



# **CALC+ Quick Rate (QR) Prices Paid User Guide**

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## **CALC+ Prices Paid Tool Purpose and Applicability**

The CALC+ prices paid tool is a pricing research tool, located on [buy.gsa.gov](https://buy.gsa.gov), to support government acquisition professionals in services pricing business intelligence. Acquisition staff can use Prices Paid data to help conduct market research with price analysis, develop Independent Government Cost Estimates (IGCE's), and aid in benchmarking competitive pricing.

When evaluating CALC+ pricing, Contracting Officers (COs) must exercise independent business judgment consistent with their authority, while remaining compliant with all applicable regulations and guidance.

Any results from CALC+ searches cannot be relied upon exclusively to demonstrate prices are fair and reasonable in accordance with FAR 15.4. Federal acquisition professionals will need additional analysis techniques to make such a determination. These rates may also be useful in creating budgetary and project cost estimates.

## **Where does data/prices in the tool come from?**

CALC+ Prices Paid data is based on the customer (contractor) invoice data uploaded to the Contractor Payment Reporting Module (CPRM). Prices Paid are the actual invoiced labor rates paid by federal agencies on awarded task/delivery orders for Time and Material (T&M) and Labor Hour (LH) contract line item numbers (CLINs). The Prices Paid data results are the mean prices paid as reported on invoices for each invoice sample size.

The data represented in CALC+ Prices Paid is no more than three years old. Contracting professionals may select the data to be limited to invoices reported within the last 12 months, 24 months, or 36 months. Users should be aware that more recent data is less impacted by inflation and historical records are not adjusted for inflation.

## **Which Contract Families are included in this tool?**

CALC+ Prices Paid data includes invoices reported in the CPRM for the following contract programs:

- Alliant 2
- 8(a) STARS III
- VETS 2

Planned contracts that will be added in the future

- OASIS
- HCaTS

## How does CALC+ Prices Paid work?

Access to the CALC+ Prices Paid tool begins with [Pricing Central](#). Labor ceiling rates in CALC+ do not require user credentials, but accessing Prices Paid requires a username and password. Note that this tool does not include labor ceiling rate data from Multiple Award Schedule contracts, but includes contract data from the sources cited above this section.

Once access is granted, remember that CALC+ pricing information is intended for market research and price evaluation purposes. It should not be considered as the only acceptable resource when making a determination. **Relying solely or primarily on CALC+ for price reasonableness determinations is an improper use of the tool.**

### Appropriate Use

This tool allows you to review Prices Paid information reported by GSA's Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) and Indefinite Quantity Indefinite Delivery (IDIQ) contractors. You may use it to create budgetary and project cost estimates.

The CALC Prices Paid tool supports (and is not intended to be in lieu of) the U.S. Government's determination of price reasonableness. The data displayed represents actual hourly labor rates paid for services purchased by the Government on GSA Federal Acquisition Service contracts.

In some cases, the number of comparable prices returned by the CALC prices paid tool is small and may not fully represent your professional service contract requirement and/or search criteria. The tool may also be used as part of a larger negotiation objective development strategy that seeks fair and reasonable pricing. However, CALC search results cannot be relied upon exclusively to demonstrate prices are fair and reasonable in accordance with FAR 15.4. Federal acquisition professionals will need to conduct additional analysis to make such a determination.

This tool is being introduced as an initial version with new features and enhancements planned in the future. Users are encouraged to submit feedback and enhancement requests through the Feedback form button displayed on the Prices Paid tool.

## Search Criteria and Filters

As a starting point for price comparison, users may search by [SOC ID](#) (a standard labor category description managed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics), contract vehicle, Labor Category (LCAT) title, or a keyword in the main search bar. There are two (2) methods to generate the primary search.

1. Begin typing characters and select from the pre-populated suggestions. Results will display an **exact match** from your selection.
2. Type characters for a [SOC ID](#), contract vehicle, LCAT title, or a keyword and click Search. Results will display any findings that **contain** the characters previously entered.

**Users should also attempt to narrow the labor category search to avoid non-comparable titles.** For example, searching 'Engineer' could return unrelated results such as Computer Hardware Engineer, Electrical Engineer, or Mechanical Engineer, etc.

