The year salary growth slowed, but structure made the difference.

Resolve reads the signed contract, not the survey response. This is the high-level view of what 4,417 physician employment agreements showed in 2026. See where compensation moved, where it didn't, and which terms carried the real long-term earnings.

4,417 CONTRACTS REVIEWED **116** SPECIALTIES **50** STATES **12–18** MONTHS

01 — THE HEADLINE NUMBERS

2026 AT A GLANCE

+2.9%–3.7%
National year-over-year salary growth
Down from 5–6% post-pandemic

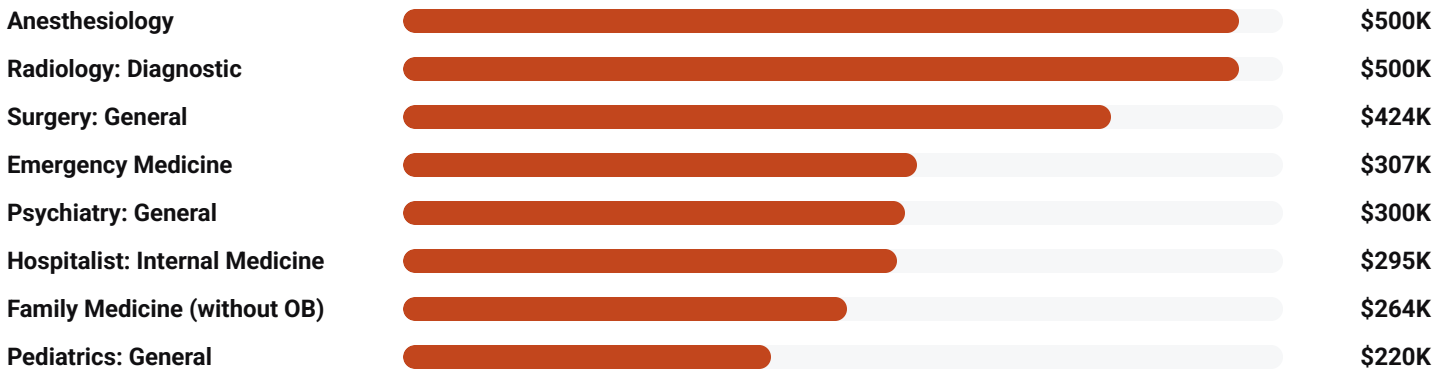
+12% vs +2%
Bonus growth outpaced base growth
Median bonus opportunity vs. median base

$25K
Typical signing bonus
Midpoint of 103 specialty medians; $6.5K–$57.5K

1 in 5
U.S. workers still under a non-compete
Healthcare ranks among the highest

02 — COMPENSATION BY SPECIALTY

MEDIAN BASE SALARY, SIGNED CONTRACTS



Median base salary from signed contracts submitted to Resolve for review. Full report includes 25th/75th percentile and year-over-year movement for 116 specialties.

03 — FIRST OFFERS MOVE

RESOLVE REVIEW DATA

85%
of reviewed contracts received changes of some kind

$16.5M+
in additional base pay negotiated

$350K
largest single base increase negotiated
OB/GYN, South Carolina — $700K final

04 — REGION MATTERS, BUT NOT THE WAY PEOPLE ASSUME

MEDIAN BASE, NOMINAL VS. COST-ADJUSTED

The West posts the highest nominal median and the second-lowest cost-adjusted median. Bonus prevalence runs high in the Midwest and South, low in the academic-heavy Northeast.

05 — FOUR FINDINGS THAT SHAPED THE YEAR

01

Salary growth stabilized; bonuses and productivity expectations rose

Employers leaned on sign-on, retention, and wRVU-based incentives to stay competitive without permanently inflating base salaries.

02

Regional differences widened

Midwest and South lead in raw compensation; coastal markets fall behind on a real-dollar basis once cost of living and call burden are counted.

03

Non-competes persisted despite the proposed federal ban

The FTC rule was formally abandoned in September 2025. Enforcement returned to a state-by-state framework; employers narrowed scope but kept restrictions.

04

Contract structure mattered more than headline pay

wRVU conversion rates, quality definitions, termination clauses, and call pay often carried more long-term financial weight than base salary alone.

06 — WHAT'S IN THE FULL REPORT

17 SECTIONS

Compensation	Median, 25th and 75th percentile base by specialty and state · bonus and incentive structures · wRVU targets and conversion rates · regional cost-adjusted comparisons
Contract terms	Non-compete scope and enforceability by state · termination and notice provisions · repayment and clawback triggers · malpractice tail exposure · renewal traps
Workload & lifestyle	Call coverage expectations · PTO and CME norms · parental leave · staffing and APP support · flexibility and phased schedules
Career stage	First-contract guidance for residents and fellows · mid-career retention packages · late-career flexibility and exit optionality · 2027 outlook

FREE · NO COST TO READ

Read the full 2026 Physician Salary & Employment Report

The complete report is free in exchange for an email address and specialty. It includes every specialty benchmark, state-level non-compete status, and the contract-term detail summarized here.

RESOLVE.COM/2026-PHYSICIAN-SALARY-EMPLOYMENT-REPORT

Your information is never sold or shared with recruiters or employers.