

KNOW YOUR WORTH

Pay Comparison: Cook County vs. Kendall, Lake, and DuPage Counties

Why This Matters

You are working in one of the largest, most violent, and chronically understaffed correctional systems in the nation and yet, officers in nearby counties are being paid more, advancing faster, and reaching their top salary without enduring long step freezes or requiring 25 years of service to reach 100k salary.

This is not perception.

This is not politics.

This is policy - and the numbers don't lie.

Cook County Salaries - Effective June 1, 2025

- Entry: \$68,764
- Year 1: \$71,693
- Year 2: \$74,730
- Year 3: \$77,910
- Year 4: \$81,218
- Year 5: \$84,674 (Step freeze begins)
- Year 7: \$88,270 (Post-freeze increase)
- Year 10: \$90,700 (Another freeze implied)
- Year 15: \$92,977 (Following a 5-year freeze)
- Year 20: \$97,619 (Another 5-year freeze)
- Year 25 (Max Salary): \$102,500

(Source: Bureau of Human Resources Teamsters 700 Department of Corrections)

Note: Achieving maximum salary at Cook County takes 25 years, with three separate step freezes embedded into the progression.

Kendall County (Effective December 5, 2025)

- Entry: \$69,036.48
- Years 1-2: \$76,103.45
- Years 3-4: \$79,850.62
- Years 4-5: \$83,784.37
- Years 5-7: \$92,211.15
- Years 7-9: \$96,806.80
- Year 9+ (Max): \$101,593.56

(Source: Kendall County 2024 CBA - Page 30)

Longevity Bonus:

- Starting at year 10, officers receive \$0.15/hour for each year of service.
- At year 20, this equals an extra \$1.50/hour or \$3,120/year.

Lake County (Effective December 1, 2025)

- Year 1: \$78,416
- Year 2: \$82,326
- Year 3: \$86,444
- Year 4: \$90,771
- Year 5: \$98,176
- Year 6: \$100,630
- Year 7: \$103,147
- Year 8: \$105,206
- Year 9: \$108,368
- Year 10: \$111,613
- Year 11: \$114,400
- Year 12 (Max): \$116,688

(Source: Lake County 2023 CBA - Page 29 & 30)

Hourly Conversion:

- Starts at \$37.70/hour
- Ends at \$56.10/hour by Year 12

DuPage County (Effective December 1, 2023)

- Year 0: \$66,361
- Year 1: \$72,072
- Year 2: \$74,310
- Year 3: \$77,156
- Year 4: \$80,101
- Year 5: \$83,797
- Year 6: \$87,494
- Year 7: \$91,191
- Year 8: \$94,891
- Years 9-10: \$98,587
- Years 11-12: \$100,952
- Years 13-14: \$103,540
- Years 15-16: \$106,195
- Years 17-20: \$110,247
- Year 21+ (Max): \$113,041

(Source: DuPage County 2024 CBA - Page 36)

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Other Pay Advantages in Surrounding Counties

Kendall County:

- Longevity bonus kicks in after 10 years
- Officers earn \$3,120 more annually after 20 years — just from that bonus

Lake County:

- Highest top salary in the region at \$116,688 by Year 12
- No multi-year freezes — just steady raises
- Starting pay (\$78K) is \$10,000+ higher than Cook

DuPage County:

- Top pay reached in 21 years, not 25
- No step freezes — raises are consistent
- Beats Cook County's pay by Year 3

Cook County: The Only County With Built-In Step Freezes

- Cook officers must endure three separate wage freezes
- Maximum salary reached only after 25 years
- Still makes less than Lake and DuPage officers who reach their peak in 12–20 years
- Officers in smaller counties are making more — with less risk, fewer detainees, and better staffing

The Hard Reality

- Cook County is falling behind.
- The officers doing the hardest work are receiving the least reward.
- This wage scale reflects a system that is unsustainable, unjustified, and uncompetitive.

Conclusion:

- You're working in the busiest, most violent, most politicized correctional environment in the state
- Yet you're paid less, wait longer, and face more financial punishment for your commitment
- When someone says, "You're lucky to have this job," — show them this data

This is not jealousy. This is math.

This is not personal. This is policy.

C4 believes every officer should be paid fairly, fully, and on time — without freezes, without excuses, and without having to beg for what you've earned.