

# Metropolitan area occupational wages, 1999

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) collects wage and salary data for about 450 occupations throughout the country. Generally, earnings are higher on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts than in the middle of the country. In 1999, average hourly wages for all workers ranged from \$11.15 in Brownsville, TX,

**Computer systems analysts and scientists.** These workers perform logical analysis of business, scientific, engineering, and other technical problems and formulate models of those problems for solution by computer. Average hourly earnings range from \$19.60 in Tallahassee, FL, to \$37.21 in San Francisco, CA.

**Financial managers.** These are management and management related occupations in the financial field of banking, trust companies, credit agencies, investment agencies, and so forth. Workers in this occupational category are concerned with the management of financial affairs. Average hourly earnings range from \$21.67 in Dayton, OH, to \$45.92 in New York, NY.

**Registered nurses.** These workers provide medical care and carry out treatment plans prescribed by physicians; observe, evaluate, and record symptoms, reactions, and progress of patients; and perform other duties involving care of the sick and injured. A license is required to practice professional nursing. Average hourly earnings range from \$17.56 in Mobile, AL, to \$30.05 in San Francisco, CA.

**Secretaries.** These workers schedule appointments, give information to callers, take and transcribe dictation, compose

and type routine correspondence, and otherwise relieve officials of clerical work and minor administrative and business details. Average hourly earnings range from \$9.73 in Brownsville, TX, to \$17.21 in San Francisco, CA.

**Truck drivers.** These workers drive trucks of all capacities to transport materials in liquid or packaged form and personnel to and from specified destinations. They may position blocks and tie rope around items to secure cargo during transit. They also may verify load against shipping papers. Average hourly earnings range from \$9.35 in Corpus Christie, TX, to \$19.33 in Minneapolis, MN.

**Nursing aides, orderlies and attendants.** These are workers involved in providing auxiliary services in the routine care of patients. Orderlies are primarily concerned with the care of male patients, setting up equipment, and relieving nurses of heavier work. Average hourly earnings range from \$6.59 in Amarillo, TX, to \$11.35 in Hartford, CT.

**Janitors and cleaners.** Workers in these occupations are involved in keeping buildings in clean and orderly condition. They perform routine maintenance activities, notify management of the need for repairs and additions, and clear snow or debris from sidewalks. Average hourly earnings range from \$6.59 in Augusta, GA, to \$12.31 in Detroit, MI.

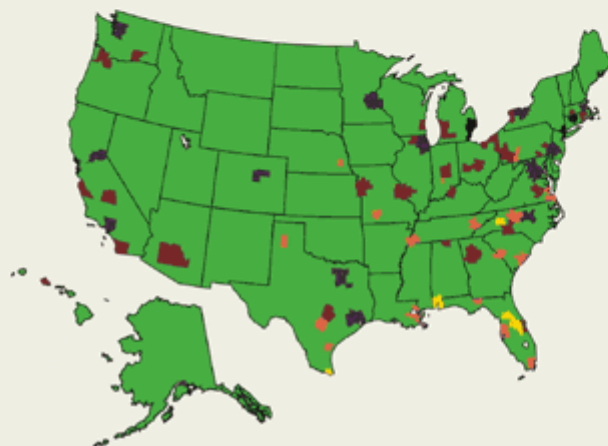
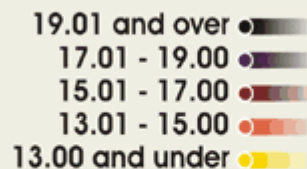


# Selected occupational wages by metropolitan area, 1990-1999

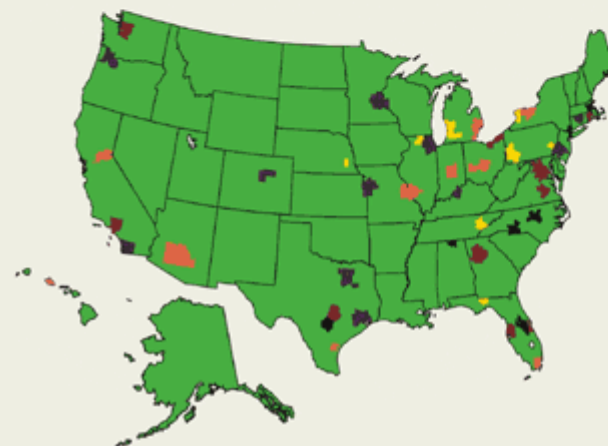
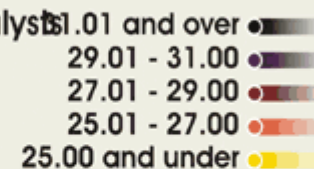
The general local wage level is an important piece of information for urban planners and local economic development officials. Average wages for most metropolitan areas fall into a class between \$13 and \$19 per hour. The exceptions on the high end tend to be in the Northeast, while those on the low end are concentrated in the Southeast.

