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Occupational Employment and Wages in Spokane-Spokane Valley — May 2016

Workers in the Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$22.12 in May 2016, about 7 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.86, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 10 of the 22 major occupational groups, including legal; management; and computer and mathematical. Seven groups had significantly higher wages than their respective national averages, including construction and extraction; personal care and service; and production.

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

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Spokane	United States	Spokane	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$23.86	\$22.12*	-7
Management	5.1	4.3*	56.74	47.68*	-16
Business and financial operations.....	5.2	4.7*	36.09	31.20*	-14
Computer and mathematical	3.0	1.9*	42.25	34.12*	-19
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.2*	40.53	34.26*	-15
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.7*	35.06	28.48*	-19
Community and social service.....	1.4	2.1*	22.69	21.77*	-4
Legal.....	0.8	0.5*	50.95	37.10*	-27
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	6.3	26.21	23.70*	-10
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.4	1.5	28.07	21.49*	-23
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	6.8*	38.06	38.64	2
Healthcare support	2.9	3.4*	14.65	15.56*	6
Protective service	2.4	2.1*	22.03	23.69	8
Food preparation and serving related	9.2	9.2	11.47	12.27*	7
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance ...	3.2	3.5	13.47	14.39*	7
Personal care and service.....	3.2	3.7*	12.74	13.76*	8
Sales and related	10.4	11.1*	19.50	18.13*	-7
Office and administrative support.....	15.7	16.6*	17.91	17.73	-1
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.2*	13.37	19.32*	45
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	4.2*	23.51	24.66*	5
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.8	22.45	22.93	2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2016 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Spokane	United States	Spokane	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Production	6.5	5.5*	17.88	18.82*	5
Transportation and material moving	6.9	6.6	17.34	17.20	-1

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Spokane-Spokane Valley 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—healthcare practitioners and technical—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Spokane-Spokane Valley had 15,420 jobs in healthcare practitioners and technical, accounting for 6.8 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 5.9-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$38.64, compared to the national wage of \$38.06.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group included registered nurses (5,700), pharmacists (690), and licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (690). Among the higher paying jobs were surgeons and obstetricians and gynecologists, with mean hourly wages of \$135.23 and \$109.12, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were emergency medical technicians and paramedics (\$14.33) and dietetic technicians (\$14.83). (Detailed occupational data for healthcare practitioners and technical are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2016/may/oes_44060.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 Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group. For instance, medical and clinical laboratory technologists were employed at 2.0 times the national rate in Spokane, and medical and clinical laboratory technicians, at 1.8 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, speech-language pathologists had a location quotient of 0.9 in Spokane, 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 Washington Employment Security Department.

Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

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 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 2016 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, and November 2013. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 73 percent based on establishments and 69 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,373 establishments with a response rate of 77 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2016 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 **Spokane-Spokane Valley, Wash. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/west. 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, Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2016

Occupation (1)	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level (2)	Location quotient (3)	Hourly	Annual (4)
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	15,420	1.2	\$38.64	\$80,370
Chiropractors	40	0.7	37.48	77,950
Dentists, general	130	0.8	81.04	168,570
Dietitians and nutritionists	100	1.1	28.08	58,410
Optometrists	80	1.3	62.20	129,370
Pharmacists	690	1.4	56.00	116,470
Anesthesiologists	(5)	(5)	67.25	139,880
Family and general practitioners	60	0.3	80.35	167,120
Internists, general	50	0.6	108.97	226,650
Obstetricians and gynecologists	(5)	(5)	109.12	226,960
Surgeons	(5)	(5)	135.23	281,270
Physicians and surgeons, all other	520	1.0	85.45	177,730
Physician assistants	120	0.7	56.60	117,740
Occupational therapists	260	1.4	35.28	73,370
Physical therapists	500	1.4	45.03	93,660
Recreational therapists	40	1.4	22.88	47,590
Respiratory therapists	360	1.8	31.12	64,730
Speech-language pathologists	200	0.9	32.84	68,300
Veterinarians	140	1.2	44.82	93,220
Registered nurses	5,700	1.2	38.73	80,560
Nurse anesthetists	(5)	(5)	106.60	221,720
Nurse practitioners	180	0.8	55.31	115,040
Health diagnosing and treating practitioners, all other	90	1.6	41.09	85,460
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists	530	2.0	35.19	73,190
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians	470	1.8	22.57	46,940
Dental hygienists	560	1.7	39.93	83,060
Cardiovascular technologists and technicians	120	1.4	31.19	64,870
Diagnostic medical sonographers	170	1.6	38.93	80,980
Nuclear medicine technologists	40	1.3	39.42	81,980
Radiologic technologists	510	1.6	31.25	64,990
Magnetic resonance imaging technologists	(5)	(5)	33.14	68,930
Emergency medical technicians and paramedics	160	0.4	14.33	29,800
Dietetic technicians	90	1.8	14.83	30,840
Pharmacy technicians	570	0.9	19.84	41,270
Surgical technologists	270	1.6	26.37	54,850
Veterinary technologists and technicians	120	0.8	15.78	32,820
Ophthalmic medical technicians	120	1.7	17.65	36,710
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	690	0.6	23.96	49,840
Medical records and health information technicians	390	1.2	18.87	39,240
Opticians, dispensing	170	1.4	18.66	38,810
Hearing aid specialists	(5)	(5)	33.60	69,890
Health technologists and technicians, all other	310	1.6	26.01	54,110
Occupational health and safety specialists	110	0.9	31.11	64,710
Healthcare practitioners and technical workers, all other	110	2.0	34.46	71,670

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Spokane-Spokane Valley Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_44060.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) Estimate not released.