

For release 10:00 a.m. (EDT) Tuesday, July 27, 2010

USDL-10-1045

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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES BY OWNERSHIP—MAY 2009

Retail salespersons and cashiers were the two largest occupations in the private sector in May 2009, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Postal service mail carriers; correctional officers and jailers; and elementary school teachers, except special education, had the highest employment among all occupations in federal, state, and local government, respectively.

These data are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program, which provides employment and wage estimates for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 801 detailed occupations. In May 2010, OES released 2009 cross-ownership data by occupation for the nation, states, metropolitan areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas, and by occupation and industry for the nation. While OES has previously released occupational employment and wage estimates at the federal, state, and local government levels, these data did not include state and local government schools and hospitals. To meet user demand, in 2006 BLS began work necessary to produce OES data for private ownership and at a more detailed level for state and local government. In particular, new state and local government estimates consist of all state and local government establishments, including schools and hospitals, which before were only included with the estimates of privately owned schools and hospitals. Data by ownership are available from the OES homepage at www.bls.gov/oes.

Occupational Employment and Wages by Ownership

- Retail salespersons and cashiers combined represented almost 7 percent of total employment in the private sector, with employment levels of 4.2 and 3.4 million, respectively. The third largest occupation, combined food preparation and serving workers, accounted for slightly more than 2 percent of total employment in the private sector. (See table 1.)
- Four occupations specific to the U.S. Postal Service accounted for 23 percent of federal employment. (See table 2.)
- Aside from occupations specific to the U.S. Postal Service, the largest occupations in federal government included: management analysts; detectives and criminal investigators; purchasing agents, except wholesale, retail, and farm products; all other business operations specialists; and compliance officers, except agriculture, construction, health and safety, and transportation. (See table 2.)
- Employment in state government was more widely distributed by occupation than employment in federal and local government. Although correctional officers and jailers was the largest occupation, with an employment level of 257,280, it accounted for only about 6 percent of state government employment. With the exception of general office clerks that accounted for around 5

percent of total employment, all the remaining occupations in state government each represented less than 3 percent of total employment. (See table 3.)

- Employment in local government was concentrated in teaching occupations. Three of the largest—elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers, except special education—accounted for 20 percent of employment. Other large occupations were protective service occupations such as police and sheriff’s patrol officers and fire fighters. (See table 4.)
- Many of the largest occupations in the private sector were relatively low paying, including waiters and waitresses with a mean hourly wage of \$9.80. Some occupations, however, paid significantly more on average, such as registered nurses (\$32.07) and general and operations managers (\$53.77). (See table 1.)

Occupational Employment and Wages in Elementary and Secondary Schools by Ownership

- Local government-owned schools employed 1.4 million, 609,070, and 977,150 elementary, middle, and secondary school teachers, except special education, respectively. (See table 5.)
- Wages for most of the largest occupations in elementary and secondary schools were higher in state and local government-owned schools than in privately owned schools. For example, the annual mean wages for elementary school teachers, except special education, in local and state government-owned schools were \$54,110 and \$53,400, respectively, compared with \$42,320 in privately owned schools.
- Special education teachers accounted for a higher share of employment in local and state government-owned schools than in privately owned schools. For example, secondary school special education teachers accounted for 1.7 and 2.2 percent of employment in local and state government-owned schools, and 1.2 percent of employment in privately owned schools.
- School bus drivers accounted for 2.9 percent of employment in local government-owned schools, and less than 1 percent of employment in private schools.
- Education administrators accounted for 3.5 percent of employment in privately owned schools and 2.4 percent of employment in local government-owned schools.

Occupational Employment and Wages in General Medical and Surgical Hospitals by Ownership

- Wages for almost all of the largest occupations in general medical and surgical hospitals were lowest in local government-owned establishments. (See table 6.)
- Staffing patterns of hospitals were similar among different ownerships. Some of the largest differences were among the nursing occupations. Registered nurses accounted for 29.4 percent of employment in privately owned hospitals, 26.2 percent in local and 24.2 percent of employment in state government-owned hospitals.
- Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants and licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses accounted for a slightly higher share of employment in local government-owned hospitals than in privately owned and state government-owned hospitals.

