

# *CLASSIFICATIONS, MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SALARY GUIDELINES FOR EXAMINERS*

*Updated January 2025*



The salary range guidelines on the following pages are excerpts from the Financial Condition Examiners Handbook. This guidance was developed in recognition of the importance of compensation particularly as it affects an Insurance Department's ability to hire and retain well-qualified employees. The guidelines were developed based on surveys of examiner pay across Insurance Departments, as well as external comparisons to other similar professions, including other financial regulators, internal auditors and external auditors.

The data presented in the charts below is based on a national average, and it is not appropriate to be applied to all locations without consideration of market and cost of living variances.

## II. EXAMINATION PERSONNEL

This section of the Handbook addresses the following subjects:

- A. Examiner Definitions and Qualifications
- B. Authority and Responsibility of the Examiner-In-Charge
- C. Duties and Responsibilities of Non-Domestic Participating Examiners
- D. Salary and Per Diem Guidelines
- E. General Salary Guidelines

Note: The guidance in Sections A–D was initially developed for zone examinations, but it is also used as a reference point for the states in setting compensation for their Department. In contrast, the guidance in Section E – General Salary Guidelines is intended to provide flexibility in setting salary expectations for purposes of all staff performing Risk-Focused Surveillance.

### A. Examiner Definitions and Qualifications

#### Insurance Company Examiner

An Insurance Company Examiner shall meet and continue to meet the qualifications set forth below:

- (a) An Insurance Company Examiner shall be: (i) an insurance department employee, or (ii) self-employed, exclusively or primarily as an Insurance Company Examiner, on a contract basis with an insurance department; and
- (b) An Insurance Company Examiner shall be: certified by the Society of Financial Examiners (SOFE) as an Accredited Financial Examiner (AFE); or Certified Financial Examiner (CFE). An AFE or CFE must meet and continue to meet all conditions of SOFE necessary to be eligible to hold the title of AFE or CFE, including but not limited to SOFE's experience requirements, successful completion of required SOFE examinations, SOFE's continuing education requirements, compliance with SOFE's Code of Ethical Conduct, and payment of SOFE fees relating to maintenance of such continuing certification.

#### Automated Examination Specialist\* (Information Technology (IT) Examiner)

\*The position of Automated Examination Specialist is a synonym for IT Examiner and is not necessarily related to SOFE's AES designation.

An IT Examiner is an examiner who is responsible for coordinating, directing and implementing the automated portion of an examination and evaluating the controls of an insurer's information technology.

An IT Examiner shall meet and continue to meet the qualifications set forth below:

- (a) An IT Examiner shall be: (i) an insurance department employee, or (ii) self-employed, exclusively or primarily as an IT Examiner, on a contract basis with an insurance department.
- (b) An IT Examiner shall have sufficient knowledge, background and experience to perform the IT portion of a financial exam, given the sophistication and complexity of the insurer's IT environment. This may include, but is not limited to, obtaining certifications such as SOFE's Automated Examination Specialist (AES) or the Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), sponsored by the Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA).

## Senior Insurance Examiner

A Senior Insurance Examiner shall meet and continue to meet the qualifications set forth below:

- (a) A Senior Insurance Examiner shall be: (i) an insurance department employee, or (ii) self-employed, exclusively or primarily as an Insurance Company Examiner or Senior Insurance Examiner, on a contract basis with an insurance department; and
- (b) A Senior Insurance Examiner shall be: certified by the Society of Financial Examiners (SOFE) as a Certified Financial Examiner (CFE). A CFE must meet and continue to meet all conditions of SOFE necessary to be eligible to hold the title of CFE, including but not limited to SOFE's experience requirements, successful completion of required SOFE examinations, SOFE's continuing education requirements, compliance with SOFE's Code of Ethical Conduct, and payment of SOFE fees relating to maintenance of such continuing certification.

## Insurance Examiner-In-Charge

An Insurance Examiner-In-Charge is an examiner who is responsible for the report, coordination and direction of the examination of a domestic insurer, including a non-domestic participating examiner from an accredited state, who is responsible for completing an affidavit of participation, on a non-accredited state's examination. (Note: Does not include other non-domestic participating examiners.) See part B below for qualifications.

