	>	Emerging Lead Flight Attendant
$135,000-$175,000	>	Developing Leader
$175,000-$200,000	>	USA Market Benchmark
$200,000-$225,000	>	Senior Cabin Leader
$225,000-$245,000	>	Executive Cabin Manager
$244,000+	>	Top 10% of Respondents

Salary Range by Years of Experience

03-05 Years	>	$82,000-$165,000
06-09 Years	>	$120,000-190,000
10-15 Years	>	$132,000-$300,000
16-20 Years	>	$116,000-$225,000
21-15 Years	>	$135,000-$270,000
26 + Years	>	$90,000-$225,000

Salary Range by Type of Operation

Part 91 (Individual/Family)	> $135,000-$300,000
Part 91 (Corporation)	> $116,000-$275,000
Part 91 (Family & Corporation)	> $120,000-$185,000
Part 135	> $90,000-$175,000
Part 91 & 135	> $90,000-$210,000

Participant Type of Flight Operation

45.6% > Part 91 (Individual/Family)
40.4% > Part 91 (Corporation/Organization)
08.8% > Both Part 91 & Part 135
03.5% > Part 135
01.8% > Part 125

Participant Team Size

14.0% > 1 Cabin Crewmember
14.0% > 2 Cabin Crewmembers
16.3% > 3 Cabin Crewmembers
23.3% > 4 Cabin Crewmembers
14.0% > 5 Cabin Crewmembers
04.7% > 6 Cabin Crewmembers
04.7% > 7 Cabin Crewmembers
09.3% > 8 or More Cabin Crewmembers

The data demonstrates a strong demand for experienced cabin leaders who not only deliver exceptional passenger service but also oversee safety, regulatory compliance, operational coordination, vendor management, budgeting, mentoring, and leadership within increasingly sophisticated flight departments.

Rather than identifying a single "standard salary," this report establishes market benchmarks across multiple experience and responsibility levels to assist both employers and aviation professionals with compensation planning.

What the Data Tells Us: Leadership is Driving Compensation
Today's Lead Flight Attendant is much more than a senior crewmember.

Many respondents oversee:

- Cabin standards
- SOP development
- Purchasing
- Inventory
- Budget management
- Scheduling
- Hiring
- Training
- Vendor relations
- Safety programs
- Cabin crew leadership

These expanded responsibilities are reflected in compensation.

The role of the Lead Flight Attendant continues to evolve beyond exceptional inflight service. Today's cabin leaders are strategic partners within the flight department, responsible for safety leadership, operational excellence, team development, and the passenger experience. As expectations continue to grow, this survey demonstrates that compensation is increasingly reflecting the complexity, accountability, and professionalism required to lead today's business aviation cabin operations.

USA Full-Time Schedules/Rotations

56% of Lead Flight Attendants and Cabin Managers reported operating primarily in an on-demand environment rather than on a fixed rotation schedule.

Scheduling Model

56% > On-Demand / No Fixed Rotation
14% > Monthly Schedule (often still on-demand)
09% > Fixed Rotation Schedule