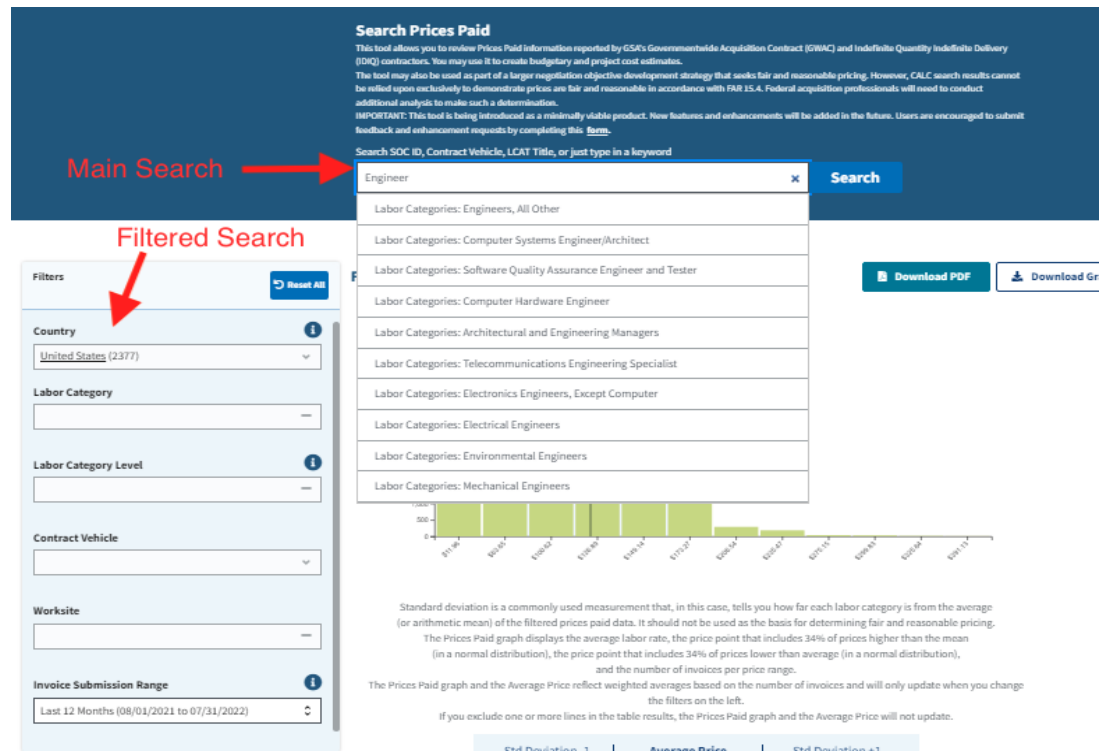


Figure 1 - Search & Filter Features

Once the main search criteria is entered, the results can be filtered using the various filters shown on the left navigation pane as seen in Figure 1.

## Country

United States (**Default setting**): Includes all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. Specific states may be selected within the filter if data is available.

Outside of United States: Includes all international locations and U.S. territories including American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands. Specific locations or territories may be selected within the filter if data is available. International locations will display 'NS' as the state in the results table.

## Labor Category

When a pre-populated LCAT title is selected from the main search bar, the Labor Category filter will default to the selected LCAT title. This filter can only be removed by generating a new search in the main search bar.

When a generic search is performed in the main search bar, then the Labor Category can be filtered by a specific labor category. (e.g., searching for Engineer in the main search bar will display various LCAT filters containing 'engineer' such as Electrical Engineer, Computer Hardware Engineer, etc.)

## Labor Category Level

Results can be filtered by a specific category level such as Junior, Journeyman, Senior, or Subject Matter Expert (SME). See [Appendix A](#) at the bottom of this document for detailed descriptions.

## Contract Vehicle

Results can be filtered by the available contract vehicles.

## Worksite

Results can be filtered by Government Site or Contractor Site. 'NA' indicates the worksite status was not provided in the raw data.

Contractor worksite rates are usually higher than government worksite rates due to higher overhead costs. If the worksite is unknown, the acquisition professional should select the customer worksite to ensure the lower price.

