

2026 Executive Compensation Guide

Finance & Accounting Leadership Benchmarks

Real Estate · Private Equity · Financial Services · Healthcare

40+

Roles Covered

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Sectors

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Markets

Q1 2026

Data Currency

Data sourced from active and recently completed Gratus Staffing searches, supplemented by peer firm intelligence. All figures reflect total cash compensation.

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■ How to Use This Guide

The figures in this guide reflect **total cash compensation** — base salary plus target annual bonus — for direct hire, full-time roles. Carried interest, equity grants, co-investment rights, and long-term incentive plans are noted separately where commonly included, but are not embedded in the total cash figures.

All data is drawn from active and recently completed Gratus searches, supplemented by peer firm intelligence and industry data current through Q1 2026. Company size tiers used throughout this guide:

Tier	Definition
Small	Under \$150M AUM / revenue, or fewer than 50 employees
Mid-Market	\$150M – \$750M AUM / revenue, or 50–500 employees
Large	\$750M – \$3B AUM / revenue, or 500–2,000 employees
Institutional	\$3B+ AUM / revenue, or publicly traded / top-10 national platform

A note on ranges: The low end reflects a qualified candidate without the ideal profile. The high end reflects a candidate with every box checked plus leverage (counter-offer, competing offer, or equity rollover). Expect most offers to clear at or above midpoint in today's market.

■ Geography & Location Multipliers

Geography is one of the largest single variables in real estate compensation. Apply these multipliers against the benchmarks throughout this guide. Mid-Atlantic (DC/Baltimore/Richmond) is the baseline at 1.00x.

Market / Region	vs. Mid-Atlantic	Key Drivers
New York City Metro	+30–40%	Highest RE finance comp market nationally
San Francisco / Bay Area	+25–35%	Cost of living and tech-sector competition
Los Angeles	+20–30%	Large multifamily and mixed-use market
Boston	+15–25%	Life science RE driving outsized demand
Miami / South Florida	+15–20%	Significant PE and institutional capital migration
Seattle	+15–20%	Tech-adjacent RE; strong multifamily pipeline
Chicago	+10–15%	Deep institutional market; closer to mid-Atlantic at director level
Mid-Atlantic (DC/MD/VA)	Baseline	Gratus home market; all benchmarks calibrated here
Atlanta / Charlotte / Nashville	-5–10%	Growing fast; comp gap narrowing at senior levels
Dallas / Houston / Phoenix	-5–10%	Large markets but lower COL; comp rising with growth
Minneapolis / Denver / Portland	-10–15%	Solid institutional markets; comp generally below coastal

Real Estate: Development & Finance Leadership

Real estate finance and development leadership remains among the tightest talent markets nationally. The combination of capital markets complexity, compressed development timelines, and a narrowing candidate pipeline at the senior level continues to push compensation upward at every tier.

Head of Development

The Head of Development is one of the most significant executive hires in real estate — and one of the most frequently under-resourced on compensation. These figures have moved sharply over the past two years.

Platform Size	Base Salary	Target Bonus	Total Cash	Equity / Promote
Small Platform <\$250M pipeline	\$175K–\$230K	20–30%	\$215K–\$300K	<i>Deal-level promote or co-invest rights</i>
Mid-Market \$250M–\$1B	\$260K–\$360K	35–50%	\$350K–\$540K	<i>Carried interest or deal equity standard</i>
Large Platform \$1B–\$5B	\$325K–\$450K	40–60%	\$455K–\$720K	<i>Carry or promote expected; co-invest common</i>
Institutional / National \$5B+ pipeline	\$375K–\$525K	40–65%	\$525K–\$865K +	<i>LTIP, equity grants, or deal-level participation</i>

Gratus Market Signal: A recent Gratus search for a Head of Development at a top-10 national affordable housing developer closed at approximately \$600K all-in cash — consistent with the institutional/national tier. Candidates at this level with a track record on 20+ state footprint platforms will not move for less.

CFO & Finance Leadership

The CFO market in real estate remains exceptionally tight, particularly for executives with experience navigating complex capital structures — development financing, JV waterfalls, REIT compliance, or institutional fund reporting.