## Supervising or Administrative Examiner

A Supervising Examiner must be a CFE, have a minimum of 10 years experience examining insurance companies and supervise more than one examination of multi-state insurers concurrently.

## **B. Authority and Responsibility of the Examiner-In-Charge**

A person shall only be eligible to be the examiner-in-charge of an examination of a multi-state insurer if such person holds the certification of Certified Financial Examiner (CFE) from the Society of Financial Examiners or be directly supervised by someone holding the CFE designation. The examiner-in-charge has the following authority and responsibilities:

1. Planning the examination
  - a. Oversee the risk-focused surveillance process by identifying risks and the company's processes to assess those risks.
  - b. Develop initial written plans.
  - c. Update written plans periodically to reflect progress.
  - d. Advise all other examiners of all current examination developments.
  - e. Confer with all other examiners on all major examination problems on a current basis.
  - f. Coordinate with specialists utilized in the examinations (e.g., IT examiners and independent actuaries).
2. Supervision of examiners, including non-domestic participating examiners
  - a. Supervise the conduct of the examination.
  - b. Allocate work assignments.
  - c. Review each examiner's work plan and revise where necessary.

- d. Monitor progress against plans regularly and initiate necessary corrective action to ensure the examination is completed in a timely and professional manner.
  - e. Ensure professional conduct of examiners.
  - f. Review each examiner's workpapers to see that they support the examiner's conclusions and findings.
  - g. Prepare and deliver performance reviews of domestic examination staff and non-domestic participating examiners on a timely basis.
  - h. Monitor the hours worked vs. the budgeted hours.
3. Report to an appropriate level supervisor regarding a non-domestic participating examiner whose performance does not meet expectations.
  4. Maintain liaison with company management
    - a. Conferences or other communications with company officials, except regarding minor matters, should be made only with the full knowledge of all non-domestic participating examiners.
    - b. The hours during which an examination should be conducted shall, except where different hours are prescribed by the state department in charge of the examination, correspond as closely as possible to the working hours of the company being examined.
  5. Provide for the security of company records and information
  6. Prepare examination report
    - a. Develop report in consultation with all other examiners before completion of fieldwork.
    - b. If a disagreement among the examiners (including the examiner-in-charge) cannot be resolved (e.g., by the procedure established in Part X H. – Coordination and Distribution of the Examination Report of a Multi-State Insurer and the Resolution of Report Conflicts of this Handbook section), include in the report the comments of the dissenter(s) and indicate which are the majority and minority opinions. (If there is an even split of opinion, so indicate.)
    - c. The preparation of examination report should be developed in consultation with all other examiners. (The examiner-in-charge or domiciliary state insurance department shall not change or amend a final work copy of any examination report on a multi-state insurer without prior advice, consultation and approval of the non-domestic participating examiners.)
  7. Maintain summary of actual hours spent on each examination activity
  8. Conduct the examination in a manner consistent with the standards set out in Letter C. (below), as appropriate.

### **C. Duties and Responsibilities of Non-domestic Participating Examiners**

A person shall only be eligible to represent a zone on an examination of a multi-state insurer if such person has been certified by the Society of Financial Examiners as either an Accredited Financial Examiner (AFE) or a Certified Financial Examiner (CFE). The non-domestic participating examiners have the following authority and responsibilities:

1. Cooperate with the examiner-in-charge and other examiners in the conduct of the examination:
  - a. Assume responsibility to perform the duties assigned to examiner by the examiner-in-charge.
  - b. Take an active interest in the examination as a whole.
  - c. Inform the examiner-in-charge of examination developments on a current basis.