14% > Hard Days Off / Protected Days
07% Other / Unique Operations

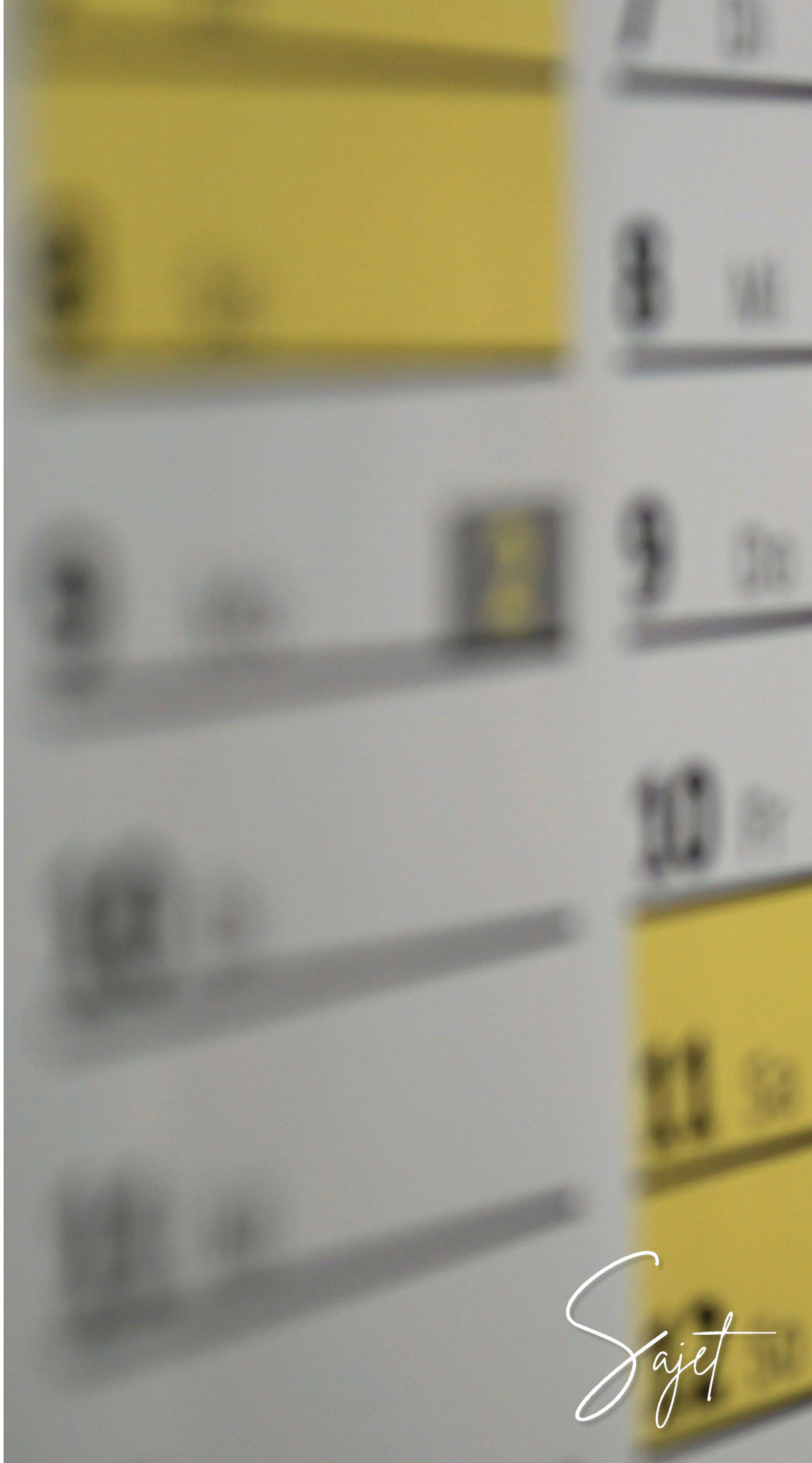
Common Schedule Types

More than half of respondents described their operation as:

- On demand
- Available when principals fly
- No fixed rotation
- Dynamic scheduling based on trip demand
- 24/7 availability

Typical comments included:

- "On demand."
- "No rotation - on demand."
- "When the principal wants to fly, we fly."
- "On demand by trip."
- "On demand with days off."



Monthly Scheduling

Several departments publish schedules in advance while remaining flexible.

Examples include:

- Monthly schedule
- Monthly schedule planned 1-2 months in advance
- Monthly schedule with on-demand adjustments
- Crew scheduling based on client needs one month ahead

Rotations

A smaller number of respondents reported structured rotations, including:

- 8 days on / 6 days off
- 12 days on / 10 days off
- 2 weeks on / 2 weeks off

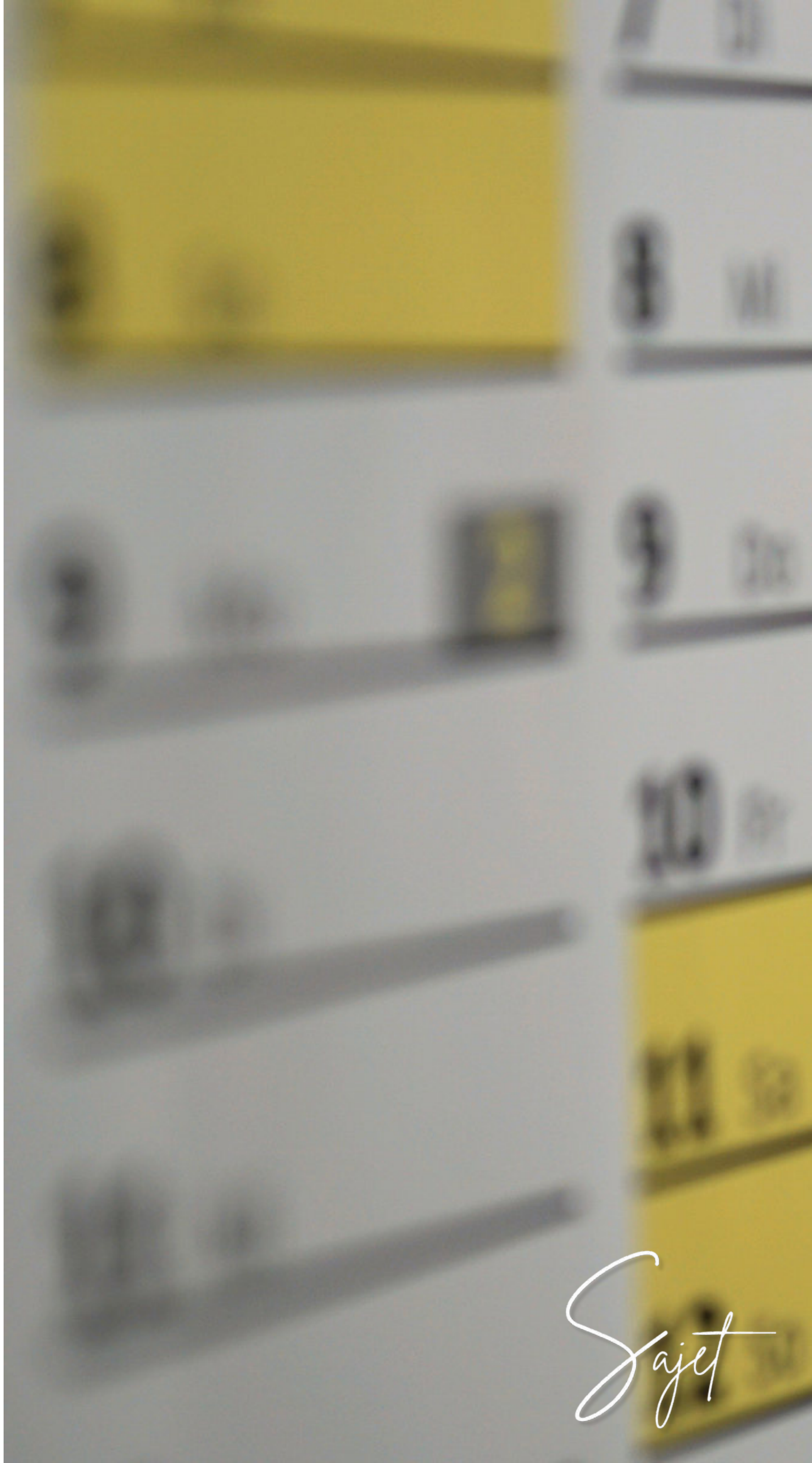
Hard Days Off

Many Lead Flight Attendants reported negotiated "hard days" rather than fixed rotations.

Examples included:

- 3 hard days off per month
- 4 hard days off per month
- 5 hard days off
- 10 hard days off
- 20 hard days off

This appears to be a common strategy for balancing operational flexibility with personal time.



