

SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE
Dallas, Texas

For release: Wednesday, May 23, 2012

12-1041-DAL

Contact information: (972) 850-4800 • BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/ro6

**OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN
LITTLE ROCK-NORTH LITTLE ROCK-CONWAY, MAY 2011**

Workers in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.15 in May 2011, about 12 percent below the nationwide average of \$21.74, 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 significantly lower than their respective national averages in 20 of the 22 major occupational groups.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2011

| Major occupational group | Percent of total employment | | Mean hourly wage | | |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | United States | Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway | United States | Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway | Percent difference ¹ |
| Total, all occupations | 100.0% | 100.0% | \$21.74 | \$19.15 * | -12 |
| Management | 4.8 | 5.0 | 51.64 | 42.29 * | -18 |
| Business and financial operations | 4.8 | 4.7 | 33.05 | 27.46 * | -17 |
| Computer and mathematical | 2.7 | 2.8 | 37.85 | 28.68 * | -24 |
| Architecture and engineering | 1.8 | 1.2 * | 37.08 | 29.83 * | -20 |
| Life, physical, and social science | 0.8 | 0.7 * | 32.44 | 25.24 * | -22 |
| Community and social service | 1.5 | 1.4 | 21.07 | 18.95 * | -10 |
| Legal | 0.8 | 1.0 * | 47.30 | 34.47 * | -27 |
| Education, training, and library | 6.6 | 5.9 * | 24.46 | 22.95 | -6 |
| Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media | 1.3 | 1.0 * | 25.89 | 21.43 * | -17 |
| Healthcare practitioners and technical | 5.9 | 7.8 * | 34.97 | 31.51 * | -10 |
| Healthcare support | 3.1 | 3.3 | 13.16 | 11.36 * | -14 |
| Protective service | 2.5 | 2.3 * | 20.54 | 16.49 * | -20 |
| Food preparation and serving related | 8.7 | 8.3 * | 10.30 | 9.32 * | -10 |
| Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance | 3.3 | 3.2 | 12.29 | 10.45 * | -15 |
| Personal care and service | 2.8 | 2.4 * | 11.84 | 10.59 * | -11 |
| Sales and related | 10.6 | 10.5 | 18.04 | 16.21 * | -10 |
| Office and administrative support | 16.7 | 18.1 * | 16.40 | 14.83 * | -10 |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry | 0.3 | 0.1 * | 11.68 | 14.57 * | 25 |
| Construction and extraction | 3.9 | 3.8 | 21.46 | 17.41 * | -19 |
| Installation, maintenance, and repair | 3.9 | 4.2 | 20.86 | 18.02 * | -14 |
| Production | 6.5 | 5.4 * | 16.45 | 14.59 * | -11 |
| Transportation and material moving | 6.7 | 6.9 | 15.96 | 15.34 * | -4 |

* 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.

¹ A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 3 of the 22 occupational groups: healthcare practitioners and technical; office and administrative support; and legal. Conversely, nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including: production; education, training, and library; and architecture and engineering. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

One occupational group—healthcare practitioners and technical—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway had 25,860 jobs in healthcare practitioners and technical, accounting for 7.8 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 5.9-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$31.51, measurably below the national wage of \$34.97.

With employment of 9,330, registered nurses was the largest occupation within the healthcare practitioners and technical group, followed by licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (3,320). Among the higher paying jobs were family and general practitioners with mean hourly earnings of \$109.58 and surgeons at \$109.00. At the lower end of the wage scale were pharmacy technicians (\$12.65) and medical and clinical laboratory technicians (\$16.07). (Detailed occupational data for the healthcare practitioners and technical group are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of all detailed occupations go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_30780.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 Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area, above average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group. For instance, respiratory therapy technicians were employed at 3.8 times the national rate in Little Rock, and speech language pathologists, at 2.4 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, medical records and health information technicians had a location quotient of 1.0 in Little Rock, 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 Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and nearly 800 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas.

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

NOTE: 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. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands also are surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2011 survey was 77.3 percent based on establishments and 73.3 percent based on employment. May 2011 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2011, November 2010, May 2010, November 2009, May 2009, and November 2008. The sample in the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,843 establishments with a response rate of 80 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2011 OES estimates mark the first set of estimates based in part on data collected using the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Nearly all the occupations in this release are 2010 SOC occupations; however, some are not. The May 2012 OES data will reflect the full set of detailed occupations in the 2010 SOC. For a list of all occupations, including 2010 SOC occupations, and how data collected on two structures were combined, see the OES Frequently Asked Questions online at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm#Ques41.