Additional Information

The Occupational Employment Statistics program produces cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates nationwide and for all states, 377 metropolitan areas, 34 metropolitan divisions, and 174 nonmetropolitan areas. OES also publishes national industry-specific occupational employment and wage estimates for NAICS sectors and 3-, 4-, and selected 5-digit industries. In addition to mean hourly and annual wages, available wage data include 10th, 25th, 50th (median), 75th, and 90th per-

centile wages, which can be used to show the distribution of wages within an occupation or industry. OES data are produced by a cooperative effort between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, and are based on a sample of 1.2 million business establishments, collected in 6 semiannual panels over a 3-year period. State and federal government estimates are based on an annual census, while local government estimates are based on a probability sample. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, visit www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm. Complete May 2009 Occupational Employment Statistics data are available from the OES Web site at www.bls.gov/oes.

Frequently Asked Questions about OES Estimates

How are the numbers in this release different from other OES estimates?

Previously released data did not include separate tabulations by ownership. Up until now, BLS was not able to produce estimates of total private, state, or local employment. That is because state and local government-owned schools and hospitals were included in their respective NAICS code with private schools and hospitals. Following changes in methodology introduced in 2006 (and now applied to a full 3-year sample rotation), these newly released data separate school and hospital data by ownership category. As a result, the new state and local government data include state and local government-owned schools and hospitals, while private-sector estimates do not include them.

Can the OES data be used to compare private and government pay for similar work?

Occupational wages in the different ownership groups (the private sector, and state, local, and federal governments) are influenced by many factors that the OES measures cannot take into account. Thus, while one can obtain OES data that compare estimates of mean and median wages paid in a wide range of detailed occupations across ownership groups, those comparisons do not explain why they might be different. Among the many reasons are:

- Level of work performed. Workers may have different levels of responsibility, despite being in the same occupation.
- Age and experience. More experienced workers tend to have higher wages. (As an example, data from the Current Population Survey show that federal workers, on average, are older and have far more work experience with their employer than the typical private-sector worker.)
- Cost of living. Workers concentrated in large urban areas with higher costs of living are more likely to have higher wages than those working elsewhere.
- Establishment size. Workers in large establishments generally have higher wages than workers in small establishments.
- Work schedules. Full-time workers tend to earn higher hourly wages than part-time workers in the same occupation. (The OES annual wage estimates assume a full-time, year-round schedule of 2,080 hours.)
- Unionization. Workers in unionized establishments may have different wages than non-union establishments.

OES data are not designed for use in comparing federal and private sector pay because the OES data do not contain information about pay according to the level of work performed. BLS conducts a separate survey, the National Compensation Survey, which provides data by level of work for use by the President's Pay Agent. The President's Pay Agent, (the Directors of the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of Management and Budget, and the Secretary of Labor), is charged by law with recommending federal pay adjustments to the President. Questions about federal pay comparability should be directed to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Are data tabulated by industry and ownership available for different geographic detail?

BLS publishes estimates by industry and ownership at the national level only.

Table 1. Largest occupations in the private sector, May 2009

Occupations	Employment	Percent of private sector employment	Mean wage	
			Hourly	Annual
Retail salespersons	4,197,760	3.86	\$11.84	\$24,630
Cashiers	3,396,180	3.13	9.10	18,930
Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	2,539,750	2.34	8.61	17,910
Waiters and waitresses	2,292,170	2.11	9.80	20,380
Office clerks, general	2,239,540	2.06	13.08	27,210
Customer service representatives	2,126,190	1.96	15.55	32,350
Registered nurses	2,124,540	1.96	32.07	66,700
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	2,074,060	1.91	12.11	25,190
Stock clerks and order fillers	1,823,910	1.68	11.15	23,180
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	1,574,240	1.45	16.62	34,570
General and operations managers	1,561,600	1.44	53.77	111,840
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	1,545,110	1.42	10.85	22,570
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer	1,519,880	1.40	18.88	39,270
Sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products	1,409,170	1.30	29.52	61,410
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	1,339,180	1.23	14.53	30,230
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	1,283,500	1.18	11.89	24,730
First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative support workers	1,232,770	1.13	23.89	49,690
First-line supervisors/managers of retail sales workers	1,156,580	1.06	18.80	39,110
Executive secretaries and administrative assistants	1,092,590	1.01	21.26	44,220
Maintenance and repair workers, general	1,036,410	.95	17.32	36,020
Team assemblers	997,020	.92	13.87	28,840
Receptionists and information clerks	991,750	.91	12.45	25,900
Accountants and auditors	977,400	.90	32.79	68,200
Security guards	928,940	.85	12.42	25,840
Home health aides	923,710	.85	10.25	21,330
Cooks, restaurant	894,550	.82	11.11	23,100
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	852,440	.78	10.00	20,790
Truck drivers, light or delivery services	821,190	.76	14.93	31,060
Construction laborers	816,150	.75	15.91	33,100
Food preparation workers	759,840	.70	9.67	20,120

