



For release 10:00 a.m. (ET) Friday, January 16, 2026

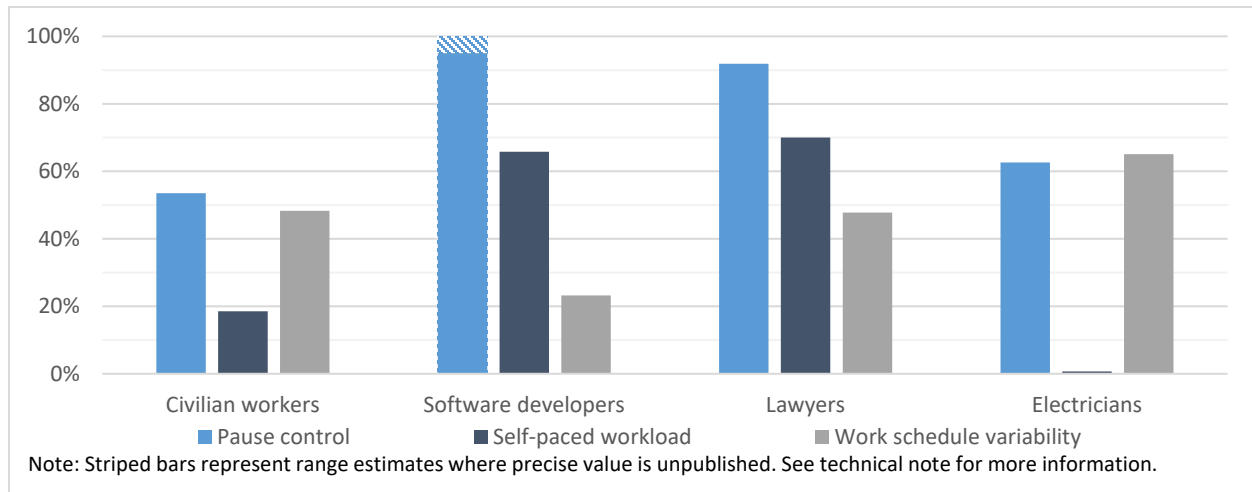
USDL-26-0047

Technical information: (202) 691-6199 • orsinfo@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/ors
 Media contact : (202) 691-5902 • pressoffice@bls.gov

OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES – 2025

The ability to pause work was present for 53.5 percent of workers in 2025, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Pause control provides the ability of a worker to take short, unscheduled breaks. In 2025, greater than 95 percent of software developers had the ability to pause work. The ability to pause work was present for 91.9 percent of lawyers and 62.6 percent of electricians. (See chart 1 and table 1.)

Chart 1. Percentage of workers by cognitive and mental requirements, 2025



Control of workload identifies who or what most determines how much work a worker must complete in a set period of time. A self-paced workload is present when the workload is mostly self-directed within general performance guidelines, allowing the worker significant discretion to vary timing of tasks within certain limits. In 2025, 18.5 percent of workers had a self-paced workload. Among software developers, 65.8 percent had a self-paced workload, while 70.0 percent of lawyers and 0.7 percent of electricians were self-paced.

Work schedule variability is present if the employer changes the work schedule, requiring workers to report on different days or times, or work a different number of hours from week to week. Varying work schedules were present for 48.3 percent of workers. In 2025, 23.2 percent of software developers and 47.8 percent of lawyers had work schedule variability present. Work schedule variability was present for 65.1 percent of electricians.