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
CFO	Small Private Developer / Family Office (<\$150M)	\$180K–\$260K	<i>Often first formal CFO hire; profit share on deals</i>
CFO	Mid-Market PE-Backed Developer (\$150M–\$750M)	\$290K–\$420K	<i>Carry participation common at \$350K+</i>
CFO	Large Institutional Platform (\$750M–\$3B)	\$390K–\$560K	<i>Full capital stack; board and LP interface</i>
CFO	Public REIT (\$1B+ Market Cap)	\$500K–\$900K +	<i>Equity grants 2–3x base; SEC reporting required</i>

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
CFO	Non-Profit / Affordable Housing (National)	\$200K–\$300K	<i>LIHTC, HUD experience commands premium</i>
VP Finance / Director	Mid-Market Operator or Developer	\$195K–\$275K	<i>Often heir apparent to CFO</i>
SVP / MD of Finance	Large Institutional Platform	\$300K–\$440K	<i>Owns specific business lines or fund structures</i>

Acquisitions & Investments

Acquisitions professionals are among the hardest roles to fill in real estate. The best candidates are rarely looking, counter-offers are aggressive, and candidates with a direct deal sourcing track record command premiums well above the ranges shown here.

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
Director of Acquisitions	Mid-Market Developer / Operator	\$190K–\$260K	<i>Bonus tied to deal volume; pipeline ownership day one</i>
VP / SVP of Acquisitions	PE-Backed (\$250M–\$1B)	\$250K–\$375K	<i>Promote / carry common; sourcing track record essential</i>
VP / SVP of Acquisitions	Large Institutional (\$1B+)	\$340K–\$525K	<i>Market-level comp vs. PE and fund peers; carry expected</i>
Managing Director, Acquisitions	Institutional (\$1B+ AUM)	\$425K–\$650K +	<i>Full carry; sponsor and LPAC relationships required</i>
Director of Investments	Family Office / Private Fund	\$205K–\$300K	<i>Multi-asset flexibility; co-invest rights common</i>
Chief Investment Officer	PE-Backed or Institutional (\$1B+)	\$525K–\$950K +	<i>Equity stake or GP co-invest expected</i>

Asset Management & Portfolio

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
Director of Asset Management	Mid-Market Operator (500–2,500 units)	\$175K–\$240K	<i>Performance bonus tied to NOI or occupancy</i>
VP of Asset Management	Mid-Market PE-Backed Operator	\$210K–\$290K	<i>Argus and Yardi proficiency expected</i>
Head / SVP of Asset Management	Large Platform (\$1B+ AUM)	\$290K–\$420K	<i>LP reporting central; equity growing at this level</i>
Head of Portfolio Management	PE-Backed RE Fund	\$260K–\$390K	<i>Waterfall calculations and LP communication central</i>
VP / Director, Asset Mgmt	Institutional REIT or Fund	\$200K–\$285K	<i>SEC/fund reporting; Yardi / MRI / Argus required</i>

Development Finance & Capital Markets

Development finance professionals who can underwrite complex capital stacks — construction debt, mezzanine, preferred equity, LIHTC, bridge-to-perm — remain among the most sought-after candidates in real estate.

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
Director of Development Finance	Mid-Market Developer	\$175K–\$250K	Construction through permanent debt; Argus required
Head of Development Finance	Large or Institutional Developer	\$265K–\$400K	Full capital stack; lender relationships; reports to CFO
Director of Capital Markets	Mid-to-Large Developer	\$200K–\$300K	Lender relationships; equity raise experience valued
SVP / MD, Capital Markets	Institutional Platform (\$1B+)	\$360K–\$575K	LP and debt capital markets; fund formation experience
Director of Dev Finance	Affordable Housing / LIHTC	\$170K–\$250K	LIHTC, HOME, HUD familiarity commands premium
VP of Underwriting	Multifamily Acquisition Platform	\$180K–\$260K	Argus proficiency and model-build speed are primary screens
Director of JV Finance	Institutional Developer or Fund	\$230K–\$340K	Waterfall structuring and JV accounting required

Accounting & Controller Functions

The controller market in real estate is highly competitive. Candidates with Big 4 audit backgrounds who have transitioned into real estate are in particular demand at every level.