Table 2. Largest occupations in federal government, May 2009

Occupations	Employment	Percent of federal employment	Mean wage	
			Hourly	Annual
Postal service mail carriers	339,030	12.73	\$23.53	\$48,940
Business operations specialists, all other	170,450	6.40	36.71	76,350
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators	162,860	6.12	23.20	48,260
Compliance officers, except agriculture, construction, health and safety, and transportation	99,570	3.74	25.00	51,990
All other information and record clerks	84,450	3.17	19.01	39,530
Postal service clerks	73,050	2.74	24.96	51,920
Computer specialists, all other	64,540	2.42	42.75	88,920
Registered nurses	62,920	2.36	37.39	77,780
Management analysts	50,310	1.89	40.53	84,290
Managers, all other	47,720	1.79	49.96	103,910
Detectives and criminal investigators	43,380	1.63	36.32	75,550
Claims adjusters, examiners, and investigators	42,510	1.60	31.73	66,000
Purchasing agents, except wholesale, retail, and farm products	32,030	1.20	36.58	76,090
Lawyers	31,570	1.19	61.30	127,490
Tax examiners, collectors, and revenue agents	29,680	1.11	30.87	64,210
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	27,820	1.04	19.70	40,980
Physicians and surgeons, all other	27,000	1.01	83.37	173,400
Eligibility interviewers, government programs	26,860	1.01	21.73	45,190
Human resources, training, and labor relations specialists, all other	25,800	.97	37.80	78,620
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	25,090	.94	22.35	46,490
Postmasters and mail superintendents	24,890	.93	28.65	59,600
Logisticians	24,730	.93	37.90	78,820
Forest and conservation technicians	24,400	.92	17.36	36,110
General and operations managers	23,410	.88	56.01	116,500
Accountants and auditors	23,360	.88	42.28	87,940
Engineers, all other	23,220	.87	51.47	107,060
Air traffic controllers	22,020	.83	52.49	109,170
Financial specialists, all other	21,170	.80	36.56	76,040
Maintenance and repair workers, general	21,020	.79	24.19	50,320
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	19,560	.73	20.84	43,340

