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## Occupational Employment and Wages in Laredo – May 2017

Workers in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$17.82 in May 2017, about 27 percent below the nationwide average of \$24.34, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, 18 of 22 major occupational groups in the local area had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including computer and mathematical; personal care and service; and construction and extraction. Three local groups had wage levels that were similar to their respective national averages: protective service; business and financial operations; and healthcare practitioners and technical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including office and administrative support; personal care and service; and transportation and material moving. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production; healthcare practitioners and technical; 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 Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Laredo	United States	Laredo	Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Total, all occupations .....	100.0	100.0	\$24.34	\$17.82*	-27
Management .....	5.1	2.8*	57.65	44.97*	-22
Business and financial operations.....	5.2	3.4*	36.70	35.37	-4
Computer and mathematical .....	3.0	0.7*	43.18	28.52*	-34
Architecture and engineering .....	1.8	0.4*	41.44	33.65*	-19
Life, physical, and social science .....	0.8	0.3*	35.76	29.66*	-17
Community and social service.....	1.5	1.1*	23.10	20.37*	-12
Legal.....	0.8	0.3*	51.62	37.36*	-28
Education, training, and library.....	6.1	8.2*	26.67	24.42*	-8
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.4	0.6*	28.34	20.57*	-27
Healthcare practitioners and technical .....	6.0	3.6*	38.83	37.26	-4
Healthcare support .....	2.9	2.7	15.05	12.30*	-18
Protective service .....	2.4	4.7*	22.69	24.53	8
Food preparation and serving related .....	9.3	10.3*	11.88	10.14*	-15
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance ...	3.1	2.6*	13.91	11.03*	-21
Personal care and service.....	3.6	8.3*	13.11	9.27*	-29
Sales and related .....	10.2	10.9*	19.56	14.39*	-26
Office and administrative support.....	15.4	21.1*	18.24	14.51*	-20
Farming, fishing, and forestry .....	0.3	(2)	13.87	(2)	
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	2.6*	24.01	17.32*	-28
Installation, maintenance, and repair .....	3.9	3.2*	23.02	18.61*	-19

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2017 - Continued**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Laredo	United States	Laredo	Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Production .....	6.3	1.2*	18.30	15.04*	-18
Transportation and material moving .....	7.0	11.2*	17.82	15.75*	-12

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

(2) Estimate not released

\* 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.

One occupational group—office and administrative support—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Laredo had 20,540 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 21.1 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 15.4-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$14.51, significantly below the national wage of \$18.24.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the office and administrative support group included office clerks, general (3,840), customer service representatives (2,890), and stock clerks and order fillers (1,560). Among the higher-paying jobs were executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, as well as first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, with mean hourly wages of \$25.04 and \$24.25, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks (\$9.30) and receptionists and information clerks (\$9.84). (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\\_29700.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29700.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 Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, cargo and freight agents were employed at 13.9 times the national rate in Laredo, and dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance, at 5.0 times the U.S. average. Both Laredo location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, stock clerks and order fillers had a location quotient of 1.1 in Laredo, indicating that this 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 Texas Workforce Commission.

## Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data

With the release of the May 2017 estimates, the OES program has replaced 21 detailed occupations found in the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) with 10 new aggregations of those occupations. In addition, selected 4- and 5-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) industries previously published by OES will no longer be published separately. Some of the 4-digit NAICS industries that are no longer being published separately will instead be published as OES-specific industry aggregations. More information about the new occupational and industry aggregations is available at [www.bls.gov/oes/changes\\_2017.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/changes_2017.htm).

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 survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES data available from BLS include cross-industry occupational employment and wage estimates for the nation; over 650 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), metropolitan divisions, nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industry levels, and national estimates by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm).

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 200,000 sampled establishments are contacted, one panel in May and the other in November. Responses are obtained by mail, Internet or other electronic means, email, telephone, or personal visit. The May 2017 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2017, November 2016, May 2016, November 2015, May 2015, and November 2014. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 72 percent based on establishments and 68 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted sample employment of 82 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 58 percent of total national employment. The sample in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,139 establishments with a response rate of 63 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_tec.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.htm).

The May 2017 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/soc](http://www.bls.gov/soc) and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at [www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm).

## Metropolitan 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 **Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Webb County in Texas.

### **Additional information**

OES data are available on our regional web page at [www.bls.gov/regions/southwest](http://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest). Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/oes\\_ques.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm). Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods\\_statement.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf).

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

**Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2017**

Occupation <sup>(1)</sup>	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level <sup>(2)</sup>	Location quotient <sup>(3)</sup>	Hourly	Annual <sup>(4)</sup>
Office and administrative support occupations.....	20,540	1.4	\$14.51	\$30,190
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	1,320	1.3	24.25	50,440
Bill and account collectors.....	140	0.8	15.39	32,000
Billing and posting clerks.....	510	1.6	13.26	27,570
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.....	1,100	1.1	15.87	33,010
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	70	0.7	18.83	39,170
Tellers.....	660	2.0	12.13	25,230
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	160	1.8	18.81	39,120
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks.....	30	1.3	15.26	31,740
Customer service representatives.....	2,890	1.5	12.12	25,210
Eligibility interviewers, government programs.....	170	1.8	17.41	36,210
File clerks.....	80	1.0	11.92	24,800
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks.....	220	1.3	9.30	19,340
Library assistants, clerical.....	110	1.7	13.78	28,670
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	50	0.3	20.09	41,800
Order clerks.....	120	1.1	14.22	29,570
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping.....	110	1.2	15.32	31,860
Receptionists and information clerks.....	380	0.6	9.84	20,460
Information and record clerks, all other.....	230	2.1	17.79	37,010
Cargo and freight agents.....	860	13.9	17.11	35,590
Couriers and messengers.....	100	1.9	10.03	20,860
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers.....	40	0.6	16.10	33,480
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	680	5.0	15.85	32,960
Postal service mail carriers.....	160	0.7	23.71	49,310
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	320	1.4	16.52	34,360
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	1,530	3.3	12.61	26,230
Stock clerks and order fillers.....	1,560	1.1	11.17	23,240
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping.....	(5)	(5)	12.99	27,020
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants.....	120	0.3	25.04	52,080
Legal secretaries.....	80	0.6	14.98	31,160
Medical secretaries.....	750	1.9	13.14	27,330
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	1,520	1.0	14.94	31,070
Computer operators.....	30	1.1	13.20	27,460
Data entry keyers.....	190	1.5	10.90	22,680
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service.....	(5)	(5)	12.64	26,300
Office clerks, general.....	3,840	1.9	13.89	28,890

Footnotes:

- (1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Laredo Metropolitan Statistical Area see [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_29700.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29700.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.