

## Crimmins Insights Q1 2026

### Private Domestic Wage Increases

#### Q1 2026 INSIGHTS PRIVATE DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT WAGE INCREASES WHY WAGES AND BENEFITS RESET TOGETHER

**Overview** Private domestic employment compensation in New York has shifted from a simple hourly wage model to a more complete employment package. Hourly rates alone are no longer sufficient to support long term retention. Inflation, healthcare costs, and long term financial stability now play a central role in compensation decisions. This reflects a structural adjustment in the private household employment market.

**Why Housekeepers Are Used as the Benchmark** Housekeepers are used as the benchmark role in this analysis because they are the most common and consistently structured position across private households. Housekeeper roles exist in apartments, townhouses, and multi property estates, making them a reliable reference point for broader private domestic employment trends.

Housekeepers are also fully exposed to New York cost of living pressures. They are locally employed, paid hourly, and typically rely on wages rather than bonuses, equity, or deferred compensation. As a result, changes in purchasing power tend to surface earlier and more clearly in housekeeper compensation than in other private household roles.

For this reason, shifts in housekeeper wages and benefits tend to act as an early indicator for compensation pressure across private domestic employment as a whole.

**Source** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index CPI U New York Newark Jersey City Metropolitan Area [https://www.bls.gov/regions/northeast/news-release/consumerpriceindex\\_newyork.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/northeast/news-release/consumerpriceindex_newyork.htm)

What Happened to the Cost of Living According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, cumulative inflation in the New York area since **January 2021** is approximately **22.0 percent to 23.0 percent**. This reflects broad based increases across food, housing, utilities, transportation, healthcare, insurance, and local services. In practical terms, everyday living costs in New York are materially higher today than they were in 2021.

**What This Means for Private Housekeepers** In **2021**, many private domestic housekeepers in New York earned between **35.00** and **40.00** per hour.

Adjusted for inflation alone, a private housekeeper earning **35.00** per hour in **2021** would need to earn approximately **43.00** per hour today to maintain the same purchasing power. A private housekeeper earning **40.00** per hour in **2021** would need to earn approximately **49.00** per hour today to remain even with inflation.

These figures reflect purchasing power only. They do not represent an increase in responsibility, scope, or lifestyle.

**Why the Market Moved Beyond Hourly Pay Alone** Inflation explains part of the wage adjustment, but it does not explain the full shift. **Since 2021**, private domestic housekeepers have faced higher out of pocket healthcare costs, rising insurance premiums and deductibles, and limited access to employer sponsored retirement plans. At the same time, households are increasingly sensitive to turnover, reliability, and continuity.

**Compensation structures** have therefore evolved beyond hourly wages alone.

**What We Are Seeing in Q1 2026** In Q1 2026 searches, competitive private domestic housekeeper roles in New York increasingly include hourly rates closer to **50.00** per hour for experienced candidates, plus healthcare support. This support most often appears as a monthly or annual healthcare stipend, or partial reimbursement toward independently sourced coverage.

In addition, **there is a growing trend toward retirement participation**. This includes employer contributions toward a 401k or similar retirement plan, or structured cash equivalents designated for long term savings. While not yet universal, these benefits are increasingly present in roles focused on stability and long term retention.

**Why Benefits Now Matter as Much as Hourly Rate** Private domestic housekeepers do not benefit from large institutional benefit structures. As healthcare and living costs rise, candidates are evaluating roles based on total compensation rather than hourly rate alone. Two roles with identical hourly pay are no longer viewed as equal if one includes healthcare support or retirement participation and the other does not.

**Key Takeaway for Q1 2026** For private domestic employment in New York, compensation has shifted to a two-part model. The first part is a higher hourly wage that reflects cumulative inflation since 2021. The second part is healthcare and long term financial support that addresses rising personal costs.

This shift explains why hourly benchmarks are moving toward **50.00 per hour, healthcare & healthcare stipends** are becoming more common, and early adoption of retirement contributions is emerging within private households.

This change is not about excess. It is about sustainability. Households that proactively recognize this shift are seeing stronger retention and smoother search outcomes. Households that do not often encounter these adjustments later through renegotiation or replacement.

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