## Invoice Submission Range

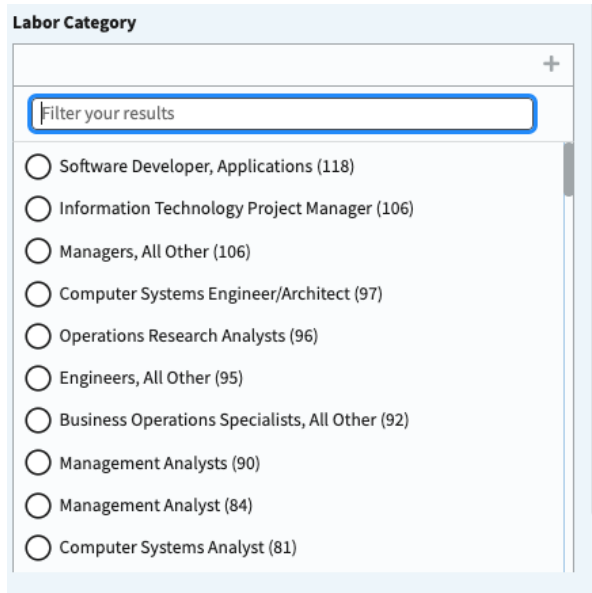
Results can be filtered to display the timeframe for when the customer submitted the invoice. The dates reflected in the filter are rolling dates as invoices are continuously submitted over time.

1. Prices submitted within the last 12 months (**Default setting**)
2. Prices submitted within the last 24 months

### 3. Prices submitted within the last 36 months

## Sorting

Filters may contain a large amount of data. The sorting feature is designed to display filter criteria ordered top to bottom by the selected criteria, highest count of results, and alphabetical order. See Figure 2.



**Figure 2 - Sorting Order**

## Table Results

Once the main search is generated, the table of results will retrieve and display data if available. If too many results are returned, then results can be filtered by various criteria (e.g., Labor Category Level, Country/State, Worksite, etc.) as previously mentioned. The results will update automatically as filters are applied. See Figure 3 below for the layout of the results table.

Showing from 1 - 10 <sup>1</sup> out of 140 Results for "Information Technology Project Manager" Data was last updated 1/28/2023 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 10	<sup>4</sup> Labor Category	<sup>5</sup> Labor Category Level	<sup>6</sup> Contract Vehicle	<sup>7</sup> Average Aggregated Price	<sup>8</sup> City	<sup>9</sup> State	<sup>10</sup> Worksite	<sup>11</sup> Invoice Sample Size
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Junior	VETS 2	\$41.76	Washington	DC	Government Site	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Journeyman	Alliant 2	\$57.02	South Burlington	VT	Government Site	7
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Junior	Alliant 2	\$71.05	Herndon	VA	Government Site	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Junior	Alliant 2	\$72.61	Fort Detrick	MD	Government Site	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Journeyman	Alliant 2	\$75.77	Lanham	MD	Government Site	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Junior	8(a) STARS III	\$77.41	Beltsville	MD	NA	3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Journeyman	Alliant 2	\$80.95	Hurlburt Field	FL	Government Site	5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Senior	Alliant 2	\$82.49	Alexandria	VA	Government Site	22
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information Technology Project Manager	Journeyman	Alliant 2	\$82.66	Falls Church	VA	Contractor Site	3

