

News

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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN SALT LAKE CITY: MAY 2008

Workers in the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.52 during May 2008 compared to the nationwide average of \$20.32, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were measurably lower than their respective national averages in 13 of the 22 major occupational groups. Only two groups, one of which was sales and related, had significantly higher wages. (For a comprehensive definition of the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see Technical Note.)

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups including office and administrative support, sales and related, and construction and extraction. Conversely, 10 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; included in this group were food preparation and serving related and education, training, and library occupations. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2008

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Average hourly wage		
	United States	Salt Lake City	United States	Salt Lake City	
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$20.32	\$19.52	*
Management	4.6	4.6	48.23	44.25	*
Business and financial operations	4.5	4.9	31.12	27.35	*
Computer and mathematical science	2.4	3.3	35.82	32.69	*
Architecture and engineering	1.9	2.1	34.34	32.00	*
Life, physical, and social science	1.0	1.0	30.90	25.76	*
Community and social services	1.4	1.0	20.09	18.32	*
Legal	0.7	0.7	44.36	47.16	
Education, training, and library	6.3	4.5	23.30	22.88	
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.8	24.36	22.33	*
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.2	4.1	32.64	31.60	
Healthcare support	2.8	2.2	12.66	12.03	*
Protective service	2.3	1.8	19.33	17.31	*
Food preparation and serving related	8.5	6.6	9.72	9.69	
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	2.9	11.72	10.95	*
Personal care and service	2.5	2.0	11.59	11.47	
Sales and related	10.6	12.3	17.35	18.55	*
Office and administrative support	17.2	20.1	15.49	14.22	*
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	11.32	12.38	*
Construction and extraction	4.8	6.0	20.36	18.05	*
Installation, maintenance, and repair	4.0	3.8	19.82	19.84	
Production	7.3	6.9	15.54	14.86	*
Transportation and material moving	7.0	7.1	15.12	15.34	

* The employment share or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group, office and administrative support, was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Salt Lake City had 127,520 jobs in office and administrative support accounting for 20.1 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the occupational group's 17.2-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for office and administrative support locally was \$14.22, measurably below the national wage of \$15.49.

Customer service representatives were the largest occupation within the office and administrative support group with employment of 18,160, followed by general office clerks (14,140), and secretaries, except legal, medical and executive (10,540). Among the higher-paying jobs were desktop publishers averaging \$19.93 an hour and production, planning, and expediting clerks at \$18.92. At the lower end of the wage scale in office and administrative support were hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks (\$9.90) and clerical library assistants (\$10.25). (Detailed occupational data for the office and administrative support group are presented in table B; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes_41620.htm.)

Table B. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, for office and administrative support occupations, Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2008

Occupation	Employment ¹	Mean wages		Median hourly wages
		Hourly	Annual ²	
Office and administrative support occupations	127,520	\$14.22	\$29,590	\$13.35
First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative support workers	7,660	20.86	43,380	19.55
Switchboard operators, including answering service	290	11.58	24,080	11.32
Telephone operators	240	12.57	26,150	12.59
Bill and account collectors	3,000	14.50	30,160	14.00
Billing and posting clerks and machine operators	2,520	14.10	29,330	13.46
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	7,400	14.75	30,680	14.53
Payroll and timekeeping clerks	660	16.56	34,450	16.40
Procurement clerks	410	16.67	34,680	16.90
Tellers	3,100	11.17	23,240	10.70
Brokerage clerks	30	16.97	35,290	17.63
Correspondence clerks	50	14.45	30,050	14.15
Court, municipal, and license clerks	790	14.23	29,590	13.73
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks	290	18.44	38,360	20.01
Customer service representatives	18,160	13.76	28,620	13.24
Eligibility interviewers, government programs	880	17.50	36,400	17.32
File clerks	720	11.90	24,750	11.69
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	770	9.90	20,580	9.68
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	1,200	12.19	25,360	11.52
Library assistants, clerical	450	10.25	21,310	9.41
Loan interviewers and clerks	2,560	15.24	31,690	14.61
New accounts clerks	410	13.80	28,700	13.58
Order clerks	2,070	14.06	29,240	12.67
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	650	16.50	34,330	15.80
Receptionists and information clerks	6,630	10.68	22,210	10.63
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks	5,750	12.60	26,200	11.59
All other information and record clerks	870	15.37	31,980	14.88
Cargo and freight agents	370	13.37	27,810	12.08
Couriers and messengers	450	12.01	24,980	11.55
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers	180	16.32	33,940	15.36
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance	910	16.95	35,250	15.04
Meter readers, utilities	170	15.65	32,560	15.18
Postal service clerks	250	23.55	48,980	24.54
Postal service mail carriers	1,020	23.03	47,900	24.12
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators	610	21.47	44,660	23.69
Production, planning, and expediting clerks	1,970	18.92	39,340	18.58
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks	3,780	13.62	28,340	12.83
Stock clerks and order fillers	7,600	11.10	23,080	10.81
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping	310	15.84	32,940	14.61
Executive secretaries and administrative assistants	5,800	18.75	38,990	17.92
Legal secretaries	1,330	18.83	39,170	18.43
Medical secretaries	3,100	12.75	26,510	12.39
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	10,540	13.72	28,540	13.75
Computer operators	570	15.09	31,390	14.08
Data entry keyers	2,920	13.66	28,400	13.44
Word processors and typists	³	18.15	37,760	17.89
Desktop publishers	110	19.93	41,450	18.17
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	1,280	14.83	30,850	14.47
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	1,050	11.10	23,080	10.77
Office clerks, general	14,140	12.04	25,040	11.57
Office machine operators, except computer	220	14.58	30,320	13.75
Proofreaders and copy markers	70	17.50	36,410	15.43
Office and administrative support workers, all other	800	14.95	31,100	13.53

¹ Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

² Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

³ Estimate not released.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Utah Department of Workforce Services. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and up to 801 non-military detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas.

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Salt Lake City metropolitan area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands also are surveyed, but their data are not included in this release. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2008 survey was 78.2 percent based on establishments and 74.3 percent based on employment. The survey included establishments sampled in the May 2008, November 2007, May 2007, November 2006, May 2006, and November 2005 semiannual panels. The sample in the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area included 3,691 establishments with a response rate of 75 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm>.

Effective with this news release, the Occupational Employment Statistics program has switched the basis for their industry classification from the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to the 2007 NAICS. Historical data were not revised.

Metropolitan Statistical Area definition

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated December 2005.

Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of Salt Lake, Summit, and Tooele Counties in Utah.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro7/home.htm. If you have additional questions, contact the Mountain-Plains Economic Analysis and Information Office at 816-285-7000. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.