

# CDC chief makes \$375K, far exceeding his predecessors' pay

April 23 2018, by Mike Stobbe

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The new head of the nation's top public health agency is getting paid nearly twice what his predecessor made and far more than other past directors, government officials confirmed.

Dr. Robert Redfield Jr., 66, has long career as a top HIV researcher, but he had no experience working in public health or managing a [public health agency](#). The U.S. government is paying him \$375,000 a year to run the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

That's nearly twice the annual compensation given to Dr. Brenda Fitzgerald, who had the job for six months before resigning in January. Her annual pay rate was \$197,300.

Redfield is also making at least \$150,000 more a year than any other previous CDC director.

By private industry standards, his CDC salary is modest for someone with his resume. But his pay is high for the field of government public health.

"It is an exceptional amount of money for what we've seen in the past for (CDC) directors," said Angela Beck, a University of Michigan researcher who studies [public health](#) workforce issues.

Redfield is being paid under a salary program called Title 42, which was established to attract health scientists with rare and critical skills to

government work.

The CDC, with about 12,000 employees, has had hundreds of Title 42 scientists on its staff at a time, according to a 2012 report by the U.S. General Accountability Office. Another federal agency, the National Institutes of Health, has had thousands.

But it's highly unusual to use Title 42 to recruit a CDC director. Fitzgerald was not paid under that program, HHS spokesman Bill Hall said. Nor was her predecessor, Dr. Tom Frieden, whose compensation was \$219,700 just before he left the job in January 2016.

Redfield, who has not been doing media interviews since taking the CDC job, did take a substantial pay cut in joining the federal government. His base salary was about \$650,000 at the University of Maryland about a year ago, according to publicly available databases. He made about \$757,000 between January 2017 and March 2018, plus a \$70,000 bonus, The Wall Street Journal reported last week.

In contrast, Fitzgerald got a pay bump when she went to the CDC. She had a \$175,000 annual salary as the head of Georgia's [health](#) department when she took the CDC job last summer, according to Georgia salary records.

An earlier Trump administration appointee, she was embroiled in unresolved financial conflicts and left the agency after six months on the job.

Last week, Redfield released a statement saying he has met HHS ethics guidelines concerning potential conflicts of interest. He said he signed over his share of future patent licensing fees or royalty payments from his inventions to the University of Maryland; divested certain stock holdings; and began the process of assigning all book royalty rights from

a textbook to his co-author.

CDC and HHS officials did not immediately provide a copy of his ethics agreement.

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Citation: CDC chief makes \$375K, far exceeding his predecessors' pay (2018, April 23)  
retrieved 26 April 2024 from  
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-04-cdc-chief-375k-exceeding-predecessors.html>

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