For individual workers, the location of higher wages in one's own occupation can be important. Computer system analysts or truck drivers, for examples, might be interested in finding those places where their occupation has its highest wages.

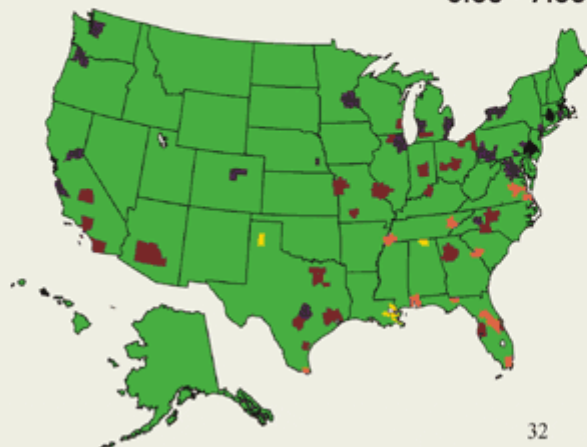
## All Workers



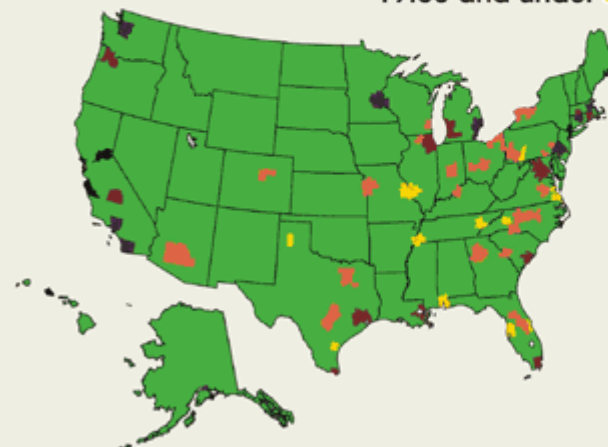
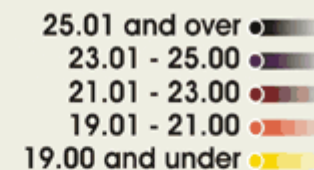
## Computer System Analysts



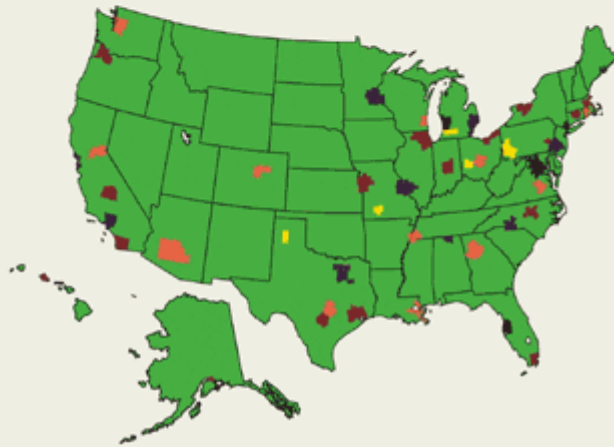
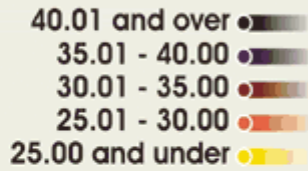
## Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants



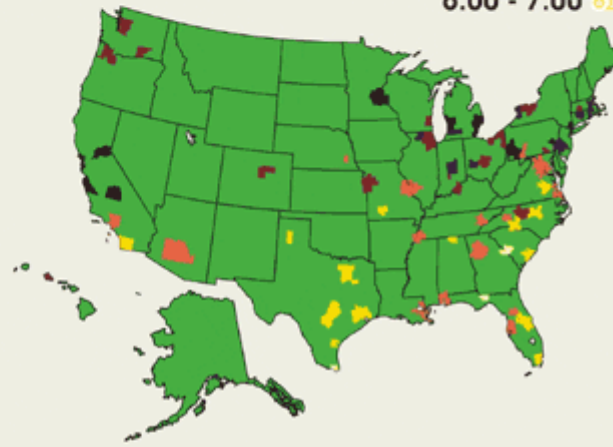
## Registered Nurses



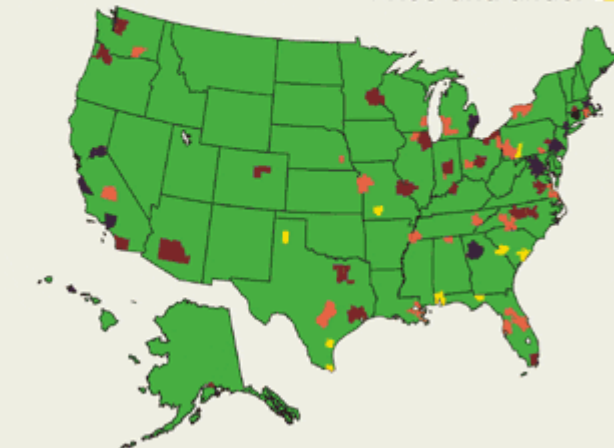
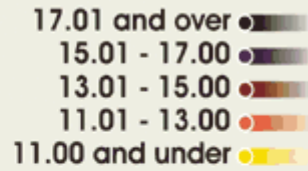
### Financial Managers



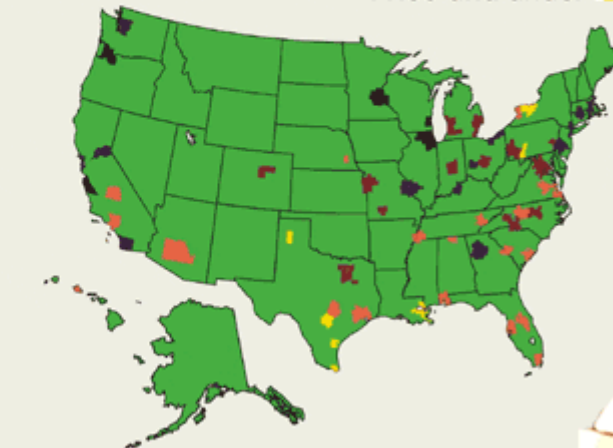
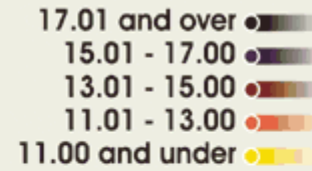
### Janitors



### Secretaries



### Truck Drivers



# The National Compensation Survey

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) provides data on employee wages, salaries, and benefits derived from a survey of establishments. It produces data at local levels, for broad regions, and for the Nation as a whole. NCS covers civilian workers in private industry and state and local government in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The sample consists of 35,000 establishments with one or more workers, in 154 geographic areas.

BLS chooses establishments for NCS using probability techniques based on employment, industry, and geographic location. For purposes of this survey, an establishment is an economic unit that produces goods or services, a central administrative office, or an auxiliary unit providing support services to a company. Occupations within each establishment also are chosen through probability selection. Probability selection of occupations is designed to obtain a statistically representative sample of occupations for both a survey area and nationwide.

NCS data come from payroll reports and job descriptions. NCS compiles data on hourly earnings (wages and salaries) by occupation, and work levels within occupations. Data are presented by:

1. Sector of the economy (private industry and state and local government)
2. Selected worker characteristics, such as full-time and part-time status, and bargaining status
3. Various establishment characteristics, including industry and employment size, national, regional,

and local area wage data are available in printed publications, which can be found on the BLS website at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/home.htm>. The same website also contains a Public Data Query application that provides average wage levels when the data user selects an area, occupation, and work level within the occupation.

#### Wages and salaries include—

- incentive pay
- cost-of-living adjustments
- hazard pay

#### Wages and salaries exclude—

- premium pay for overtime, vacations, and holidays
- nonproduction bonuses
- shift differentials
- tips

The NCS produces a variety of compensation measures in addition to data on average wages. These include:

1. The Employment Cost Index (ECI) a quarterly measure of change in employer costs for employee compensation (wages, salaries, and the employers' costs for employee benefits), as well as annual data on cost levels
2. Data on the incidence and detailed characteristics of employer-provided benefits, such as health insurance and retirement benefits

Additional information can be obtained by calling (202) 691-6199 or sending e-mail to [ocltinfo@bls.gov](mailto:ocltinfo@bls.gov).