Table 3. Largest occupations in state government, May 2009

Occupations	Employment	Percent of state government employment	Mean wage	
			Hourly	Annual
Correctional officers and jailers	257,280	5.63	\$21.02	\$43,720
Office clerks, general	208,970	4.57	14.15	29,430
Registered nurses	128,080	2.80	31.26	65,020
Executive secretaries and administrative assistants	117,160	2.56	19.54	40,630
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	110,600	2.42	15.99	33,260
Business operations specialists, all other	106,740	2.33	27.89	58,020
Graduate teaching assistants	86,600	1.89	n.a.	31,800
Postsecondary teachers, all other	77,410	1.69	n.a.	68,240
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	76,750	1.68	12.39	25,780
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	67,850	1.48	27.59	57,380
Child, family, and school social workers	64,490	1.41	20.90	43,480
Health specialties teachers, postsecondary	59,110	1.29	n.a.	105,210
First-line supervisors/managers of office and administrative support workers	57,860	1.27	25.14	52,280
Accountants and auditors	51,320	1.12	25.84	53,750
Teachers and instructors, all other	51,240	1.12	n.a.	55,130
Probation officers and correctional treatment specialists	50,360	1.10	24.75	51,480
Education administrators, postsecondary	49,150	1.07	48.05	99,940
Social and human service assistants	48,230	1.05	17.18	35,740
Maintenance and repair workers, general	47,900	1.05	16.73	34,800
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	46,380	1.01	16.94	35,240
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	43,330	.95	13.25	27,570
Psychiatric technicians	42,470	.93	15.45	32,130
Management analysts	41,250	.90	27.69	57,590
Office and administrative support workers, all other	39,790	.87	14.77	30,710
General and operations managers	37,810	.83	40.33	83,880
Lawyers	37,020	.81	40.10	83,410
Compliance officers, except agriculture, construction, health and safety, and transportation	36,360	.80	23.89	49,680
Civil engineers	34,900	.76	36.22	75,350
Managers, all other	33,950	.74	38.10	79,250
Computer systems analysts	33,620	.74	31.53	65,570

n.a. = Not available.

Table 4. Largest occupations in local government, May 2009

Occupations	Employment	Percent of local government employment	Mean wage	
			Hourly	Annual
Elementary school teachers, except special education	1,403,250	9.52	n.a.	\$54,110
Teacher assistants	980,160	6.65	n.a.	24,580
Secondary school teachers, except special and vocational education	979,120	6.64	n.a.	55,740
Middle school teachers, except special and vocational education	609,590	4.13	n.a.	54,220
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	556,420	3.77	\$26.47	55,070
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	440,720	2.99	13.57	28,230
Teachers and instructors, all other	385,580	2.62	n.a.	36,380
Office clerks, general	351,170	2.38	14.12	29,380
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	322,800	2.19	15.66	32,560
Fire fighters	279,530	1.90	23.01	47,860
Bus drivers, school	270,310	1.83	13.37	27,810
Registered nurses	268,230	1.82	30.44	63,310
Special education teachers, preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school	201,520	1.37	n.a.	54,700
Education administrators, elementary and secondary school	190,310	1.29	n.a.	88,650
Maintenance and repair workers, general	163,600	1.11	18.44	38,360
Correctional officers and jailers	160,400	1.09	19.89	41,360
Kindergarten teachers, except special education	152,980	1.04	n.a.	52,670
Executive secretaries and administrative assistants	150,140	1.02	21.66	45,060
Educational, vocational, and school counselors	146,660	.99	29.34	61,030
Child care workers	145,870	.99	11.33	23,560
Cooks, institution and cafeteria	142,090	.96	10.95	22,770
Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	137,630	.93	10.05	20,900
Special education teachers, secondary school	133,240	.90	n.a.	56,790
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	117,690	.80	17.13	35,630
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	105,280	.71	14.30	29,740
Librarians	104,050	.71	26.61	55,350
Highway maintenance workers	103,140	.70	16.81	34,960
Recreation workers	102,940	.70	12.25	25,470
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	99,040	.67	12.43	25,860
Special education teachers, middle school	96,260	.65	n.a.	55,040

n.a. = Not available.

Table 5. Largest occupations in elementary and secondary schools, by ownership, May 2009

