

## Credentials

The Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS) publishes job-related information on physical demands; environmental conditions; education, training, and experience; as well as cognitive and mental requirements. The job requirements reflect those necessary for workers to perform critical tasks in support of the critical job functions, and not the capabilities of individual workers.

Credentials include training time required as a condition of hiring, which often results in certifications, licenses, or educational certificates and are part of the education, training, and experience requirements.

The published estimates reflect the percentage of workers with credential requirements and the time necessary to obtain them.

Credential requirements include:

- Certifications which are issued by a certification body, industry association, or professional association and acknowledge that occupation specific skills and abilities exist. Certifications expire if not renewed.
- Educational certificates which are issued by an educational institution (or a training provider) and certify that an occupation specific program of study was completed. Educational certificates typically do not expire.
- Licenses which are issued by a government agency and constitute a legal authority to perform a specific occupation. Similar to a certification, a license expires if not renewed.

Apprenticeships, vocational training, non-credit courses, and credit courses that do not result in a degree are included in credential requirements. These credentials are included in overall credential requirements but are not separately published. When workers are expected to obtain credentials to perform critical job tasks, these requirements are included in estimates.

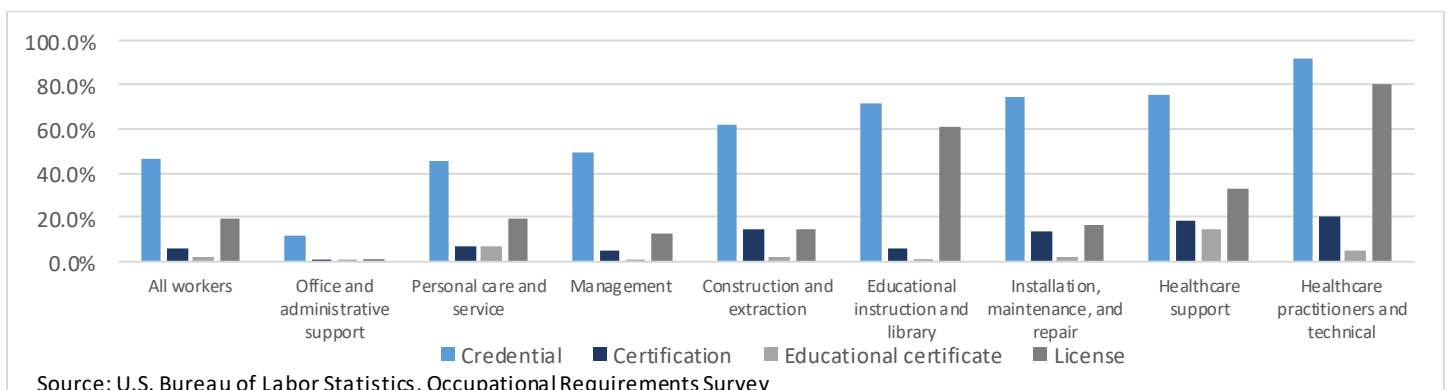
Not all credentials are included in the ORS estimates. Instances where:

- credentials are desirable but are not required,
- credentials are part of the hiring criteria but are not associated with any critical job tasks, and
- certificates of attendance or participation for training that is not vocationally relevant are not included in credential requirement estimates.

In 2021, 46.1 percent of civilian workers were required to have a credential where 5.8 percent had a certification requirement and 19.4 percent had a license requirement.

