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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN ATLANTA-SANDY SPRINGS-MARIETTA, MAY 2011

Workers in the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$22.39 in May 2011, about 3 percent above the nationwide average of \$21.74, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly higher than their respective national averages in 5 of the 22 major occupational groups, including business and financial operations, management, and sales and related. Nine groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including construction and extraction, production, and architecture and engineering.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support, management, and transportation and material moving. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production, healthcare practitioners and technical, and personal care and service. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

One occupational group—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta had 406,910 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 18.3 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 16.7-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$16.59, measurably above the national wage of \$16.40.

With employment of 63,250, customer service representatives was the largest occupation within the office and administrative support group, followed by general office clerks (50,540) and stock clerks and order fillers (33,370). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, and executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, with mean hourly wages of \$25.49 and \$22.54, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks (\$9.28) and stock clerks and order filers (\$11.95). (Detailed occupational data for office and administrative support are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_12060.htm.)

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Atlanta	United States	Atlanta	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$21.74	\$22.39 *	3
Management	4.8	6.3 *	51.64	54.05 *	5
Business and financial operations	4.8	6.2 *	33.05	35.23 *	7
Computer and mathematical	2.7	3.6 *	37.85	36.73 *	-3
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.5 *	37.08	35.64 *	-4
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.5 *	32.44	30.57	-6
Community and social service	1.5	1.0 *	21.07	21.46	2
Legal	0.8	0.9 *	47.30	49.46	5
Education, training, and library	6.6	6.5	24.46	21.90 *	-10
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.2 *	25.89	25.12	-3
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	4.6 *	34.97	34.97	0
Healthcare support	3.1	1.9 *	13.16	13.35	1
Protective service	2.5	2.4 *	20.54	16.97 *	-17
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	8.4 *	10.30	9.98 *	-3
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	2.7 *	12.29	11.90 *	-3
Personal care and service	2.8	2.1 *	11.84	11.21 *	-5
Sales and related	10.6	11.7 *	18.04	18.67 *	3
Office and administrative support	16.7	18.3 *	16.40	16.59 *	1
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	11.68	14.11 *	21
Construction and extraction	3.9	3.0 *	21.46	18.96 *	-12
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.1	20.86	20.86	0
Production	6.5	5.1 *	16.45	15.24 *	-7
Transportation and material moving	6.7	7.8 *	15.96	16.58	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 Atlanta is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

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 Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area, above average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, customer service representatives were employed at 1.7 times the national rate in Atlanta, and bill and account collectors, at 1.5 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks had a location quotient of 1.0 in Atlanta, 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 Georgia Department of Labor. 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 Atlanta 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 Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area included 8,672 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 **Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, Ga. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Jasper, Lamar, Meriwether, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Rockdale, Spalding, and Walton Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm. If you have additional questions, contact the Southeast Economic Analysis and Information Unit at (404) 893-4222. 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, Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2011

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean Wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations	406,910	1.1	\$16.59	\$34,500
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers	28,090	1.2	25.49	53,020
Switchboard operators, including answering service	2,390	1.0	12.97	26,980
Telephone operators	(5)	(5)	14.77	30,710
Bill and account collectors	10,110	1.5	15.73	32,720
Billing and posting clerks	8,850	1.1	16.42	34,160
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	27,890	1.0	17.81	37,050
Payroll and timekeeping clerks	3,000	1.0	19.18	39,890
Procurement clerks	1,380	1.1	17.37	36,120
Tellers	7,040	0.7	13.56	28,200
Brokerage clerks	980	0.9	18.85	39,200
Correspondence clerks	200	1.3	17.93	37,300
Court, municipal, and license clerks	1,690	0.8	16.28	33,860
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks	1,060	1.2	16.64	34,600
Customer service representatives	63,250	1.7	17.00	35,360
Eligibility interviewers, government programs	1,250	0.6	21.61	44,960
File clerks	1,730	0.6	13.90	28,920
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks	3,790	1.0	9.28	19,300
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	2,610	0.8	14.24	29,630
Library assistants, clerical	1,380	0.7	11.13	23,150
Loan interviewers and clerks	3,620	1.1	15.51	32,250
New accounts clerks	500	0.5	18.82	39,150
Order clerks	3,440	0.9	14.86	30,910
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping	2,560	1.0	18.29	38,030
Receptionists and information clerks	12,340	0.7	12.76	26,550
Information and record clerks, all other	3,990	1.2	17.48	36,350
Cargo and freight agents	1,640	1.2	17.62	36,650
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers	1,340	0.8	16.43	34,170
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance	3,300	1.0	17.75	36,930
Meter readers, utilities	1,220	1.7	15.66	32,580
Postal service clerks	1,130	1.0	25.75	53,570
Postal service mail carriers	5,060	0.9	24.66	51,300
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators	2,630	1.1	24.29	50,520
Production, planning, and expediting clerks	5,540	1.2	19.54	40,640
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks	13,550	1.1	14.54	30,240
Stock clerks and order fillers	33,370	1.1	11.95	24,860
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping	1,160	1.0	14.64	30,450
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants	22,380	1.4	22.54	46,880
Legal secretaries	3,360	0.9	23.86	49,640
Medical secretaries	10,390	1.2	16.00	33,280
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive	25,480	0.8	15.54	32,330
Computer operators	2,640	2.0	17.64	36,690
Data entry keyers	4,540	1.2	14.19	29,510
Word processors and typists	710	0.4	15.44	32,120
Desktop publishers	330	1.0	21.50	44,720
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks	4,690	1.2	18.16	37,780
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service	2,680	1.3	12.56	26,120
Office clerks, general	50,540	1.0	12.78	26,580
Office machine operators, except computer	1,350	1.2	14.36	29,860
Proofreaders and copy markers	150	0.8	15.34	31,910
Statistical assistants	1,160	4.5	12.54	26,090
Office and administrative support workers, all other	2,560	0.6	18.94	39,390

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_12060.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) Estimate not released.