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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 Roanoke – May 2017

Workers in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.93 in May 2017, 14 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that after testing for statistical significance, 20 of the 22 major occupational groups had average wages in the local area that were significantly lower than their respective national averages, including arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; legal; and construction and extraction.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment shares were significantly higher in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including health care practitioners and technical and protective service. Conversely, 10 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation including management; computer and mathematical; and personal care and service. (See [Table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
	United States	Roanoke		United States	Roanoke		
Total, all occupations	100	100		\$24.34	\$20.93		-14
Management	5.1	3.0	*	57.65	49.88	*	-13
Business and financial operations	5.2	4.5	*	36.70	32.07	*	-13
Computer and mathematical	3.0	1.6	*	43.18	36.62	*	-15
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.3	*	41.44	35.02	*	-15
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.5	*	35.76	31.37	*	-12
Community and social service	1.5	1.7	*	23.10	21.16	*	-8
Legal	0.8	0.6	*	51.62	39.07	*	-24
Education, training, and library	6.1	5.2		26.67	21.57	*	-19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	1.0	*	28.34	21.41	*	-24
Healthcare practitioners and technical	6.0	8.1	*	38.83	39.63		2
Healthcare support	2.9	3.5	*	15.05	14.27	*	-5
Protective service	2.4	3.5	*	22.69	17.87	*	-21
Food preparation and serving related	9.3	8.6	*	11.88	10.03	*	-16
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.1	3.0		13.91	11.92	*	-14
Personal care and service	3.6	2.7	*	13.11	11.54	*	-12
Sales and related	10.2	10.8		19.56	18.36	*	-6
Office and administrative support	15.4	16.3	*	18.24	16.57	*	-9
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.2	*	13.87	14.26		3
Construction and extraction	4.0	4.1		24.01	18.78	*	-22
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.5	*	23.02	21.31	*	-7
Production	6.3	7.3		18.30	17.16	*	-6

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Roanoke		United States	Roanoke		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Transportation and material moving.....	7.0	7.9	*	17.82	16.03	*	-10

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area 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—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Roanoke had 24,850 jobs in the office and administrative support occupations, accounting for 16.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 15.4-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$16.57, significantly lower than the national average of \$18.24.

With employment of 3,600, general office clerks was the largest occupation within the office and administrative support group, followed by customer service representatives (2,810). Among the higher-paying jobs in this group were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers with a mean hourly wage of \$25.86 and postal service mail carriers with a wage of \$24.25. At the lower end of the wage scale were hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks (\$9.71) and stock clerks and order fillers (\$12.25). (Detailed occupational data for office and administrative support are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_40220.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 Roanoke area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, loan interviewers and clerks were employed at 2.4 times the national rate in Roanoke, and insurance claims and policy processing clerks at 2.8 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, customer service representatives had a location quotient of 1.0 in Roanoke, 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 Virginia Employment Commission.

Note on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.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 survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels; and national estimates 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. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,792 establishments with a response rate of 75 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm.

The May 2017 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2017 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 2017 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 **Roanoke, VA Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke Counties and Roanoke and Salem Cities in Virginia.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at 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, Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment ⁽²⁾		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	24,850	1.1	\$16.57	\$34,470
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	1,650	1.1	25.86	53,800
Switchboard operators, including answering service.....	30	0.4	12.60	26,200
Bill and account collectors.....	370	1.3	15.35	31,920
Billing and posting clerks.....	440	0.9	16.80	34,940
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.....	1,770	1.1	17.58	36,560
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	250	1.5	18.86	39,230
Procurement clerks.....	100	1.4	16.48	34,280
Tellers.....	680	1.3	14.38	29,910
Brokerage clerks.....	70	1.1	20.07	41,760
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	120	0.9	17.60	36,610
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks.....	40	1.2	15.45	32,140
Customer service representatives.....	2,810	1.0	15.76	32,780
Eligibility interviewers, government programs.....	260	1.7	19.08	39,700
File clerks.....	100	0.8	11.39	23,680
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks.....	260	1.0	9.71	20,190
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan.....	340	1.7	14.86	30,910
Library assistants, clerical.....	80	0.8	10.90	22,660
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	590	2.4	18.05	37,550
New accounts clerks.....	100	2.2	18.84	39,180
Order clerks.....	240	1.3	14.05	29,230
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping.....	160	1.1	14.28	29,700
Receptionists and information clerks.....	1,320	1.2	12.29	25,550
Information and record clerks, all other.....	180	1.1	18.39	38,240
Cargo and freight agents.....	90	0.9	(5)	(5)
Couriers and messengers.....	50	0.6	12.33	25,650
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers.....	150	1.5	18.33	38,130
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	230	1.1	16.12	33,530
Meter readers, utilities.....	30	0.9	13.74	28,570
Postal service clerks.....	70	0.8	23.96	49,830
Postal service mail carriers.....	350	1.0	24.25	50,440
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators.....	270	2.3	23.52	48,920
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	380	1.1	21.59	44,910
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	580	0.8	16.11	33,500
Stock clerks and order fillers.....	2,500	1.1	12.25	25,480
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping.....	60	0.8	16.48	34,280
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants.....	330	0.5	25.82	53,710
Legal secretaries.....	130	0.6	18.86	39,230
Medical secretaries.....	310	0.5	16.48	34,270
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	2,160	0.9	15.60	32,450
Data entry keyers.....	160	0.8	13.43	27,940
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks.....	830	2.8	19.76	41,090
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service.....	210	2.3	11.36	23,620
Office clerks, general.....	3,600	1.1	15.13	31,470
Office machine operators, except computer.....	(5)	(5)	17.65	36,710
Office and administrative support workers, all other.....	170	0.7	17.48	36,360

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Roanoke MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_40220.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.

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

(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.