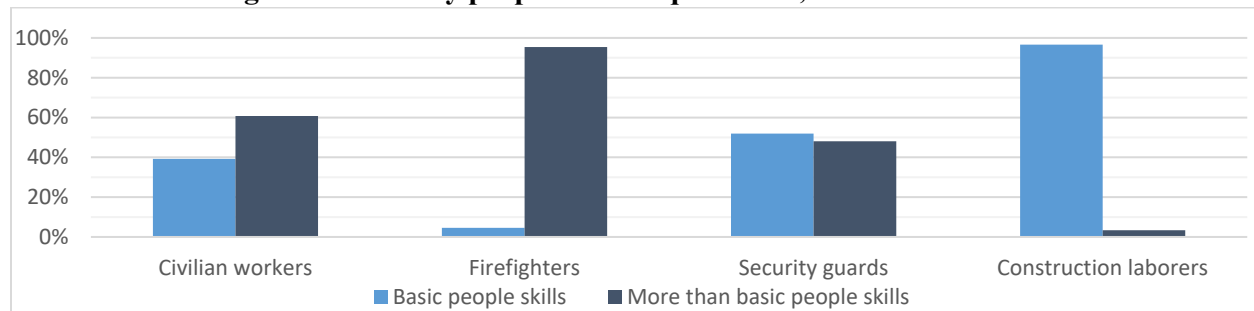
The Occupational Requirements Survey provides information on job requirements in the following categories: physical demands; environmental conditions; education, training, and experience; as well as cognitive and mental requirements. Each category is highlighted below.

Cognitive and mental requirements

People skills are the ability to listen, communicate, and relate to others. Basic people skills are present when workers have limited contact with others or engage in only simple, brief work-related communications, while more than basic people skills include anything more than simple communication with others. Basic people skills were required for 39.2 percent of workers and 60.8 percent required more than basic. (See chart 2 and table 2.)

- More than basic people skills were required for 95.4 percent of firefighters.
- More than basic people skills were required for 3.4 percent of construction laborers.

Chart 2. Percentage of workers by people skills requirement, 2025

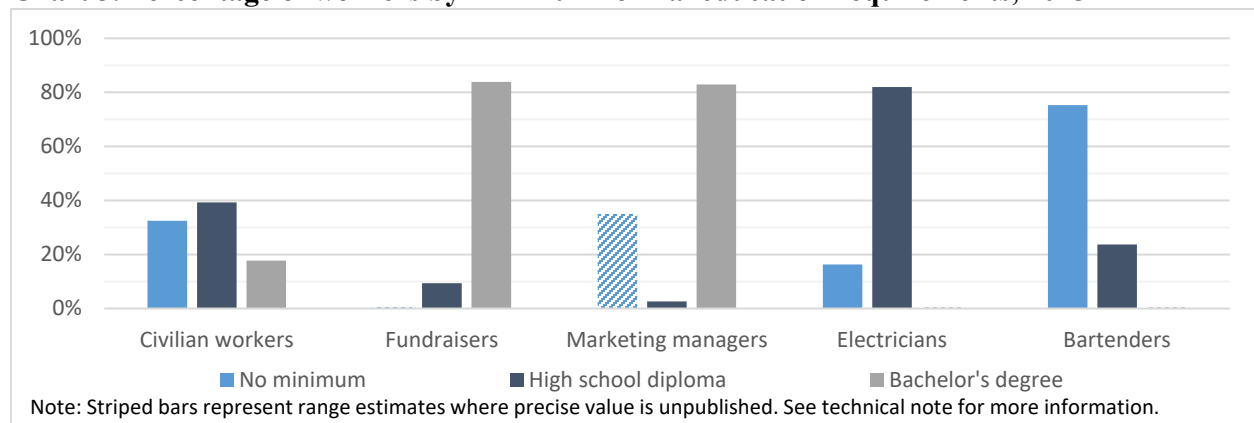


Education, training, and experience

Minimum formal education measures the minimum level of formal coursework resulting in a degree required as a condition of hire for a job, excluding general education. No minimum formal education was required for 32.5 percent of workers, 39.3 percent required a high school diploma, and 17.7 percent required a bachelor’s degree in 2025. (See chart 3 and table 3.)

- A high school diploma was required for 82.0 percent of electricians and 23.7 percent of bartenders.
- A bachelor’s degree was required for 83.9 percent of fundraisers and 82.9 percent of marketing managers.

Chart 3. Percentage of workers by minimum formal education requirements, 2025



Physical demands

On average, civilian workers spent 44.9 percent of the workday sitting and 55.1 percent standing. Waiters and waitresses spent 1.4 percent of the workday sitting, and civil engineers spent 76.6 percent of the workday sitting. (See chart 4 and table 4.)

