

Messi doubles MLS base salary, earns \$28M



Lionel Messi more than doubled his salary to \$25 million in his new contract with Inter Miami and earns more more than twice as much as the second-highest-paid player in Major League Soccer, Los Angeles FC's Son Heung-min.

Messi's new contract includes \$25 million in base salary and \$28,333,333 in guaranteed compensation, the MLS Players Association said Tuesday in its first release of 2026 salaries.

Miami's \$54.6 million payroll is more than \$20 million higher than LAFC, which is second at \$32.7 million, and nearly five times as much as Philadelphia's league-low \$11.7 million. Miami's payroll is up from \$46.8 million at the start of last season. Toronto cut payroll to \$21.4 million from \$34.1 million at the start of 2025, and LAFC boosted its spending to \$32.7 million from \$22.4 million.

Total league compensation was \$631 million and the average guaranteed compensation of \$688,816 on April 16 was up 8.9% from \$632,809 as of last Oct. 1.

Messi's initial MLS contract, agreed to in July 2023, included a \$12 million base salary and annualized guaranteed compensation of \$20,446,667. Messi agreed last October to a three-year contract through the 2028 season, then led the team to its first MLS title.

An attacker who turns 39 next month, Messi has 59 goals in 64 regular-season games with Miami, including nine in 11 matches this season.

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