Summary

On-Demand Flying Remains the Industry Standard

Approximately 56% of respondents reported operating primarily in an on-demand environment with little or no fixed rotation, reflecting the dynamic nature of business aviation.

Predictability is Increasing

While on-demand flying remains the norm, an increasing number of flight departments are publishing monthly schedules to improve work-life balance and provide greater schedule visibility.

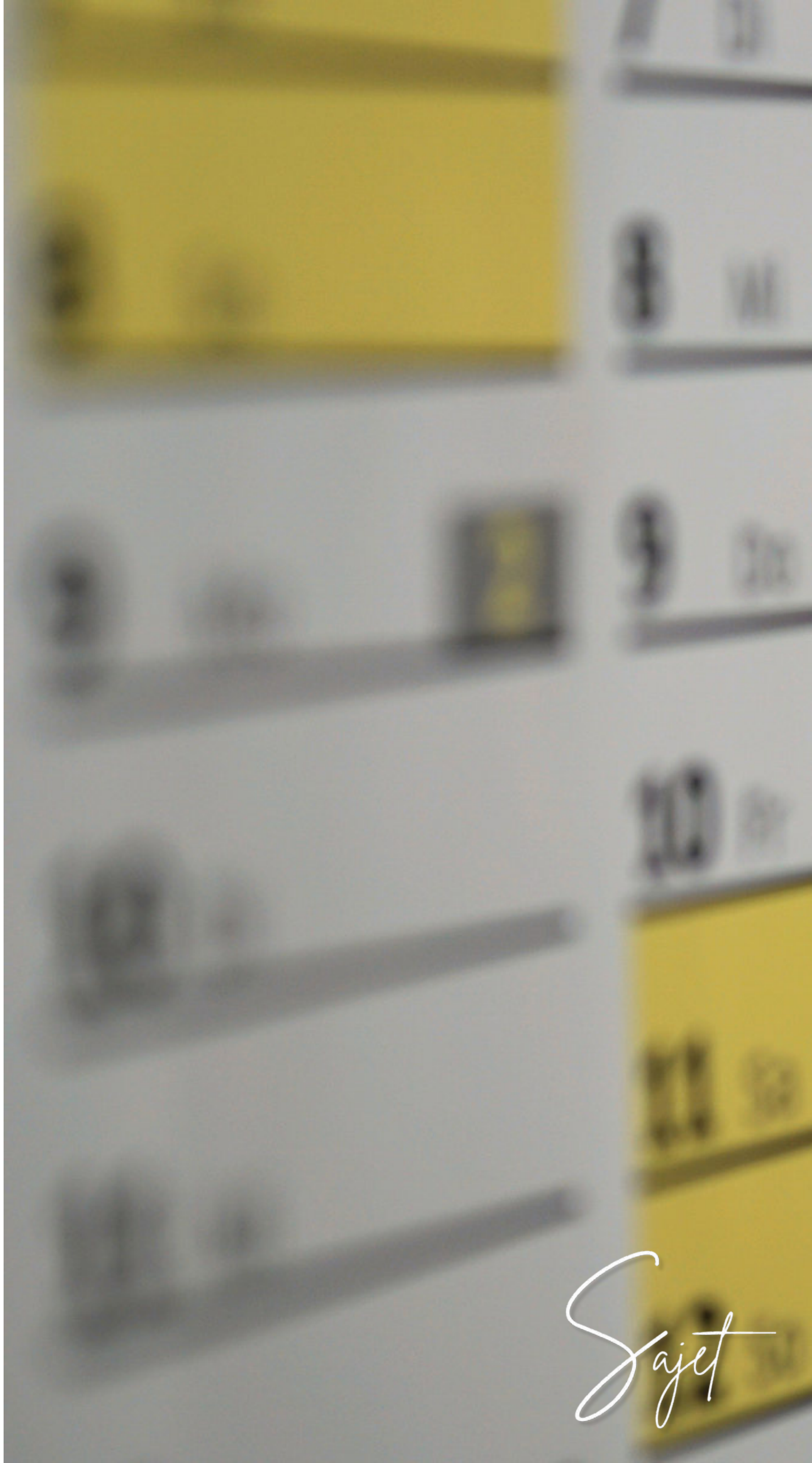
Protected Time Off is Becoming More Common

Rather than traditional rotations, many organizations now provide hard days off, allowing cabin crew to maintain operational flexibility while ensuring protected personal time.