- On average, pharmacists spent 27.7 percent of the workday sitting and 72.3 percent of the workday standing.
- On average, dental assistants spent 49.6 percent of the workday sitting and 50.4 percent of the workday standing.

Chart 4. Percentage of workday required to sit and stand, 2025

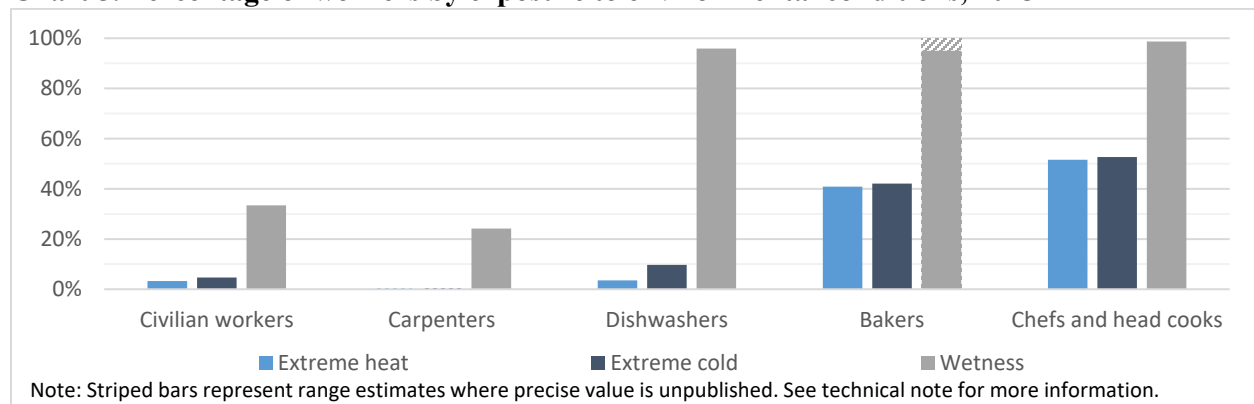


Environmental conditions

Environmental conditions consider the required exposure of workers to various conditions. Exposure to extreme heat, extreme cold, and wetness are considered non-weather-related conditions to which workers are exposed. Extreme heat was present for 3.3 percent of workers in 2025. Extreme cold was present for 4.7 percent of workers and 33.4 percent were exposed to wetness. (See chart 5 and table 5.)

- Exposure to extreme heat was present for 3.5 percent of dishwashers, 40.9 percent of bakers, and 51.6 percent of chefs and head cooks.
- Exposure to extreme cold was present for 9.7 percent of dishwashers, 42.1 percent of bakers, and 52.7 percent of chefs and head cooks.

Chart 5. Percentage of workers by exposure to environmental conditions, 2025



Technical Note

The Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS) provides job-related information about the physical demands; environmental conditions; education, training, and experience; as well as cognitive and mental requirements in the U.S. economy.

Additional job requirement estimates are available at www.bls.gov/web/ors/ors-complete-dataset.xlsx and www.bls.gov/ors/data.htm. For information on estimation concepts and methods, see the Handbook of Methods at www.bls.gov/pub/hom/ors/home.htm and www.bls.gov/ors/questions-and-answers.htm. Some estimates in this release have been provided as ranges. Ranges represent estimates where the precise value cannot be published. More information is available in the range estimates factsheet at www.bls.gov/ors/factsheet/range-estimates.htm.

Sample size: The ORS is a nationally representative establishment-based survey. Estimates are produced from a probability sample of 27,100 establishments. There were 10,700 private industry and 2,200 state and local government responding establishments that provided approximately 50,600 occupational observations. The 2025 estimates represent 148,672,800 civilian workers. The 2025 estimates are the aggregate of two annual samples collected between August 2023 and July 2025 as part of the third wave of ORS. Estimates are preliminary until the entire third wave sample is collected and aggregated to produce final estimates.

