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MID-ATLANTIC INFORMATION OFFICE: Philadelphia, Pa.

Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic

Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

Occupational Employment and Wages in Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington – May 2015

Workers in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$25.20 in May 2015, 8 percent above the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly higher than their respective national averages in 12 of the 22 major occupational groups, including construction and extraction; management; and sales and related.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Philadelphia employment shares were significantly higher in 10 of the 22 occupational groups including business and financial operations, office and administrative support, and healthcare practitioners and technical. Conversely, nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included production; food preparation and serving related; and construction and extraction. (See [table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
	United States	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington		United States	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington		
Total, all occupations	100%	100%		\$23.23	\$25.20	*	8
Management	5.0	4.5	*	55.30	64.75	*	17
Business and financial operations	5.1	6.2	*	35.48	37.44	*	6
Computer and mathematical	2.9	3.3	*	41.43	41.65		1
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.6	*	39.89	40.21		1
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	1.0	*	34.24	35.48		4
Community and social service	1.4	2.0	*	22.19	22.02		-1
Legal	0.8	1.1	*	49.74	51.54		4
Education, training, and library	6.2	6.8	*	25.48	27.76	*	9
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.1	*	27.39	27.20		-1
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.6	*	37.40	38.79	*	4
Healthcare support	2.9	3.6	*	14.19	14.11		-1
Protective service	2.4	2.4		21.45	21.56		1
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	8.0	*	10.98	11.08		1
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.1		13.02	14.16	*	9
Personal care and service	3.1	3.7	*	12.33	12.72	*	3
Sales and related	10.5	10.5		18.90	21.19	*	12
Office and administrative support	15.8	16.8	*	17.47	18.42	*	5
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	*	12.67	13.47	*	6
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.1	*	22.88	27.23	*	19

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington metropolitan area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington		United States	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.6	*	22.11	23.85	*	8
Production	6.6	4.7	*	17.41	19.27	*	11
Transportation and material moving	6.9	6.1	*	16.90	17.04		1

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment 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—life, physical, and social science—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Philadelphia had 28,680 jobs in the life, physical, and social science group, accounting for 1.0 percent of local area employment, significantly larger than the 0.8-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$35.48, close to the national average of \$34.24.

With employment of 4,510, medical scientists, except epidemiologists, was the largest detailed occupation within life, physical, and social science, followed by clinical, counseling, and school psychologists (2,960). Among the higher-paying jobs were physicists with a mean hourly wage of \$59.16 and economists with a wage of \$47.96. At the lower end of the wage scale were social science research assistants (\$20.23) and environmental science and protection technicians, including health (\$21.89). (Detailed occupational data for life, physical, and social science are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_37980.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area as it does nationally. In the Philadelphia area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the life, physical, and social science group. For instance, biochemists and biophysicists were employed at 1.9 times the national rate in Philadelphia, and survey researchers at 3.2 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, social science research assistants had a location quotient of 1.0 in Philadelphia, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

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 Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry; the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development; the Delaware Department of Labor; and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the issuance of data for May 2015, the OES program has incorporated redefined metropolitan area definitions as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. OES data are available for 394 metropolitan areas, 38 metropolitan divisions, and 167 OES-defined nonmetropolitan areas. A listing of the areas and their definitions can be found at www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm.

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. The OES program produces employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations for all industries combined in the nation; the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 432 metropolitan areas and divisions; 167 nonmetropolitan areas; and Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. National estimates are also available by industry for NAICS sectors, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industries, and by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm.

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2015 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, and November 2012. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 73.5 percent based on establishments and 69.6 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.9 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington Metropolitan Statistical Area included 16,160 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2015 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Metropolitan area definitions

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

The **Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at <https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic>. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment ⁽²⁾		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Life, physical, and social science occupations	28,680	1.3	\$35.48	\$73,790
Food scientists and technologists	190	0.7	35.21	73,230
Soil and plant scientists	90	0.3	27.96	58,160
Biochemists and biophysicists	1,150	1.9	43.54	90,570
Microbiologists	(5)	(5)	35.84	74,540
Zoologists and wildlife biologists	(5)	(5)	28.48	59,240
Biological scientists, all other	380	0.6	37.92	78,870
Conservation scientists	220	0.6	28.92	60,150
Foresters	(5)	(5)	35.32	73,470
Epidemiologists	90	0.8	33.62	69,930
Medical scientists, except epidemiologists	4,510	2.2	45.70	95,050
Life scientists, all other	60	0.3	42.00	87,360
Physicists	140	0.5	59.16	123,040
Atmospheric and space scientists	50	0.3	47.96	99,750
Chemists	(5)	(5)	40.69	84,630
Materials scientists	230	1.7	40.66	84,570
Environmental scientists and specialists, including health	1,440	0.8	40.57	84,390
Geoscientists, except hydrologists and geographers	(5)	(5)	38.21	79,480
Hydrologists	70	0.5	39.71	82,590
Physical scientists, all other	240	0.6	47.86	99,550
Economists	220	0.6	47.96	99,760
Survey researchers	880	3.2	25.12	52,250
Clinical, counseling, and school psychologists	2,960	1.4	36.93	76,820
Psychologists, all other	290	1.2	42.47	88,340
Sociologists	70	1.2	37.80	78,620
Urban and regional planners	890	1.3	34.75	72,280
Anthropologists and archeologists	(5)	(5)	35.78	74,430
Historians	70	1.1	29.99	62,380
Social scientists and related workers, all other	260	0.4	37.52	78,040
Agricultural and food science technicians	90	0.2	18.67	38,830
Biological technicians	2,330	1.6	22.48	46,750
Chemical technicians	2,460	1.9	23.62	49,130
Geological and petroleum technicians	110	0.3	22.73	47,280
Nuclear technicians	(5)	(5)	34.76	72,300
Social science research assistants	580	1.0	20.23	42,070
Environmental science and protection technicians, including health	350	0.5	21.89	45,530
Forensic science technicians	180	0.7	23.49	48,870
Life, physical, and social science technicians, all other ..	1,490	1.0	23.60	49,090

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington Metropolitan Statistical Area, see https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_37980.htm

(2) 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.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) 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.

(5) Estimates not available.