<sup>14</sup> 1 2 3 4 5 ... 14 Next

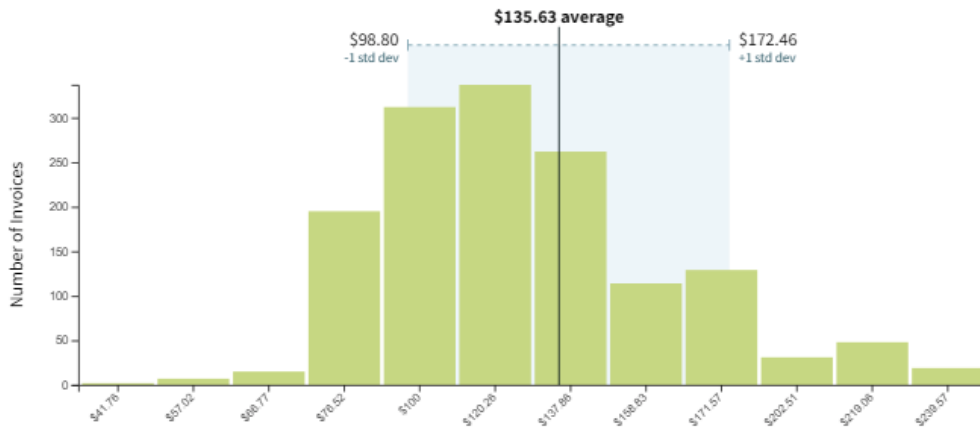
**Figure 3 - Results Table Layout**

1. Total count of results
2. The last date the CALC+ Prices Paid tool pulled invoice data
3. Select number of displayed results per page
4. Labor Category
5. Labor Category Level
6. Contract Vehicle
7. Average Aggregated Price (The average price of the invoice sample size)
8. City
9. State ('NS' is displayed for International locations)
10. Worksite
11. Invoice Sample Size (Count of invoices with the same LCAT/level/place of performance)
12. Remove the result row (Removed rows cannot be restored)
13. Feedback Form (Submit issues, bugs, or enhancement requests)
14. Navigate to various page results

## Prices Paid Graph

The Prices Paid graph and the average price reflect averages based on the number of invoices and will only update when the filters are modified on the left. If you exclude one or more lines in the table results, the Prices Paid graph and the average price will not update.





Standard deviation is a commonly used measurement that, in this case, tells you how far each labor category is from the average (or arithmetic mean) of the filtered prices paid data. It should not be used as the basis for determining fair and reasonable pricing.

The Prices Paid graph displays the average labor rate, the price point that includes 34% of prices higher than the mean (in a normal distribution), the price point that includes 34% of prices lower than average (in a normal distribution), and the number of invoices per price range.

The Prices Paid graph and the Average Price reflect weighted averages based on the number of invoices and will only update when you change the filters on the left.

If you exclude one or more lines in the table results, the Prices Paid graph and the Average Price will not update.

Std Deviation -1	Average Price	Std Deviation +1
<b>\$98.80</b>	<b>\$135.63</b>	<b>\$172.46</b>

Figure 4 - Prices Paid Graph

## Best Practices

If a search yields a limited number of results, the user should try some of the following approaches.

- Ensure the labor category name is spelled correctly, and/or represents your search appropriately
- Expand the invoice period time frame to include more historical results
- Ensure your filters appropriately represent your search criteria

Additionally, if a record appears to be out of your intended search criteria, then the user should click the to remove the result from the table.

If sample sizes remain small, the user should be more cautious with the pricing intelligence provided.

## Best Practice Example

Below is a screenshot from the CALC+ Prices Paid tool to describe how the tool should be properly used.

*Example #1 - Shows an example of receiving a wide range of price results based on the labor category description 'Administrator'. The example is designed to showcase how using generic keywords in the search may yield a broad range of pricing for the intended category/keyword. See Figure 6. In this example, consider updating the search to a specific type of administrator (e.g., Database Administrator, Network and Computer Systems Administrator, Systems Administrator).*

Showing from  
**1 - 10** out of 140 Results for "administrator" Data was last updated 5/2/2023

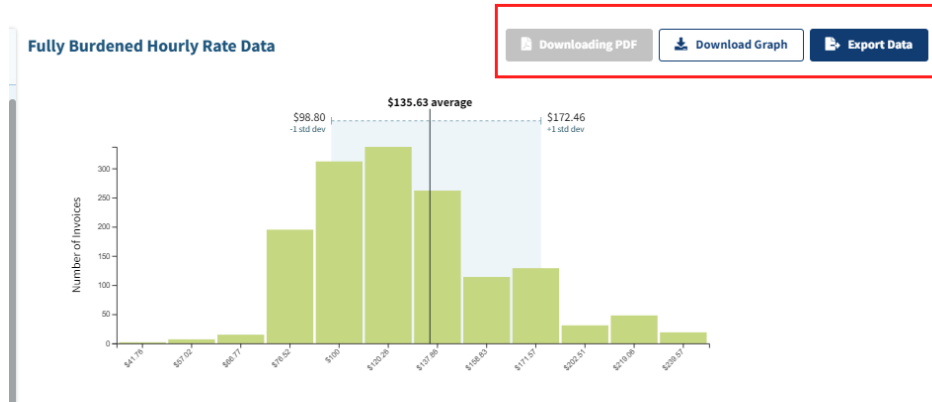
10	Labor Category	Labor Category Level	Contract Vehicle	Average Aggregated Price	City	State	Worksite	Invoice Sample Size
	Administrators							
✕	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$59.10	Washington	DC	Government Site	3
✕	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$59.23	Atlanta	GA	Government Site	5
✕	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$59.55	Rockville	MD	Government Site	1
✕	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$59.55	Rockville	MD	Contractor Site	4
✕	Database Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$61.66	Patuxent River	MD	Contractor Site	14
✕	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$61.91	Fort Detrick	MD	Government Site	21
✕	Database Administrators	Junior	Alliant 2	\$63.28	Falls Church	VA	Contractor Site	12