Standard errors: To assist users in ascertaining the reliability of ORS estimates, standard errors are made available with the release. Standard errors provide users a measure of the precision of an estimate to ensure that it is within an acceptable range for their intended purpose. Collected and imputed data are included in the standard error calculation. For further information on standard errors and how to use them, see www.bls.gov/ors/se.htm.

Limitations: Estimates are subject to sampling error, which may cause the sampled results to differ from the true value of job requirements in all establishments, see the Handbook of Methods for more information. The ORS program advises against making comparisons with previously published ORS estimates. ORS estimates are not time series data and instead reflect job requirements for the published reference period.

Major terms: Below are selected major terms from the news release. For complete terms and definitions, see the collection manual at www.bls.gov/ors/information-for-survey-participants/pdf/occupational-requirements-survey-collection-manual-third-wave.pdf.

- **Critical job function** is the main purpose and the primary pay factor for the job. It consists of critical tasks that are integral to the job.
- **Critical tasks** are the activities workers must perform to carry out their critical job function.
- **Pause control** considers if a worker has the flexibility to choose or control how and when they can take short, unscheduled breaks.
- **Work schedule variability** is present if the employer changes the work schedule, requiring workers to report on different days or times, or work a different number of hours from week to week.

Table 1. Percentage of workers by cognitive and mental requirements, 2025

Occupation and occupational group	Pause control		Self-paced workload		Work schedule variability	
	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error
All workers	53.5	0.9	18.5	0.5	48.3	0.8
Management occupations	97.0	0.6	88.5	1.1	28.0	2.2
Marketing managers	>99.5	[15]	99.2	0.7	23.6	13.8
Business and financial operations occupations	97.7	0.7	58.8	2.8	27.9	2.5
Fundraisers	>99.5	[15]	87.7	7.8	-	-
Computer and mathematical occupations	94.4	1.7	44.1	4.9	27.6	3.6
Software developers	>95	[15]	65.8	15.6	23.2	4.9
Architecture and engineering occupations	97.2	1.3	55.8	6.0	28.1	3.8
Civil engineers	>99.5	[15]	46.0	14.8	25.0	12.3
Legal occupations	93.4	2.5	41.9	5.1	37.9	9.4
Lawyers	91.9	4.3	70.0	6.0	47.8	12.3
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	27.2	4.1	3.5	0.7	45.3	6.6
Pharmacists	37.1	12.6	19.0	11.9	58.9	11.6
Healthcare support occupations	32.8	5.7	<0.5	[15]	58.3	2.7
Dental assistants	21.1	9.8	<0.5	[15]	40.3	3.8
Protective service occupations	12.8	1.3	3.4	0.9	55.7	4.2
Firefighters	<5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	92.2	2.1
Security guards	4.7	1.6	<0.5	[15]	27.8	4.9
Food preparation and serving related occupations	21.2	1.7	1.6	[6]	78.8	1.2
Chefs and head cooks	56.8	8.3	21.6	6.0	56.2	6.6
Bartenders	20.3	9.3	<0.5	[15]	83.2	4.9
Waiters and waitresses	18.9	5.0	<0.5	[15]	90.3	2.7
Dishwashers	36.7	5.0	<0.5	[15]	78.9	4.5
Construction and extraction occupations	56.7	5.2	8.6	2.2	65.5	3.6
Carpenters	79.1	8.4	<0.5	[15]	-	-
Construction laborers	39.6	4.5	<0.5	[15]	73.8	4.0
Electricians	62.6	11.4	0.7	0.5	65.1	10.4
Production occupations	40.5	3.2	5.3	2.1	57.3	1.4
Bakers	35.5	12.7	<0.5	[15]	52.7	9.8

[6] Standard error is less than 0.5.

[15] The standard error is not available for this estimate.

