



NEWS RELEASE



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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN ROANOKE – MAY 2011

Workers in the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.70 in May 2011, measurably lower than the nationwide average of \$21.74, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, 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, including architecture and engineering, legal, and computer and mathematical. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Roanoke	United States	Roanoke	Percent difference ¹
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$21.74	\$18.70 *	-14
Management	4.8	3.6 *	51.64	45.69 *	-12
Business and financial operations	4.8	4.2 *	33.05	27.14 *	-18
Computer and mathematical	2.7	1.5 *	37.85	30.51 *	-19
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.2 *	37.08	27.71 *	-25
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.3 *	32.44	26.94 *	-17
Community and social service	1.5	1.8 *	21.07	19.54 *	-7
Legal	0.8	0.5 *	47.30	37.93 *	-20
Education, training, and library	6.6	5.5	24.46	22.27 *	-9
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.9 *	25.89	19.57 *	-24
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	7.2 *	34.97	32.73 *	-6
Healthcare support	3.1	3.1	13.16	12.46 *	-5
Protective service	2.5	2.6	20.54	17.18 *	-16
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	9.1	10.30	9.79 *	-5
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	2.6 *	12.29	10.98 *	-11
Personal care and service	2.8	2.5 *	11.84	11.13 *	-6
Sales and related	10.6	10.6	18.04	17.68	-2
Office and administrative support	16.7	18.8 *	16.40	14.95 *	-9
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	11.68	15.52 *	33
Construction and extraction	3.9	4.3	21.46	16.47 *	-23
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.5 *	20.86	18.53 *	-11
Production	6.5	7.4 *	16.45	14.81 *	-10
Transportation and material moving	6.7	7.5 *	15.96	14.00 *	-12

* 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 Roanoke is above the national mean wage, while a negative percent difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Roanoke employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups including office and administrative support, healthcare practitioners and technical, and production. Conversely, 10 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included management, computer and mathematical, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.

One occupational group—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Roanoke had 27,580 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 18.8 percent of local area employment, significantly above the 16.7-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$14.95, which was significantly below the national average of \$16.40.

With employment of 4,240, general office clerks was the largest occupation within the office and administrative support group, followed by customer service representatives (3,760). Among the higher-paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers with a mean hourly wages of \$23.14 and executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants with a wage of \$20.17. At the lower end of the wage scale were stock clerks and order fillers (\$11.63) and receptionists and information clerks (\$11.79). (Detailed occupational data for the business and financial operations group are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_40220.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 as it does nationally. In Roanoke, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, insurance claims and policy processing clerks were employed at more than twice the national rate in Roanoke, and customer service representatives at one-and-a-half times the U.S. average. On the other hand, receptionists and information clerks had a location quotient of 1.0 in Roanoke, 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 Virginia Employment Commission. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and about 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 Roanoke 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 are also 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 Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,806 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 are 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 **Roanoke, Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke Counties and Roanoke and Salem Cities in Virginia.

Additional information

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, Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2011

Occupation ¹	Employment ²		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ³	Hourly	Annual ⁴
Office and administrative support	27,580	1.1	\$14.95	\$31,100
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers	1,800	1.2	23.14	48,130
Switchboard operators, including answering service	140	0.9	11.31	23,520
Bill and account collectors	590	1.3	14.84	30,860
Billing and posting clerks	660	1.2	15.15	31,510
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	2,330	1.2	15.47	32,180
Payroll and timekeeping clerks	180	0.9	17.71	36,830
Procurement clerks	90	1.1	16.81	34,960
Tellers	640	1.0	11.75	24,440
Brokerage clerks	80	1.2	17.79	37,010
Correspondence clerks	40	3.9	14.37	29,890
Court, municipal, and license clerks	120	0.9	(5)	(5)
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks	(5)	(5)	12.87	26,770
Customer service representatives	3,760	1.5	14.29	29,720
Eligibility interviewers, government programs	270	2.0	16.90	35,160
File clerks	160	0.9	12.35	25,690
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	290	1.1	9.80	20,380
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	80	0.3	12.77	26,560
Library assistants, clerical	90	0.8	11.81	24,560
Loan interviewers and clerks	410	1.9	16.01	33,300
New accounts clerks	130	1.9	14.72	30,620
Order clerks	230	0.9	13.96	29,030
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	190	1.1	16.91	35,180
Receptionists and information clerks	1,140	1.0	11.79	24,530
Information and record clerks, all other	400	1.8	15.53	32,290
Cargo and freight agents	(5)	(5)	18.14	37,720
Couriers and messengers	110	1.1	12.31	25,610
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers	110	1.0	17.16	35,690
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance	200	1.0	15.70	32,650
Postal service clerks	70	0.9	25.61	53,260
Postal service mail carriers	340	0.9	24.56	51,080
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators	270	1.7	23.83	49,560
Production, planning, and expediting clerks	290	0.9	19.39	40,330
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks	1,040	1.3	13.40	27,870
Stock clerks and order fillers	2,840	1.4	11.63	24,190
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping	(5)	(5)	13.24	27,530
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	700	0.6	20.17	41,950
Legal secretaries	140	0.6	18.58	38,650
Medical secretaries	380	0.7	14.42	29,990
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive	1,330	0.6	14.77	30,720
Computer operators	100	1.1	16.07	33,420

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2011—continued

Occupation ¹	Employment ²		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ³	Hourly	Annual ⁴
Data entry keyers	420	1.7	\$11.91	\$24,770
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	530	2.1	17.82	37,060
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	80	0.6	13.28	27,630
Office clerks, general	4,240	1.3	13.12	27,290
Office machine operators, except computer	40	0.5	13.33	27,720
Office and administrative support workers, all other*	290	1.0	15.61	32,460

*This occupation has the same title, but not necessarily the same content, as the 2010 SOC occupation.

¹ For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Roanoke MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_40220.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.