Occupations	Private ownership			Local government			State government		
	Employment	Percent of employment	Annual mean wage	Employment	Percent of employment	Annual mean wage	Employment	Percent of employment	Annual mean wage
Elementary school teachers, except special education	119,380	17.30	\$42,320	1,401,530	17.93	\$54,110	10,790	16.22	\$53,400
Secondary school teachers, except special and vocational education	96,890	14.04	50,100	977,150	12.50	55,760	8,160	12.27	50,470
Teacher assistants	69,640	10.09	23,920	947,190	12.12	24,530	6,350	9.55	25,780
Middle school teachers, except special and vocational education	50,710	7.35	46,150	609,070	7.79	54,220	1,280	1.93	44,230
Teachers and instructors, all other	15,700	2.28	36,510	355,870	4.55	34,790	7,610	11.44	52,840
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	18,530	2.69	27,340	333,320	4.26	28,180	2,700	4.06	30,160
Bus drivers, school	5,340	.77	27,860	228,360	2.92	27,360	190	.28	29,070
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	15,050	2.18	31,050	201,470	2.58	31,940	940	1.42	35,930
Education administrators, elementary and secondary school	24,170	3.50	78,760	189,280	2.42	88,630	1,620	2.44	89,890
Special education teachers, preschool, kindergarten, and elementary school	12,320	1.78	49,480	199,290	2.55	54,760	2,030	3.06	47,290
Kindergarten teachers, except special education	17,360	2.52	40,380	152,690	1.95	52,690	200	.31	46,610
Child care workers	16,590	2.40	22,540	125,680	1.61	23,690	1,410	2.13	21,460
Special education teachers, secondary school	8,540	1.24	53,110	132,470	1.69	56,820	1,430	2.15	53,770
Educational, vocational, and school counselors	8,230	1.19	54,730	129,290	1.65	61,640	1,160	1.74	57,920
Combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food	4,780	.69	20,500	129,950	1.66	20,790	100	.15	20,850
Cooks, institution and cafeteria	4,910	.71	23,330	117,740	1.51	22,210	630	.95	28,020
Office clerks, general	11,070	1.60	26,420	104,800	1.34	27,870	1,300	1.96	29,460
Special education teachers, middle school	4,570	.66	50,230	95,910	1.23	55,050	800	1.20	50,820
Vocational education teachers, secondary school	1,420	.21	47,830	86,760	1.11	54,660	1,540	2.32	58,740
Food preparation workers	2,940	.43	21,600	61,890	.79	23,230	740	1.12	24,250

Table 6. Largest occupations in general medical and surgical hospitals, by ownership, May 2009

Occupations	Private ownership			Local government			State government		
	Employment	Percent of employment	Annual mean wage	Employment	Percent of employment	Annual mean wage	Employment	Percent of employment	Annual mean wage
Registered nurses	1,273,970	29.44	\$67,960	172,560	26.17	\$66,280	45,470	24.18	\$66,990
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	326,560	7.55	26,750	57,280	8.69	25,040	12,520	6.65	27,960
Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses	126,340	2.92	40,500	27,870	4.23	37,300	4,170	2.22	42,020
Radiologic technologists and technicians	108,770	2.51	55,190	15,730	2.39	51,690	3,320	1.77	55,530
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	97,720	2.26	23,160	16,910	2.57	21,410	3,050	1.62	23,040
Medical secretaries	98,060	2.27	31,740	13,250	2.01	28,540	4,890	2.60	35,340
Medical and health services managers	86,580	2.00	97,760	13,240	2.01	90,730	2,960	1.57	91,030
Medical and clinical laboratory technologists	82,300	1.90	56,400	11,200	1.70	54,230	5,650	3.00	60,780
Office clerks, general	73,840	1.71	29,370	17,730	2.69	29,640	7,210	3.83	29,200
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan	74,670	1.73	30,040	13,070	1.98	28,570	2,380	1.27	31,390
Respiratory therapists	70,690	1.63	54,230	9,940	1.51	51,610	2,500	1.33	55,460
Physicians and surgeons, all other	56,900	1.32	129,540	10,580	1.60	109,730	4,210	2.24	98,680
Medical and clinical laboratory technicians	57,930	1.34	38,930	8,530	1.29	37,180	3,040	1.61	41,220
Healthcare support workers, all other	56,700	1.31	30,510	6,780	1.03	27,460	1,730	.92	31,380
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	56,240	1.30	33,390	6,080	.92	30,660	2,500	1.33	35,480
Surgical technologists	54,860	1.27	40,810	7,280	1.10	36,800	1,760	.94	40,140
Medical records and health information technicians	52,590	1.22	35,990	8,910	1.35	34,680	2,110	1.12	37,900
Medical assistants	50,170	1.16	30,890	8,120	1.23	29,740	2,620	1.39	32,880
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	49,730	1.15	25,670	7,610	1.15	24,690	2,850	1.52	24,870
Pharmacists	47,960	1.11	105,920	6,740	1.02	109,510	2,540	1.35	102,920