2. Make appropriate arrangements with examiner-in-charge for carrying out specific instructions given to the examiner and for obtaining specifically requested information.
3. Devote full time to examination duties and responsibilities.
4. Adopt the rules of conduct established for the examination team.
5. Observe professional standards of conduct free from any impropriety in fact and appearance, and avoid any situations or circumstances that may reasonably appear to influence independence, judgment or discretion.
6. Respect the confidentiality of information developed or received during the course of an examination.
7. In addition to performing duties assigned by the examiner-in-charge, perform such other work as the examiner deems necessary to obtain assurance that major solvency risk areas, specific concerns expressed by the zone he/she represents, and other concerns arising during the examination have been addressed in the examination. This objective can normally be met by reviewing work performed on key activities of the company. (Note that the non-domestic participating examiner should not duplicate the work of the examiner-in-charge.)
8. In addition to performing duties assigned by the examiner-in-charge, review other work as the examiner deems necessary for a fair and complete examination.
9. Prepare dissenting opinions, if any, for inclusion in the examination report with respect to each issue the examiner deems significant and which is not reflected in the majority report.
10. Upon completion of the examination, the non-domestic participating examiner should proactively communicate the examination findings and conclusions to the other states within his/her zone.
11. All examiners should comply with the universal confidentiality agreements enforced in their respective state(s).
12. Typically, the non-domestic participating examiner should remain on the examination until the significant examination areas have been completed and all of the major examination issues have been addressed. However, this procedure may be varied for justifiable reasons. Signed signature sheets may be left with the examiner-in-charge if the non-domestic participating examiner leaves the engagement prior to having a copy of the rough draft of the report.
13. Any major difference arising during the course of an examination that is not resolved after thorough discussion with the examiner-in-charge and the participating examiners should be reported to the examiner's chief examiner and zone secretary by the examiner involved.

#### **D. Salary and Per Diem Guidelines**

Salary and per diem charges are to be computed beginning at the time of reporting for duty at the office of the company to be examined and terminating upon completion of the examination or the examiner's active participation therein and to include actual days for travel as certified by his or her commissioner.

1. Suggested Compensation:

The proposed competitive salary schedule for all examiners is as follows:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Daily Rate</u>
Insurance Company Examiner, AFE	\$407.00
Automated Examination Specialist, AFE (no AES)	\$500.00
Senior Insurance Examiner, CFE	\$500.00
Automated Examination Specialist, AES or similar designation	\$562.00
Automated Examination Specialist, CFE (no AES)	\$562.00
Insurance Examiner In-Charge, CFE	\$602.00
Supervising or Administrative Examiner	\$638.00

## 2. Transportation

The NAIC has adopted the use of CONUS reimbursement rates in relation to per diem payments. The CONUS rates can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>.

Examiners shall not be reimbursed for travel time or travel expenses not actually incurred in connection with an assignment.

Air Travel – Only one day of travel time will be authorized.

Land Travel – Travel time is expected to be no more than 400 miles per day.

Actual mileage will be compensated at the rates set forth by CONUS.

## 3. Illness & Holidays

On days which examiners are absent due to sickness or any other cause, no salary charge should be made to the company, provided the company is open for the normal transaction of business. If the examiner is available for work on site or on any national holiday or any other day that the company has optionally closed for business, he or she shall be allowed salary and per diem allowances for that particular day.

Examiners shall not be reimbursed for dual living expenses while on branch office assignments.

## 4. Maximum Reimbursement

Effective January 1, 2000, the lodging CONUS rates adopted by the General Services Administrations (GSA) and distributed by the NAIC did not reflect the reimbursable room taxes for the U.S. and the U.S. territories. Under the GSA requirements, these taxes are separately reimbursable. This change was made by the GSA as a result of several lodging establishments setting their room rates in accordance with the maximum per diem amount and then adding lodging taxes to that amount. Per the GSA, the new method of having taxes excluded from the per diem amount will assure U.S. travelers that they will most likely be properly reimbursed for lodging costs. (Per diem rates for foreign countries continue to include the reimbursable lodging taxes.)

As an example, the city of Chicago, Illinois may have a maximum per diem amount for lodging of \$155. Therefore, the actual reimbursable amount for lodging would be \$155 plus the actual room taxes paid. If state and local lodging taxes equal 17.5% of the room rate, then the actual reimbursable amount would be \$182.13 (\$155 for lodging plus \$27.13 for lodging taxes). The GSA currently does not have any restrictions on the reimbursable lodging taxes.

Lodging expenses should be supported with actual receipts. A meal allowance should be paid on a basis consistent with the CONUS rates. In lieu of the above, it is recommended that examiners working within a 50-mile radius of their official domicile receive a commuting allowance.

