



For Release: Friday, June 24, 2016

16-1294-DAL

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Occupational Employment and Wages in Laredo, May 2015

Workers in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$16.85 in May 2015, about 27 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical; sales and related; and personal care and service. Only one local group, protective service, had wages that were measurably higher than the national average.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including personal care and service; office and administrative support; and transportation and material moving. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production; healthcare practitioners and technical; and computer and mathematical. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Laredo		United States	Laredo	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$23.23	\$16.85	* -27
Management	5.0	3.2	*	55.30	42.59	* -23
Business and financial operations	5.1	3.0	*	35.48	32.32	* -9
Computer and mathematical	2.9	0.7	*	41.43	26.28	* -37
Architecture and engineering	1.8	0.5	*	39.89	29.83	* -25
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.3	*	34.24	27.05	* -21
Community and social service	1.4	1.1	*	22.19	21.92	-1
Legal	0.8	0.4	*	49.74	37.96	* -24
Education, training, and library	6.2	8.1	*	25.48	19.65	* -23
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.7	*	27.39	19.92	* -27
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	3.4	*	37.40	38.67	3
Healthcare support	2.9	2.3	*	14.19	12.10	* -15
Protective service	2.4	4.5	*	21.45	23.52	* 10
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	10.2	*	10.98	9.37	* -15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.5	*	13.02	9.98	* -23
Personal care and service	3.1	7.7	*	12.33	8.82	* -28
Sales and related	10.5	12.3	*	18.90	13.31	* -30
Office and administrative support	15.8	20.0	*	17.47	14.00	* -20
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	NA		12.67	NA	NA
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.1	*	22.88	18.81	* -18

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
	United States	Laredo		United States	Laredo		
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.5		22.11	16.33	*	-26
Production	6.6	1.5	*	17.41	15.10	*	-13
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	10.9	*	16.90	14.73	*	-13

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

Note: * 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.

NA: estimate is not available.

One occupational group – office and administrative support – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Laredo had 19,310 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 20.0 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 15.8-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At \$14.00 an hour, the mean wage for Laredo office and administrative support workers was 20 percent below the \$17.47 national average.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included general office clerks (4,160), customer service representatives (1,730), and secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (1,590). Among the higher paying jobs were executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants as well as first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, with mean hourly wages of \$24.10 and \$23.26, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were receptionists and information clerks (\$10.29) and stock clerks and order fillers (\$10.32). (Detailed data for office and administrative support occupations are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all detailed occupations see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29700.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 than it does nationally. In the Laredo metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, local cargo and freight agents were employed at 14.8 times the U.S. average, and dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance, at 6.3 times the national rate. Both location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, stock clerks and order fillers had a location quotient of 1.0 in Laredo, indicating that this 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 Texas Workforce Commission.

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 Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,154 establishments with a response rate of 62 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 **Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Webb County in Texas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. 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, Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations	19,310	1.3	\$14.00	\$29,120
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	1,290	1.3	23.26	48,380
Switchboard operators, including answering service.....	50	0.7	11.30	23,510
Bill and account collectors.....	320	1.4	15.89	33,040
Billing and posting clerks.....	700	2.0	14.30	29,740
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.....	960	0.9	15.68	32,620
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	160	1.4	13.42	27,920
Tellers.....	580	1.7	11.49	23,890
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	170	1.9	17.54	36,490
Customer service representatives.....	1,730	1.0	12.22	25,410
Eligibility interviewers, government programs.....	160	1.7	15.93	33,120
File clerks.....	90	0.9	11.35	23,610
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks.....	170	1.0	8.87	18,450
Library assistants, clerical.....	80	1.1	11.36	23,630
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	70	0.5	16.67	34,680
New accounts clerks.....	100	2.9	14.62	30,400
Order clerks.....	130	1.0	17.23	35,840
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping.....	90	1.0	14.23	29,590
Receptionists and information clerks.....	440	0.7	10.29	21,410
Information and record clerks, all other.....	120	0.9	12.93	26,900
Cargo and freight agents.....	840	14.8	17.16	35,690
Couriers and messengers.....	130	2.5	9.80	20,370
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	860	6.3	16.62	34,560
Postal service mail carriers.....	120	0.5	25.51	53,060
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	220	1.0	15.37	31,960
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	1,040	2.2	12.11	25,180
Stock clerks and order fillers.....	1,380	1.0	10.32	21,470
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants.....	190	0.4	24.10	50,120
Legal secretaries.....	(5)	(5)	17.51	36,420
Medical secretaries.....	540	1.5	12.59	26,180
Secretaries & administrative assistants, except legal, medical, & executive.....	1,590	1.0	12.91	26,850
Data entry keyers.....	(5)	(5)	10.37	21,580
Office clerks, general.....	4,160	2.0	12.54	26,080

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Laredo MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29700.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 released.