

Differences in employment composition help explain differences in State average wages.

Figure 19 Wages and percent of employment by selected State and occupational group, May 2006

Occupational composition varies by State.

- Virginia had one of the highest concentrations of business and financial operations occupations and one of the lowest concentrations of healthcare support occupations, and West Virginia had one of the lowest concentrations of business and financial operations occupations and one of the highest concentrations of health care support occupations.
- California had one of the highest employment concentrations of arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations, and one of the lowest employment concentrations of installation, maintenance, and repair occupations. West Virginia and Louisiana, on the other hand, had the opposite distribution.

State	Occupational group											
	Mean hourly wage	Business and financial operations	Computer and mathematical science	Life, physical, and social science	Education, training, and library	Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	Health-care support	Protective service	Food preparation and serving	Construction and extraction	Production	Transportation and material moving
United States	\$18.84	4.4	2.3	0.9	6.2	1.3	2.6	2.3	8.3	5.0	7.7	7.3
Alabama	16.08	3.2	1.8	0.5	5.6	0.9	2.5	2.2	8.0	5.3	11.9	8.4
Arkansas	14.84	3.0	1.2	0.6	6.0	0.7	2.7	1.9	7.9	4.3	13.0	10.9
Colorado	19.93	5.2	3.5	1.3	5.5	1.4	1.9	2.1	8.9	6.4	4.7	6.2
Florida	17.22	4.6	1.9	0.6	5.0	1.2	2.5	2.6	9.4	6.5	4.5	6.6
Hawaii	18.57	3.9	1.4	1.0	6.5	1.6	2.2	3.2	11.9	5.1	3.0	7.0
Idaho	16.73	3.3	1.7	1.6	5.6	1.2	2.7	1.8	8.1	6.6	6.5	7.5
Indiana	16.92	3.1	1.3	0.6	5.6	1.0	2.3	1.8	8.8	4.9	13.7	9.0
Kentucky	16.10	2.9	1.3	0.6	6.0	0.9	2.7	2.0	8.7	4.8	11.8	8.9
Massachusetts	22.76	5.3	3.6	1.5	6.7	1.5	3.0	2.2	8.2	3.7	5.6	5.2
Michigan	19.82	4.6	2.2	0.8	6.1	1.2	2.9	1.9	8.4	3.8	10.8	6.9
Nebraska	16.49	4.2	2.4	0.9	6.0	1.2	2.8	1.5	8.3	4.8	9.0	8.8
Nevada	17.31	3.1	1.1	0.6	3.8	1.3	1.5	2.9	12.8	9.7	3.6	8.0
New Hampshire	18.87	4.4	2.6	0.7	7.3	0.9	2.4	1.7	8.4	4.1	7.9	5.7
New Mexico	16.34	3.0	1.5	1.2	6.9	1.0	2.6	2.8	9.6	7.9	4.3	5.8
North Carolina	17.08	3.5	2.1	1.0	6.4	0.9	3.2	2.1	8.4	4.9	10.5	7.9
Oklahoma	15.66	3.7	1.8	0.9	6.6	1.0	3.0	2.3	8.3	5.5	8.1	7.0
Pennsylvania	18.07	4.5	2.0	1.0	6.1	1.1	3.1	2.0	8.2	4.2	8.3	7.8
South Dakota	14.65	3.7	1.4	0.9	5.8	1.3	2.8	1.5	10.2	5.6	7.9	7.5
Utah	17.09	4.2	2.7	1.2	5.7	1.4	2.2	1.7	7.3	7.4	8.0	6.9
Washington	20.63	4.6	3.4	1.6	5.8	1.4	2.5	1.8	8.6	5.5	6.2	7.5
Wisconsin	17.66	4.2	1.8	0.9	5.6	1.2	2.9	1.8	8.6	4.2	12.6	8.2

See Web site for full table containing all States and occupations.



Some of the highest-paying States (The District of Columbia, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, and Alaska) have high employment concentrations of community and social services; legal; education, training, and library; arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; and protective service occupations.

Some of the lowest-paying States (Mississippi, South Dakota, Montana, West Virginia, North Dakota, and Louisiana) have relatively high employment concentrations of food preparation and serving; and installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.