Necessary exceptions or clarifications to the preceding should be directed by the commissioner of the state employing the examiner consistent with the intent of this policy.

#### 5. Official Domicile

It is recommended that examiners be authorized to return to the official domicile every other weekend. Expenses will be paid based upon the lesser of airfare or mileage. This reimbursement is made in lieu of the per diem allowance. It is understood that the travel will be done with a minimum amount of work time lost.

#### 6. Insurance Department Examinations

All payments covering insurance department examinations shall be made directly to the home state of the examiner, if consistent with the laws and fiscal procedure of such state.

#### 7. Statutory Provisions

The foregoing shall be subject to the statutory provisions in any state governing compensation and expenses of department examiners representing such state.

### **E. General Salary Guidelines**

The compensation guidelines in this section of the Handbook were developed in recognition of the importance of compensation, particularly as it affects an Insurance Department's ability to hire and retain well-qualified employees. The guidelines were developed based on surveys of examiner pay across Insurance Departments, as well as external comparisons to other similar professions, including other financial regulators, internal auditors and external auditors. In using the information below, the following are brief descriptions of the associated positions listed:

#### *Financial Examiner*

Financial Examiners are responsible for performing tasks in accordance with the Risk-Focused Examination approach under the supervision of the Examiner-In-Charge (EIC). The Financial Examiner is responsible for investigating and analyzing insurance company risks, policies, procedures and controls in an attempt to assist the Insurance Department in its responsibility to assess and monitor the current financial condition and prospective financial solvency of insurance companies.

#### *Senior Financial Examiner*

Senior Financial Examiners are responsible for performing tasks in accordance with the Risk-Focused Examination approach under the supervision of the EIC. The Senior Financial Examiner is responsible for investigating and analyzing insurance company risks, policies, procedures, and controls in an attempt to assist the Insurance Department in its responsibility to assess and monitor the current financial condition and prospective financial solvency of insurance companies. Senior Financial Examiners may also be asked to provide guidance and support to Financial Examiners and assist in all areas of examinations, as requested.

### *Examiner-In-Charge (EIC)*

EIC's are responsible for the execution of the Risk-Focused Examination approach. The EIC is responsible for ensuring that the exam approach is appropriately designed to investigate and analyze insurance company risks, policies, procedures, and controls in an attempt to assist the Insurance Department in its responsibility to assess and monitor the current financial condition and financial solvency of insurance companies. The EIC provides guidance to Financial Examiners and Senior Financial Examiners, conducts detailed reviews of examiner work, and ensures a proper flow of communication with company management and Department officials, as appropriate.

### *Supervising & Assistant Chief Examiner*

A Supervising or Assistant Chief Examiner is responsible for supervising EICs on examinations. This person provides input on technical matters, acts as a reviewer of the work performed by the EIC and ensures that examination work is an appropriate execution of the Risk-Focused Examination approach.

### *Chief Examiner*

This position is responsible for the overall examination of staff performance and development, the ongoing scheduling of financial examinations, and general communications regarding the examinations of regulated entities. This position should work under the general direction of a Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner, and it should oversee a consistent Risk-Focused Examination process across the Department.

### Use of Salary Tables:

The salary tables included below generally require certain adjustments before being applied by a State or Jurisdiction in setting examiner compensation. Factors to consider in setting examiner compensation include:

- Specific job responsibilities and expectations.
- Location or market-based adjustments.
- Complexity of industry.
- Specialization requirements (e.g., Reinsurance/Investment/IT Specialist).
- Travel expectations (including consideration of amount of travel and in consideration of work from home or other similar arrangements).
- Retirement and other benefits (not included in table).

### Suggested Salary Ranges:

Position	Salary Range	
	Low end	High end
Financial Examiner	\$52,000	\$85,000
Senior Financial Examiner	\$64,500	\$105,000
Examiner-In-Charge (EIC)/Supervisor/Assistant Chief Examiner	\$87,000	\$150,000
Chief Examiner	\$100,000	\$170,000

Note: The data above is based on a national average, and it is not appropriate to be applied to all locations without consideration of market and cost of living variances.