One Size Does Not Fit All

Scheduling practices vary significantly based on:

- Owner travel patterns
- Corporate flight department requirements
- Charter operations
- Sports team schedules
- International flying
- Cabin crew staffing levels
- Number of aircraft supported



USA Lead/Manager COLA, Bonuses & Additional Findings

Salary Data

Approximately three out of four Lead Flight Attendants and Cabin Managers reported receiving regular annual salary increases, while one in four indicated they do not receive consistent raises.

Annual Salary Increase Responses:
75.6% > Yes
24.4% > No

Typical Annual Salary Increase
Among respondents who receive annual increases, the most common range was:

02%-03% > Most common
03%-05% > Very common
05%-08% > Less common
10% + > Limited to exceptional performance or promotions

Observations:

- 3% annual increases were by far the most frequently reported.
- Several respondents reported annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) in the 2-4% range.
- Others receive merit-based increases tied to performance rather than automatic annual adjustments.

Annual Bonuses

Approximately 75-80% of respondents reported receiving some form of bonus or incentive compensation.

The majority of respondents receiving bonuses reported 10-15% of annual salary.

Examples included:

- 7% annual bonus
- 10% annual bonus
- 10-15% performance bonus
- 15% annual incentive
- $20,000 annual bonus
- $45,000 annual bonus
- Two months' salary as a bonus
- Holiday bonus tied to company performance

Additional Compensations

Beyond salary and bonuses, respondents also reported receiving:

- Stock options
- Company-owned stock dividends
- 401(k) contributions
- Uniform allowance
- Merit increases
- Cost-of-living adjustments (COLA)
- Holiday bonuses
- Profit sharing

These benefits significantly increase total compensation beyond base salary.

Anual Raises and Bonuses Key Findings

76% RECEIVE ANNUAL RAISES
Nearly three-quarters of respondents indicated they receive annual salary increases, with 3% emerging as the most common adjustment.

BONUSES ARE COMMON
Approximately 80% reported receiving some form of bonus or incentive compensation.

The most frequently reported bonus range was:
10-15% of annual salary.

TOTAL COMPENSATION CAN BE SUBSTANTIAL
Several respondents noted that bonus programs significantly increased their overall earnings.

Examples included:

- $45,000 annual bonus, resulting in $270,000 total compensation
- 10-15% annual bonuses
- Two months' salary as an annual bonus
- $20,000 annual bonus
- Stock options and company equity participation

COMPENSATION EXTENDS BEYOND SALARY
The survey indicates that employers are increasingly using a combination of:

- Competitive base salaries
- Annual merit increases
- Performance incentives
- Long-term equity programs
- Retirement contributions

... to attract and retain experienced cabin leaders.

Small Teams Continue to Define Business Aviation
The survey demonstrates that business aviation continues to operate with lean cabin staffing models:

28.0% > 1-2 Cabin Crewmembers
53.5% > 3-5 Cabin Crewmembers
18.5% > 6 or More Cabin Crewmembers

SINGLE PERSON OPERATIONS REMAIN COMMON
Approximately 14% of respondents serve as the only full-time cabin crewmember within their operation. Many of these departments supplement staffing with contract flight attendants during periods of increased flight activity.

LARGER FLIGHT OPERATIONS
Nearly one in five respondents work within cabin teams of six or more crewmembers, typically supporting multi-aircraft operations, larger flight departments, or organizations with dedicated cabin leadership roles.
Report Narrative
Business aviation cabin departments remain relatively small, with more than 80% of respondents working in teams of five or fewer cabin crewmembers.

Four-person cabin teams were the most common organizational structure reported, while more than one-quarter of respondents work in departments with only one or two cabin professionals.

