



For Release: Friday, July 08, 2016

16-1426-DAL

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Occupational Employment and Wages in New Orleans–Metairie, May 2015

Workers in the New Orleans-Metairie Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.85 in May 2015, about 10 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 16 of the 22 major occupational groups, including protective service; computer and mathematical; and business and financial operations. Local wages were measurably higher than their respective national averages in 4 groups, including production; architecture and engineering; and transportation and material moving.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 9 of the 22 occupational groups, including food preparation and serving related; transportation and material moving; and sales and related. Conversely, employment shares were significantly below their national representation in 11 groups, including computer and mathematical; production; and business and financial operations. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage		
	United States	New Orleans-Metairie		United States	New Orleans-Metairie	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations.....	100.0%	100.0%		\$23.23	\$20.85	* -10
Management.....	5.0	4.7	*	55.30	47.64	* -14
Business and financial operations.....	5.1	4.0	*	35.48	29.98	* -16
Computer and mathematical.....	2.9	1.2	*	41.43	33.37	* -19
Architecture and engineering.....	1.8	1.9		39.89	45.00	* 13
Life, physical, and social science.....	0.8	0.6	*	34.24	34.32	0
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.2	*	22.19	19.64	* -11
Legal.....	0.8	0.9	*	49.74	46.74	-6
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	5.5	*	25.48	23.11	* -9
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	1.8	*	27.39	25.79	* -6
Healthcare practitioners and technical.....	5.8	6.6	*	37.40	32.40	* -13
Healthcare support.....	2.9	2.3	*	14.19	12.40	* -13
Protective service.....	2.4	3.2	*	21.45	17.20	* -20
Food preparation and serving related.....	9.1	11.6	*	10.98	9.87	* -10
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance..	3.2	3.0		13.02	11.44	* -12
Personal care and service.....	3.1	2.9	*	12.33	10.72	* -13

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie 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	New Orleans-Metairie	*	United States	New Orleans-Metairie	*	
Sales and related.....	10.5	11.5	*	18.90	16.67	*	-12
Office and administrative support.....	15.8	14.8	*	17.47	15.86	*	-9
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	12.67	17.74	*	40
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	4.8	*	22.88	20.46	*	-11
Installation, maintenance, and repair.....	3.9	4.6	*	22.11	21.13	*	-4
Production.....	6.6	4.9	*	17.41	21.73	*	25
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	8.0	*	16.90	18.72	*	11

⁽¹⁾ A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in New Orleans-Metairie 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.

One occupational group—transportation and material moving—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. New Orleans had 44,440 jobs in transportation and material moving, accounting for 8.0 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.9-percent national share. The local average hourly wage for this occupational group was \$18.72, about 11 percent above the national average of \$16.90.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the transportation and material moving group included hand laborers and freight, stock, and material movers (13,190), heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (5,700), and light truck or delivery services drivers (3,240). Among the higher paying jobs were captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, as well as ship engineers, with mean hourly wages of \$48.84 and \$40.18, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were parking lot attendants (\$9.27) and cleaners of vehicles and equipment (\$10.70). (Detailed occupational data for transportation and material moving are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all detailed occupations, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.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 New Orleans metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the transportation and material moving group. For instance, sailors and marine oilers were employed at 22.8 times the national average in New Orleans, and captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, at 22.7 times the U.S. rate. Ship engineers also had a double-digit location quotient at 15.4. These location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, light truck or delivery services drivers had a location quotient of 1.0 in New Orleans, 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 Louisiana 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 New Orleans-Metairie Metropolitan Statistical Area included 4,172 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 **New Orleans-Metairie Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Jefferson, Orleans,

Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes in Louisiana.

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, New Orleans-Metairie Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	44,440	1.2	\$18.72	\$38,940
Aircraft cargo handling supervisors.....	50	1.9	26.50	55,110
First-line supervisors of helpers, laborers, and material movers, hand... ..	1,070	1.5	24.32	50,580
First-line supervisors of transportation and material-moving machine and vehicle operators.....	1,260	1.5	29.38	61,110
Commercial pilots.....	80	0.5	⁽⁵⁾	85,010
Bus drivers, transit and intercity.....	1,080	1.6	17.18	35,740
Bus drivers, school or special client.....	1,260	0.6	12.43	25,860
Driver/sales workers.....	1,380	0.8	12.83	26,680
Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers.....	5,700	0.8	19.67	40,920
Light truck or delivery services drivers.....	3,240	1.0	16.50	34,320
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs.....	1,260	1.7	10.68	22,210
Motor vehicle operators, all other.....	280	1.3	14.77	30,720
Sailors and marine oilers.....	2,820	22.8	21.10	43,880
Captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels.....	3,030	22.7	48.84	101,580
Ship engineers.....	620	15.4	40.18	83,580
Bridge and lock tenders.....	100	7.8	15.39	32,020
Parking lot attendants.....	940	1.6	9.27	19,270
Automotive and watercraft service attendants.....	420	0.9	14.47	30,110
Traffic technicians.....	120	4.3	19.60	40,770
Transportation inspectors.....	90	0.9	29.62	61,610
Transportation attendants, except flight attendants.....	150	2.4	13.00	27,040
Transportation workers, all other.....	330	2.1	14.89	30,960
Conveyor operators and tenders.....	360	2.7	17.65	36,710
Crane and tower operators.....	880	4.7	24.95	51,890
Dredge operators.....	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾	17.89	37,200
Excavating and loading machine and dragline operators.....	100	0.5	21.19	44,080
Industrial truck and tractor operators.....	1,740	0.8	16.42	34,140
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment.....	980	0.7	10.70	22,260
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand.....	13,190	1.3	12.43	25,860
Machine feeders and offbearers.....	30	0.1	12.87	26,770
Packers and packagers, hand.....	650	0.2	11.36	23,630
Pump operators, except wellhead pumpers.....	60	1.2	25.19	52,400
Refuse and recyclable material collectors.....	340	0.7	13.20	27,450
Tank car, truck, and ship loaders.....	280	5.8	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾
Material moving workers, all other.....	130	1.4	17.88	37,190

⁽¹⁾ For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the New Orleans-Metairie MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.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.