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 **Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Faulkner, Grant, Lonoke, Perry, Pulaski, and Saline Counties in Arkansas.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro6. If you have additional questions, contact the Southwest Information Office at (972) 850-4800. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1 (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2011

| Occupation ¹ | Employment | | Mean wages | |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| | Level ² | Location quotient ³ | Hourly | Annual ⁴ |
| Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations | 25,860 | 1.3 | \$31.51 | 65,530 |
| Chiropractors | 40 | 0.6 | 55.14 | 114,680 |
| Dentists, general | 280 | 1.2 | 85.45 | 177,730 |
| Dietitians and nutritionists | 190 | 1.3 | 25.29 | 52,590 |
| Optometrists | [5] | [5] | 51.18 | 106,460 |
| Pharmacists | 940 | 1.3 | 50.57 | 105,200 |
| Family and general practitioners | 410 | 1.6 | 109.58 | 227,930 |
| Obstetricians and gynecologists | [5] | [5] | [6] | [6] |
| Psychiatrists | [5] | [5] | 67.87 | 141,170 |
| Surgeons | 140 | 1.3 | 109.00 | 226,720 |
| Physicians and surgeons, all other | 1,430 | 1.8 | 74.50 | 154,960 |
| Physician assistants | 40 | 0.2 | 25.47 | 52,980 |
| Registered nurses* | 9,330 | 1.3 | 28.46 | 59,200 |
| Occupational therapists | 420 | 1.6 | 36.66 | 76,260 |
| Physical therapists | 560 | 1.2 | 38.61 | 80,300 |
| Radiation therapists | 60 | 1.3 | 35.85 | 74,570 |
| Recreational therapists | 140 | 2.7 | 16.85 | 35,040 |
| Respiratory therapists | 310 | 1.1 | 24.72 | 51,420 |
| Speech-language pathologists | 720 | 2.4 | 33.34 | 69,340 |
| Veterinarians | 90 | 0.6 | 35.49 | 73,810 |
| Audiologists | 30 | 1.0 | 29.17 | 60,680 |
| Medical and clinical laboratory technologists | 660 | 1.6 | 24.75 | 51,480 |
| Medical and clinical laboratory technicians | 680 | 1.7 | 16.07 | 33,420 |
| Dental hygienists | 360 | 0.8 | 28.68 | 59,650 |
| Cardiovascular technologists and technicians | 110 | 0.8 | 24.81 | 51,600 |
| Diagnostic medical sonographers | 140 | 1.0 | 26.95 | 56,050 |
| Nuclear medicine technologists | 60 | 1.1 | 30.49 | 63,420 |
| Radiologic technologists and technicians* | 880 | 1.5 | 23.10 | 48,060 |
| Dietetic technicians | 50 | 0.9 | 12.05 | 25,070 |
| Pharmacy technicians | 1,130 | 1.3 | 12.65 | 26,310 |
| Psychiatric technicians | 380 | 2.1 | 11.57 | 24,060 |
| Respiratory therapy technicians | 140 | 3.8 | 19.31 | 40,160 |
| Surgical technologists | 470 | 1.9 | 18.04 | 37,530 |
| Veterinary technologists and technicians | [5] | [5] | 16.14 | 33,570 |
| Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses | 3,320 | 1.8 | 18.06 | 37,560 |
| Medical records and health information technicians | 480 | 1.0 | 17.55 | 36,510 |
| Opticians, dispensing | 90 | 0.6 | 13.40 | 27,870 |
| Health technologists and technicians, all other* | 330 | 1.3 | 18.30 | 38,070 |
| Occupational health and safety specialists | 240 | 1.6 | 28.85 | 60,010 |
| Athletic trainers | 80 | 1.7 | [5] | 39,400 |
| Healthcare practitioners and technical workers, all other* | 60 | 0.4 | 17.21 | 35,790 |

¹ For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Little Rock MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_30780.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 available.

⁶ Indicates a wage greater than \$80.00 per hour or \$166,400 per year.

* Occupation titles followed by an asterisk (*) have similar titles, but not necessarily the same content as 2010 SOC occupations.