

QUARTERLY LABOR-MARKET REPORT

Q3 2026 Wage Report

Verified hourly wages from completed Upshift shifts across hospitality and light-industrial roles.

Observed Upshift wages. Clearer decisions.

upshift.work







INDUSTRY VIEW

Industry wages continued to rise

Eight of 9 industry categories paid more in Q3. Hotel showed the strongest movement.

HIGHEST OBSERVED
$19.80
Hotel

LARGEST MOVEMENT
+$1.29
Hotel

CATEGORIES RISING
8/9
paid more in Q3

Quarter-over-quarter movement

* limited sample — directional only

CATEGORY	WAGE RANGE ($16 $17 $18 $19 $20 $21)	Q2	Q3	CHANGE
Hotel		$18.51	**$19.80**	+$1.29
Clubs		$19.45	**$19.63**	+$0.18
Large Venue		$18.44	**$19.35**	+$0.91
Food Service		$18.87	**$19.20**	+$0.33
Caterer/Restaurants		$18.36	**$18.60**	+$0.24
Manufacturer*		$18.02	**$18.41**	+$0.39
Education		$19.33	**$18.39**	-$0.94
Corporate Dining		$18.08	**$18.29**	+$0.21
Fulfillment/Distribution		$17.26	**$17.41**	+$0.15

CLIENT TAKEAWAY

Hotel and Large Venue moved fastest

Hotel rose $1.29 and Large Venue rose $0.91 — the sharpest gains among well-sampled industries this quarter — worth re-checking before you post.

WHERE RATES EASED

One category moved down

Education fell $0.94. The rest held roughly flat.

ROLE VIEW

Role wages continued to rise

Nine of 12 roles paid more in Q3. Event Set Up/Houseman showed the strongest movement.

HIGHEST OBSERVED
$20.51
Event Set Up/Houseman

LARGEST MOVEMENT
+$2.13
Event Set Up/Houseman

ROLES RISING
9/12
paid more in Q3

Quarter-over-quarter movement

* limited sample — directional only

CATEGORY	WAGE RANGE ($16 $17 $18 $19 $20 $21)	Q2	Q3	CHANGE
Event Set Up/Houseman		$18.38	**$20.51**	+$2.13
Bartender		$20.62	**$20.09**	-$0.53
Line Cook/Prep Cook		$19.26	**$20.02**	+$0.76
Host/Hostess		$19.48	**$19.85**	+$0.37
Server/Banquet Server		$18.58	**$19.73**	+$1.15
General Labor		$18.15	**$19.27**	+$1.12
Dishwasher/Kitchen Steward		$18.94	**$19.08**	+$0.14
Busser		$17.72	**$18.44**	+$0.72
Warehouse Associate		$17.42	**$17.54**	+$0.12
Production Associate		$17.47	**$17.43**	-$0.04
Housekeeper*		$16.52	**$17.39**	+$0.87
Food Service		$18.52	**$17.02**	-$1.50

FAST MOVEMENT

Event Set Up/Houseman and Server/Banquet Server moved fastest

Event Set Up/Houseman rose $2.13 and Server/Banquet Server rose $1.15 — the sharpest gains among well-sampled roles this quarter — worth re-checking before you post.

STABLE BENCHMARKS

Several roles barely moved

Production Associate, Warehouse Associate, Dishwasher/Kitchen Steward all changed by about $0.15 or less quarter over quarter — reliable anchors for budgeting.

METHODOLOGY

How this report is built

What the numbers represent

Every figure is an **average hourly wage actually paid to Upshift workers** for shifts completed in the quarter — not survey estimates or posted ranges. Q2 covers April–June 2026; Q3 covers July–September 2026. Rates shown are the wage set by the business; tipped roles are marked and presented on a non-tipped basis.

How wages are grouped

The **industry view** groups shifts by the hiring business's vertical (Clubs, Hotel, Education, Manufacturer, and so on). The **role view** groups by the job worked (Bartender, Line Cook/Prep Cook, Server/Banquet Server, and so on). A category appears once it has enough completed shifts in both quarters to report a stable average.

How to use it

Use these as live benchmarks when setting pay for an open shift. Categories with the largest quarter-over-quarter movement are where the market is repricing fastest — worth re-checking before you post high-volume or hard-to-fill work.

Data collected and analyzed by Upshift from completed shift activity across the Cincinnati metro. Averages reflect real rates paid during the measured period and are intended to guide fair, competitive wage-setting.