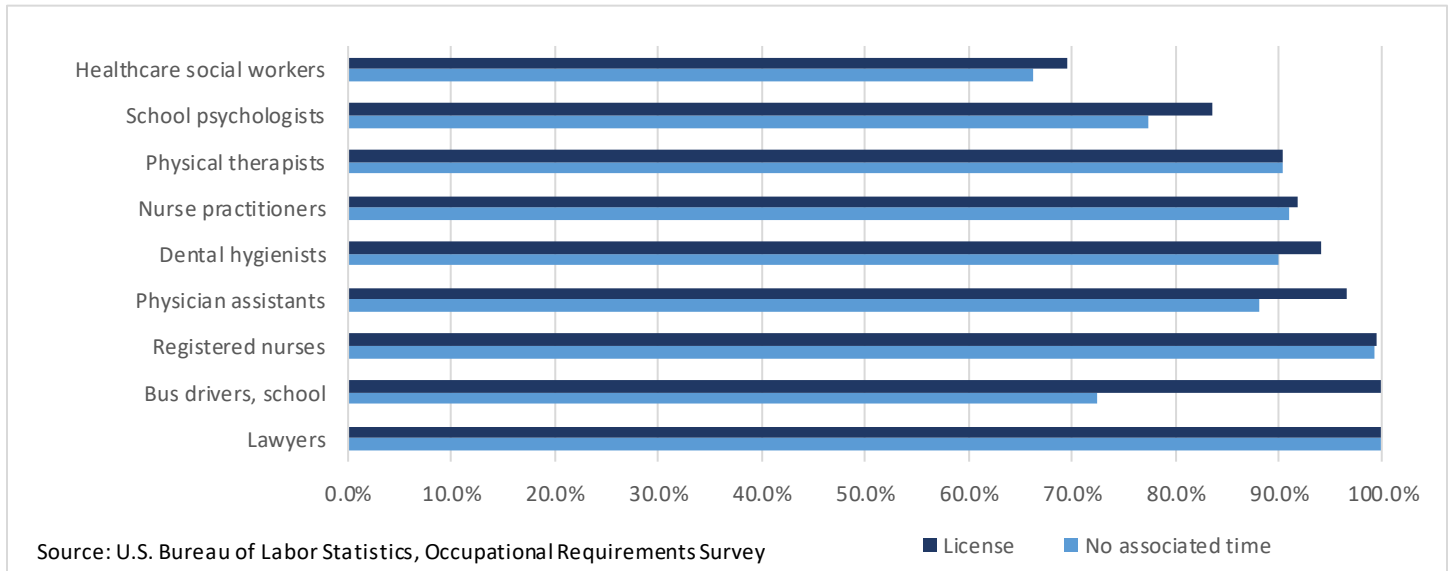
Among published occupational groups, credential requirements ranged from 11.6 percent for workers in office and administrative support occupations to 92.1 percent for workers in healthcare practitioners and technical occupations. (See Chart A.)

**Chart A. Percentage of civilian workers with credential requirements by occupational group, 2021**



Estimates reflect the length of time necessary to obtain the required credentials. In some instances, the duration of individual credentials cannot be separated from other education, training, and experience requirements. For example, lawyers have degrees included as part of the criteria for obtaining licenses so there is no separate time from the degree requirement. When this occurs, it is included as concurrent time (published as no associated time) with the other education, training, or experience requirements as appropriate. (See Chart B.)

**Chart B. Percentage of workers with license and no associated time requirements, 2021**



The percentage of workers with credential requirements are published along with the associated length of time necessary to obtain the credential when the time is separate from other education, training, and experience requirements. For example, a license was required for 66.5 percent of nursing assistants. For 27.4 percent of these workers, obtaining a license required time in addition to other education, training, and experience. No associated time was required for 39.1 percent of nursing assistants required to obtain a license.

Percentile estimates for associated time provide a range of time required to obtain the credential. For example, at the 10th percentile, electricians had 1,440 days (almost four years) associated with license requirements. While at the 90th percentile, the associated time for the license requirement was 1,825 days (five years). (See Table 1.)

**Table 1. Percentage of workers with license requirements and associated number of days, 2021**

Occupation	Required	Associated time	Number of days				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	90th percentile
Nursing assistants	66.5%	27.4%	9.4	9.4	15.0	31.5	-
Security guards	65.5%	51.9%	1.0	1.0	-	4.0	6.8
Pharmacy technicians	64.9%	12.3%	7.5	-	120.0	125.0	270.0
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	99.9%	8.8%	187.5	-	360.0	365.0	365.0
Hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists	100.0%	46.3%	150.0	150.0	187.5	200.0	-
Electricians	39.5%	27.9%	-	1440.0	1460.0	1825.0	1825.0

Note: Dash indicates estimate did not meet publication criteria.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Requirements Survey

#### Additional resources:

- [Latest news release](#)
- [Archived ORS news releases](#)
- [Handbook of Methods](#)
- [Collection manuals](#)
- [Factsheets](#)

#### Articles:

- [Use of personal protective equipment to mitigate noise exposure in 2020](#)
- [Civilian occupations required to spend the most time outdoors in 2020](#)
- [Sitting and standing requirements in 2020](#)
- [Job requirements for animal caretakers on National Mutt Day](#)
- [Three-fourths of workers had to interact with the public in 2019; 4.3 percent worked around crowds](#)
- [Physical requirements in food preparation and serving jobs](#)
- [Job requirements and wages for auto mechanics in 2018](#)
- [Occupational requirements and benefits for nurses in the United States in 2018](#)
- [All The Economics Daily \(TED\) articles on ORS](#)
- [A look at teachers' job requirements, employer costs, and benefits \(PDF\)](#)
- [Occupational Requirements Survey: results from a job observation pilot test](#)
- [The Occupational Requirements Survey: estimates from preproduction testing](#)

For additional information on occupational requirements see the [ORS homepage](#) or download the [ORS complete dataset](#) to explore the latest estimates.