

MOUNTAIN-PLAINS INFORMATION OFFICE
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**OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN
COLUMBIA, MO.–MAY 2010**

Workers in the Columbia, Mo., Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$17.62 in May 2010, roughly 17 percent below the nationwide average of \$21.35, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, no wages in the local area were significantly higher than their respective national averages for the 22 major occupational groups. Nineteen groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including management, healthcare practitioners and technical, and transportation and material moving.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 3 of the 22 occupational groups: healthcare practitioners and technical; food preparation and serving related; and arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media. Conversely, eight groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production, business and financial operations, and transportation and material moving. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Columbia, Mo., Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2010

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Average hourly wage	
	United States	Columbia	United States	Columbia
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$21.35	\$17.62 *
Management	4.7	3.8 *	50.69	38.10 *
Business and financial operations	4.8	3.7 *	32.54	25.61 *
Computer and mathematical	2.6	2.1	37.13	27.87 *
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.0 *	36.32	29.06 *
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	1.5	31.92	26.53 *
Community and social service	1.5	1.4	20.76	17.40 *
Legal	0.8	0.5 *	46.60	35.16 *
Education, training, and library	6.7	7.7	24.25	20.70
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	1.7 *	25.14	18.80 *
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	9.6 *	34.27	28.42 *
Healthcare support	3.1	2.1 *	12.94	12.02 *
Protective service	2.5	1.7 *	20.43	16.97 *
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	11.0 *	10.21	9.18 *
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.3	12.16	11.03 *
Personal care and service	2.7	[1]	11.82	10.46 *
Sales and related	10.6	10.0	17.69	13.52 *
Office and administrative support	16.9	17.6	16.09	14.06 *
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.2	11.70	12.39
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.5	21.09	20.75
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.7	20.58	18.25 *
Production	6.5	3.9 *	16.24	14.17 *
Transportation and material moving	6.7	5.7 *	15.70	12.94 *

* 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] Estimate not released.

One occupational group—healthcare practitioners and technical—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Columbia had 7,890 healthcare practitioners and technical jobs, accounting for 9.6 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 5.8-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$28.42, measurably below the national wage of \$34.27.

With employment of 3,090, registered nurses was the largest occupation within the healthcare practitioners and technical group, followed by licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses (790) and medical and clinical laboratory technicians and pharmacy technicians (both at 300). Among the higher paying jobs were family and general practitioners and pharmacists, with mean hourly wages of \$61.80 and \$51.95, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were pharmacy technicians (\$12.33) and dispensing opticians (\$14.49). (Detailed occupational data for the healthcare practitioners and technical group are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_17860.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 Columbia, Mo., Metropolitan Statistical Area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the healthcare practitioners and technical group. For instance, medical and clinical laboratory technicians were employed at 3 times the national rate in Columbia, and veterinary technologists and technicians, at 2.4 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, pharmacists had a location quotient of 1.0 in Columbia, 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 Missouri Economic Research and Information Center, Occupational Employment Unit. 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 non-military 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 Columbia 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. 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 2010 survey was 78.2 percent based on establishments and 74.4 percent based on employment. May 2010 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2010, November 2009, May 2009, November 2008, May 2008, and November 2007. The sample in the Columbia Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,151 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 2010 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 Columbia, Mo. Metropolitan Statistical Area includes Boone and Howard Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro7/home.htm. If you have additional questions, contact the Mountain-Plains Economic Analysis and Information Unit at (816) 285-7000. 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, Columbia, Mo., Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2010

Occupation	Employment		Mean Wages	
	Level [1]	Location quotient [2]	Hourly	Annual
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	7,890	1.7	\$28.42	\$59,120
Dentists, General	50	0.9	[3]	[3]
Dietitians and Nutritionists	50	1.4	27.11	56,390
Optometrists	40	2.2	41.22	85,730
Pharmacists	170	1.0	51.95	108,050
Anesthesiologists	[3]	[3]	115.69	240,630
Family and General Practitioners	130	2.1	61.80	128,550
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	[3]	[3]	51.31	106,720
Registered Nurses*	3,090	1.8	27.96	58,150
Occupational Therapists	100	1.5	30.25	62,910
Physical Therapists	160	1.4	31.38	65,260
Respiratory Therapists	160	2.3	24.40	50,750
Speech-Language Pathologists	90	1.3	27.90	58,040
Veterinarians	40	1.3	34.60	71,960
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	270	2.5	25.34	52,710
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	300	3.0	14.52	30,210
Dental Hygienists	[3]	[3]	29.87	62,140
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	[3]	[3]	19.61	40,790
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	60	1.6	28.48	59,240
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians*	230	1.7	24.59	51,140
Pharmacy Technicians	300	1.4	12.33	25,650
Surgical Technologists	90	1.5	18.31	38,080
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	120	2.4	[3]	[3]
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	790	1.7	16.87	35,090
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	230	2.0	15.31	31,840
Opticians, Dispensing	70	1.7	14.49	30,150
Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other*	110	2.0	17.40	36,200
Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	40	1.0	30.24	62,900
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers, All Other*	40	1.2	19.73	41,040

[1] 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.

[2] 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.

[3] Estimate not released.

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