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
Corporate Controller	Small Private Developer (<\$150M)	\$135K–\$190K	Yardi / MRI required; often reports to owner or CFO
Corporate Controller	Mid-Market Developer or Operator	\$170K–\$240K	CPA preferred; multi-entity consolidation and audit
VP / Director of Accounting	Large PE-Backed or Institutional	\$210K–\$300K	CPA required; GAAP, fund accounting; team of 4–12
VP / Director of Accounting	Public REIT	\$265K–\$400K	SEC reporting; SOX compliance experience valued
Senior Fund Accountant	Real Estate PE Fund	\$125K–\$170K	Waterfall calculations and LP reporting; CPA preferred
FP&A; Director	Operator, REIT, or Mid-Market Developer	\$160K–\$220K	Board-level reporting and variance analysis

Role	Platform Type	Total Cash	Notes
FP&A; Director	Large Institutional Platform (\$1B+)	\$210K-\$295K	<i>Complex multi-entity; scenario modeling for capital allocation</i>

■ Private Equity: Portfolio Company & Fund Roles

PE-backed companies face distinct finance leadership demands — executives who can build infrastructure quickly, satisfy institutional investor reporting requirements, and operate at the speed and accountability standards PE sponsors expect.

Portfolio Company Finance Leadership

Role	Context	Total Cash	Notes
CFO	PE-Backed Portfolio Co. (<\$100M revenue)	\$250K–\$380K	Often first institutional CFO; build reporting from scratch
CFO	PE-Backed Portfolio Co. (\$100M–\$500M)	\$350K–\$550K	Board / LPAC reporting; M&A; or exit prep key differentiator
CFO	PE-Backed Portfolio Co. (\$500M+ revenue)	\$500K–\$850K +	Full institutional finance; equity rollover common
VP Finance / Director	Mid-Market PE Portfolio Co.	\$195K–\$280K	Runs FP&A; and investor reporting day-to-day
Controller	PE-Backed Portfolio Co.	\$175K–\$260K	CPA required; GAAP; multi-entity consolidation; monthly close
Head of FP&A;	PE-Backed Portfolio Co.	\$185K–\$275K	Board deck ownership; KPI dashboards; scenario modeling
Chief Accounting Officer	Large PE-Backed or Pre-IPO	\$325K–\$525K	Technical accounting; SEC readiness; IPO prep role

Fund & Platform Finance Roles

Role	Context	Total Cash	Notes
CFO, Fund Management Co.	Mid-Market PE Firm (\$1B–\$5B AUM)	\$400K–\$700K	Fund accounting, GP economics, regulatory oversight
Fund Controller	PE or Credit Fund	\$200K–\$320K	Waterfall calculations, NAV reporting, LP capital accounts
Head of Investor Relations	PE Firm (\$1B+ AUM)	\$280K–\$450K	LP communication, fundraising support, consultant relations
Director of Portfolio Monitoring	PE Firm	\$190K–\$290K	Aggregates portfolio reporting; analytical and relationship role
Head of Risk Management	Mid-to-Large PE or Credit Firm	\$250K–\$420K	Portfolio risk, liquidity, compliance overlap common

Role	Context	Total Cash	Notes
Director of M&A; / Corp Dev	PE-Backed Platform	\$225K–\$360K	<i>Buy-side deal sourcing and execution; internal IB role</i>
Operating Partner, Finance	PE Firm Value Creation Team	\$400K–\$700K +	<i>Former CFO embedded with portfolio; carry and co-invest</i>

■ Financial Services: Asset Management, Banking & Insurance

Financial services firms — asset managers, RIAs, insurance companies, regional and community banks, and fintech platforms — require finance leaders who understand regulatory capital, fund accounting structures, and investor-facing reporting.

Investment Management & Fund Accounting

Role	Firm Type	Total Cash	Notes
CFO	RIA or Investment Manager (\$1B–\$10B AUM)	\$350K–\$600K	SEC compliance, fund accounting; equity stake growing
CFO	Large Asset Manager (\$10B+ AUM)	\$550K–\$950K +	Complex multi-vehicle; regulatory capital management
Head of Fund Accounting	Asset Manager or Fund Admin	\$185K–\$290K	NAV, expense allocations, LP reporting; CPA; Geneva/Advent
Controller / Fund Controller	Investment Manager or Hedge Fund	\$200K–\$320K	GAAP and IFRS fund accounting; audit management
Director of Investor Relations	Asset Manager or Alt Investment	\$230K–\$380K	LP communication, DDQ management, fundraising support
Chief Compliance Officer	RIA or Broker-Dealer	\$220K–\$400K	SEC / FINRA oversight; AML and surveillance programs
Head of Risk	Asset Manager or Hedge Fund	\$275K–\$500K	Market, credit, operational risk; quant background valued