**Figure 6 - Generic Search Criteria Leading to Wide Range of Price Results**

As a reminder, acquisition professionals must exercise independent business judgment while remaining compliant with all applicable regulations and guidance.

## Download and Export Results

The ability to download the entire data set with query/filter parameters is available for support documentation.



**Figure 5 - Download & Export Features**

### Download PDF

Data can be exported in PDF format for supporting documentation. Click Download PDF to get started.

### Download Graph

The Prices Paid graph can be exported as an image for supporting documentation. Click Download Graph to get started.

### Export Data

Data can be exported in CSV format for viewing or editing in spreadsheet platforms such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets. Click Export Data to get started.

## Point of Contact

[fasdigitalsupport@gsa.gov](mailto:fasdigitalsupport@gsa.gov)

## Appendix A - Definitions of Labor Category Levels

- Junior
  - A Junior labor category has up to 3 years experience and a BA/BS degree. A Junior labor category is responsible for assisting more senior positions and/or performing functional duties under the oversight of more senior positions.
  - A Junior labor category applies fundamental concepts, processes, practices, and procedures on technical assignments. Performs work that requires practical experience and training. Work is performed under supervision.
- Journeyman
  - A Journeyman labor category has 3 to 10 years of experience and a BA/BS or MA/MS degree. A journeyman labor category typically performs all functional duties independently.
  - A Journeyman labor category possesses and applies expertise on multiple complex work assignments. Assignments may be broad in nature, requiring originality and innovation in determining how to accomplish tasks. Operates with appreciable latitude in developing methodology and presenting solutions to problems. Contributes to deliverables and performance metrics where applicable.
- Senior
  - A Senior labor category has over 10 years of experience and a MA/MS degree. A Senior labor category typically works on high-visibility or mission critical aspects of a given program and performs all functional duties independently. A Senior labor category may oversee the efforts of less senior staff and/or be responsible for the efforts of all staff assigned to a specific job.
  - A Senior labor category possesses and applies a comprehensive knowledge across key tasks and high impact assignments. Plans and leads major technology assignments. Evaluates performance results and recommends major changes affecting short-term project growth and success. Functions as a technical expert across multiple project assignments. May supervise others.
- Subject Matter Expert (SME)
  - A SME labor category is an individual whose qualifications and/or particular expertise are exceptional and/or highly unique. SMEs do not have specific experience/education qualifications, but are typically identified as recognized industry leaders for a given area of expertise. SMEs typically perform the following kinds of functions: initiates, supervises, and/or develops requirements from a project's inception to conclusion for complex to extremely complex programs. Provides strategic advice, technical guidance and expertise to program and project staff. Provides detailed analysis, evaluation and recommendations for improvements, optimization development, and/or maintenance efforts for client-specific or mission critical challenges/issues. Consults with clients to define need or problem, supervises studies, and leads surveys to collect and analyze data to provide advice and recommend solutions.

- A SME labor category provides technical/management leadership on major tasks or technology assignments. Establishes goals and plans that meet project objectives. Has domain and expert technical knowledge. Directs and controls activities for a client, having overall responsibility for financial management, methods, and staffing to ensure that technical requirements are met. Interactions involve client negotiations and interfacing with senior management. Decision-making and domain knowledge may have a critical impact on overall project implementation. May supervise others.