Several organizations supplement their full-time staffing with contract flight attendants, providing additional flexibility during periods of increased flight activity.

Insights

More than 80% of Lead Flight Attendants and Cabin Managers work within cabin teams of five or fewer crewmembers.

This finding underscores one of the defining characteristics of business aviation: leadership is often exercised in small, highly collaborative teams.

Lead Flight Attendants frequently balance operational flying responsibilities with scheduling, training, safety oversight, vendor coordination, and team management, making versatility and leadership essential components of the role.

Know Your Worth

Full-Time Salary Negotiation Questions to Ask

To provide the most accurate salary estimate and negotiating power there are several questions you should ask. These answers will support your targeted salary range.

Questions, such as:

- Type of operation? i.e. private owner (individual/family or corporation, fractional, charter or shuttle)
- How much experience do you have?
- Where is the flight department based?
- Are you required to live at base or will you position via the airlines?
- Number of aircraft?
- Are you going to be the only cabin crewmember or will there be additional crewmembers?
- What type of schedule and/or rotation is to be expected?
- Do you have firm days off per month or a set schedule?
- How many days are you projected to fly per month?
- What is the total volume of flight hours expected annually?
- What is the estimated extent of international travel?
- If there is a scheduled rotation, how are the crew swaps coordinated domestically and internationally?
- If international airline travel is required, is there a policy/standard for positioning crew to fly in the main cabin, business or first class?
- Are there additional duties/responsibilities required when not flying?
- Will you have a set per diem or reimbursable expenses?
- What benefits are included? Healthcare, 401K (is there a percentage match?), contract agreement, training and uniform allowances and/or reimbursement, profit sharing, and so on.
- Do you receive vacation days? An accrual? PTO?
- Is there cost of living increases annually? If so, what is the percentage?
- Are there any bonsues or incentive programs?

Additional Salary Considerations

Most full-time base salary calculations are based on an average of 12–15 flying days per month.

- If you typically fly 10 days or fewer per month, your base salary may be lower to reflect the reduced flying schedule—but this is not always the case. Other responsibilities and expectations should also be considered.

- If you fly 10-20 days per month, your salary should generally be based on no fewer than 15 flying days per month, as this represents the industry average for many full-time positions.

- If you regularly fly more than 20 days per month, your salary should be calculated using 18-22 flying days per month at a minimum, reflecting the significantly higher workload and time commitment.

Additional Factors That Increase Your Negotiating Leverage

Flying days are only one part of the equation. Consider the following when evaluating a compensation package:

- Exclusivity: Are you permitted to accept contract work on your scheduled days off, or are you required to be exclusively employed by the company regardless of whether you are flying? If exclusivity is required, you have stronger justification for negotiating toward the higher end of the salary range.

- Schedule and Days Off: Do you have a published rotation or guaranteed days off each month? Are those days protected, or are they routinely changed based on operational needs? If you are effectively expected to remain available at all times, your negotiating leverage increases considerably. Whenever possible, negotiate for guaranteed, protected days off each month to support work-life balance and prevent long-term burnout.

- Ground Responsibilities: If your role includes ongoing responsibilities when you are not flying—such as aircraft stocking, inventory management, office administration, scheduling, trip planning, training coordination, or other operational duties—those responsibilities should be reflected in your compensation.

Contractor vs Full-Time Considerations

If you currently work as an independent contractor and regularly fly more than 15 days per month, carefully compare your annual earning potential before accepting a full-time position. While your total annual income may be lower as a salaried employee, a full-time role often provides valuable benefits such as health insurance, retirement contributions, paid time off, training, and greater income stability.

Ultimately, compensation should be evaluated as a total package, not solely on annual salary. In many cases, the long-term value of benefits, job security, and quality of life can outweigh a higher contract income.

2026-2027 Global Salaries & Related Data

This valued resource data is provided complimentary and can be sourced on the following websites:

sajetsolutions.com

RESOURCES
2026 Global Daily Rates
2026 Global Salaries

thecfaconnection.com

RESOURCES/SUPPORT
Positions and Salaries