Banking & Insurance

Role	Institution Type	Total Cash	Notes
CFO	Community Bank (<\$1B assets)	\$200K–\$320K	Regulatory reporting, ALCO support, board finance committee
CFO	Regional Bank (\$1B–\$10B assets)	\$350K–\$600K	CECL, DFAST, capital planning; M&A; background valued
Chief Accounting Officer	Regional or National Bank	\$280K–\$480K	SEC reporting, technical accounting, regulatory exams
Controller	Community or Regional Bank	\$155K–\$240K	CPA required; call report and GAAP; exam support
VP of Financial Reporting	Regional Bank or Insurance Co.	\$155K–\$225K	10-K / 10-Q; XBRL tagging; technical accounting research

Role	Institution Type	Total Cash	Notes
Head of Internal Audit	Regional Bank or Financial Institution	\$185K–\$300K	<i>Regulatory and operational audit; CIA or CPA preferred</i>
VP Technical Accounting	Bank or Insurance Co.	\$160K–\$240K	<i>New ASC standards, lease accounting; Big 4 background valued</i>

■ Healthcare: Finance & Operations Leadership

Healthcare finance executives face a uniquely complex operating environment — revenue cycle management, payor contracting, CMS compliance, and the M&A; pace driven by PE consolidation in physician services all create differentiated demand and compensation dynamics.

Finance & Accounting Leadership

Role	Organization Type	Total Cash	Notes
CFO	Physician Group / Specialty Practice (<\$100M)	\$200K–\$320K	Revenue cycle, payor contracting, provider comp modeling
CFO	PE-Backed Healthcare Services (\$100M–\$500M)	\$380K–\$600K	M&A; and integration required; board and sponsor reporting
CFO	Health System or Hospital (\$500M+ revenue)	\$500K–\$900K +	340B, cost report, CMS compliance; capital planning
VP of Finance	Mid-Market Healthcare Organization	\$185K–\$270K	FP&A; and decision support; service line profitability
Controller	Healthcare Services or Health System	\$165K–\$245K	Healthcare GAAP, third-party liability, audit management
Director of Reimbursement	Health System or Large Physician Group	\$155K–\$230K	Medicare / Medicaid cost reports; DSH and UPL expertise
Head of Revenue Cycle	Health System or PE-Backed Practice	\$185K–\$310K	End-to-end RCM; denial management, coding integrity

Operations & Administrative Leadership

Role	Organization Type	Total Cash	Notes
Chief Operating Officer	Healthcare Services or Physician Group	\$300K–\$550K	Clinical ops and admin integration; growth and M&A; focus
VP of Operations	Multi-Site Healthcare Services	\$200K–\$310K	Site performance management; capacity planning
Director of Contracts	Health System or PE-Backed Services	\$145K–\$210K	Payor contracting, value-based arrangements
Director of Procurement	Health System	\$155K–\$230K	Supply chain and GPO relationship management
Compliance Director	Healthcare Services or Health System	\$170K–\$265K	OIG, CMS, HIPAA compliance program oversight

Role	Organization Type	Total Cash	Notes
VP of Human Resources	Mid-to-Large Healthcare Organization	\$185K–\$290K	<i>Physician and clinical staff relations; high-volume recruiting</i>
Chief Administrative Officer	Health System or Large Physician Group	\$275K–\$475K	<i>Non-clinical ops: HR, IT, legal, facilities</i>

■ About Gratus Staffing

Gratus Staffing is a boutique executive search firm specializing in finance and accounting leadership for Real Estate, Private Equity, Financial Services, and Healthcare companies. We work on both retained and contingent engagements, and bring deep market intelligence to every search we run.

300+ Placements completed	100% Retained search fill rate	83% Contingent fill rate	28+ yrs Combined experience
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We run retained searches for CFO, Head of Development, VP Acquisitions, and other C-suite and senior leadership roles. We also execute contingent searches for director, VP, and controller-level positions where speed and network reach are the primary drivers.

Ready to discuss a search? Reach out directly — we typically respond the same business day. Justin Marcus, President & CEO · justin@gratusstaffing.com · (240) 552-9846 gratusstaffing.com · info@gratusstaffing.com

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