Note: Dashes indicate that the estimate was not publishable or there are no workers with the requirement. Due to rounding sum of estimates may not equal 100 percent.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

Table 2. Percentage of workers by people skills requirement, 2025

Occupation and occupational group	Basic people skills		More than basic people skills	
	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error
All workers	39.2	0.6	60.8	0.6
Management occupations	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Marketing managers	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Business and financial operations occupations	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Fundraisers	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Computer and mathematical occupations	1.5	0.6	98.5	0.6
Software developers	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Architecture and engineering occupations	2.9	0.5	97.1	0.5
Civil engineers	<5	[15]	>95	[15]
Legal occupations	<5	[15]	>95	[15]
Lawyers	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	1.7	0.6	98.3	0.6
Pharmacists	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Healthcare support occupations	40.4	5.3	59.6	5.3
Dental assistants	29.6	6.6	70.4	6.6
Protective service occupations	29.1	5.4	70.9	5.4
Firefighters	4.6	2.7	95.4	2.7
Security guards	51.9	9.6	48.1	9.6
Food preparation and serving related occupations	82.8	1.3	17.2	1.3
Chefs and head cooks	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Bartenders	62.7	4.2	37.3	4.2
Waiters and waitresses	80.0	5.9	20.0	5.9
Dishwashers	>99.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Construction and extraction occupations	57.9	3.7	42.1	3.7
Carpenters	67.9	12.5	32.1	12.5
Construction laborers	96.6	1.4	3.4	1.4
Electricians	42.3	9.5	57.7	9.5
Production occupations	78.1	1.6	21.9	1.6
Bakers	96.9	1.1	3.1	1.1

[15] The standard error is not available for this estimate.

Note: Dashes indicate that the estimate was not publishable or there are no workers with the requirement. Due to rounding sum of estimates may not equal 100 percent.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

Table 3. Percentage of workers by minimum formal education requirements, 2025

Occupation and occupational group	No minimum		High school diploma		Bachelor's degree	
	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error
All workers	32.5	0.8	39.3	0.7	17.7	0.5
Management occupations	4.6	0.8	28.7	1.8	51.5	2.1
Marketing managers	<35	[15]	2.6	2.0	82.9	11.7
Business and financial operations occupations	1.9	[6]	28.0	2.0	63.1	2.2
Fundraisers	<0.5	[15]	9.4	5.9	83.9	9.2
Computer and mathematical occupations	6.3	1.8	27.2	2.4	52.3	4.6
Software developers	<10	[15]	12.6	3.8	75.8	8.3
Architecture and engineering occupations	2.8	2.3	15.4	3.6	67.1	3.9
Civil engineers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	94.5	5.2
Legal occupations	0.8	0.5	24.0	5.8	10.8	2.8
Lawyers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	<0.5	[15]	21.4	2.6	19.1	3.4
Pharmacists	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	3.8	1.7
Healthcare support occupations	30.7	2.1	63.8	2.9	0.8	0.5
Dental assistants	5.8	0.9	86.7	2.9	<0.5	[15]
Protective service occupations	13.4	1.0	81.4	1.4	1.8	[6]
Firefighters	<10	[15]	92.8	2.5	<0.5	[15]
Security guards	12.6	2.4	87.4	2.4	<0.5	[15]
Food preparation and serving related occupations	81.6	2.1	17.8	2.2	<0.5	[15]
Chefs and head cooks	46.7	10.2	34.3	5.1	4.0	2.4
Bartenders	75.3	5.6	23.7	5.2	<0.5	[15]
Waiters and waitresses	80.3	8.0	19.7	8.0	<0.5	[15]
Dishwashers	93.5	2.8	6.5	2.8	<0.5	[15]
Construction and extraction occupations	49.3	2.3	49.6	2.5	0.6	[6]
Carpenters	63.2	8.7	36.8	8.7	<0.5	[15]
Construction laborers	82.0	5.0	18.0	5.0	<0.5	[15]
Electricians	16.3	6.1	82.0	4.8	<0.5	[15]
Production occupations	48.5	2.7	48.1	2.5	1.2	0.7
Bakers	52.4	13.1	46.7	13.2	<0.5	[15]

[6] Standard error is less than 0.5.

[15] The standard error is not available for this estimate.

Note: Dashes indicate that the estimate was not publishable or there are no workers with the requirement. Due to rounding sum of estimates may not equal 100 percent.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

Table 4. Percentage of workday required to sit and stand, 2025

Occupation and occupational group	Sitting		Standing	
	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error
All workers	44.9	[6]	55.1	[6]
Management occupations	74.8	1.2	25.2	1.2
Marketing managers	93.2	2.8	6.8	2.8
Business and financial operations occupations	89.8	0.7	10.2	0.7
Fundraisers	85.6	2.9	14.4	2.9
Computer and mathematical occupations	91.1	0.8	8.9	0.8
Software developers	97.1	1.3	2.9	1.3
Architecture and engineering occupations	69.9	3.5	30.1	3.5
Civil engineers	76.6	9.4	23.4	9.4
Legal occupations	87.7	1.5	12.3	1.5
Lawyers	86.4	2.7	13.6	2.7
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	39.5	1.6	60.5	1.6
Pharmacists	27.7	8.0	72.3	8.0
Healthcare support occupations	33.4	0.9	66.6	0.9
Dental assistants	49.6	3.5	50.4	3.5
Protective service occupations	42.7	1.2	57.3	1.2
Firefighters	43.3	2.3	56.7	2.3
Security guards	38.1	2.0	61.9	2.0
Food preparation and serving related occupations	2.8	[6]	97.2	[6]
Chefs and head cooks	11.2	1.5	88.8	1.5
Bartenders	1.7	0.7	98.3	0.7
Waiters and waitresses	1.4	[6]	98.6	[6]
Dishwashers	1.8	0.6	98.2	0.6
Construction and extraction occupations	20.5	1.0	79.5	1.0
Carpenters	5.8	2.5	94.2	2.5
Construction laborers	10.8	2.0	89.2	2.0
Electricians	11.3	1.1	88.7	1.1
Production occupations	16.7	1.4	83.3	1.4
Bakers	-	-	98.9	0.6

[6] Standard error is less than 0.5.

[15] The standard error is not available for this estimate.

Note: Sitting estimates includes time spent sitting, lying down, and when workers have the choice between sitting and standing.

Note: Standing estimates includes time spent standing, walking, and in low postures.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

Table 5. Percentage of workers by exposure to environmental conditions, 2025

Occupation and occupational group	Extreme heat		Extreme cold		Wetness	
	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error	Estimate	Standard error
All workers	3.3	[6]	4.7	[6]	33.4	0.8
Management occupations	<0.5	[15]	1.6	[6]	4.7	0.6
Marketing managers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<10	[15]
Business and financial operations occupations	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	0.6	[6]
Fundraisers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Computer and mathematical occupations	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Software developers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Architecture and engineering occupations	1.9	1.4	<5	[15]	9.0	3.9
Civil engineers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<45	[15]
Legal occupations	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Lawyers	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	92.8	1.5
Pharmacists	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	73.1	9.5
Healthcare support occupations	3.2	1.3	<0.5	[15]	96.2	1.6
Dental assistants	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	>99.5	[15]
Protective service occupations	13.3	2.5	2.0	1.2	24.9	3.7
Firefighters	98.7	[6]	14.4	7.0	>99.5	[15]
Security guards	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]
Food preparation and serving related occupations	15.7	1.0	31.9	2.3	91.9	0.7
Chefs and head cooks	51.6	5.6	52.7	12.1	98.7	0.8
Bartenders	<0.5	[15]	24.2	5.5	94.5	3.6
Waiters and waitresses	<0.5	[15]	4.9	1.5	93.8	1.7
Dishwashers	3.5	1.5	9.7	4.8	95.9	3.2
Construction and extraction occupations	4.2	1.5	<0.5	[15]	34.3	4.5
Carpenters	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	24.2	9.7
Construction laborers	<5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	41.4	7.6
Electricians	<0.5	[15]	<0.5	[15]	<10	[15]
Production occupations	10.4	1.9	6.2	1.7	23.5	2.4
Bakers	40.9	10.3	42.1	11.9	>95	[15]

[6] Standard error is less than 0.5.

[15] The standard error is not available for this estimate.

Note: Dashes indicate that the estimate was not publishable or there are no workers with the requirement. Due to rounding sum of estimates may not equal 100 percent.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey