

# Office of Compensation and Working Conditions Customer Service Guide

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U.S. Department of Labor  
Elaine L. Chao, Secretary

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Lois L. Orr, Acting Commissioner

January 2002

# Frequently Requested OCWC Contacts

Phone numbers begin with area code (202)

Topic	Program	Phone number	Page number	E-mail address
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<b>Employer costs for employee compensation</b>	National Compensation Survey	691-6199	8	ocltinfo@bls.gov
<b>Employment Cost Index</b>	National Compensation Survey	691-6199	7	ocltinfo@bls.gov
<b>Fatalities</b>	Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries	691-6175	17	cfoistaff@bls.gov
<b>Injuries and illnesses</b>	Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses	691-6179	14	oshstaff@bls.gov
<b>Periodical: <i>Compensation and Working Conditions</i></b>	NA	691-6275	23	cbainfo@bls.gov
<b>Wages</b>	National Compensation Survey	691-6199	4	ocltinfo@bls.gov
	Occupational Compensation Survey	691-6199		ocltinfo@bls.gov
<b>Work stoppages</b>	NA	691-6282	20	cbainfo@bls.gov

NA - Not applicable

# Contents

	Page
<b>Mission</b> .....	1
<b>Introduction</b> .....	2
<b>Pledge to our customers</b> .....	3
<b>National Compensation Survey – Wages</b> .....	4
Examples of wage data use .....	5
Common wage data use questions .....	6
<b>National Compensation Survey – Employment Cost Index</b> .....	7
<b>Employer Costs for Employee Compensation</b> .....	8
Examples of ECI and ECEC data use .....	9
Common ECI and ECEC data use questions .....	10
<b>National Compensation Survey – Benefits</b> .....	11
Examples of benefits data use .....	12
Common benefits data use question .....	13
<b>Occupational Injuries and Illnesses</b> .....	14
Examples of occupational injuries and illnesses data use .....	15
Common occupational injuries and illnesses data use question .....	16
<b>Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries</b> .....	17
Examples of CFOI data use .....	18
Common CFOI data use questions .....	19
<b>Collective Bargaining</b> .....	20
Examples of collective bargaining uses .....	21
Common collective bargaining questions .....	22
<b>Compensation and Working Conditions (CWC)</b> .....	23
<b>Tools for data use</b> .....	24
<b>Your contacts for labor statistics</b> .....	25

## Mission

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. BLS is an independent national statistical agency that provides essential economic data to the American public, Congress, other Federal agencies, State and local governments, business, and labor.

The Office of Compensation and Working Conditions (OCWC), located within BLS, plans, directs, and conducts programs involving the design, collection, statistical research and analysis, and publication of data on employee compensation and employment conditions.

## Introduction

### About the *OCWC Customer Service Guide*

To make it easier for you to request information or data, we have provided:

- Descriptions of the information and data the Office of Compensation and Working Conditions produces and where to find them.
- Instructions needed to use various electronic means (Internet, e-mail, etc.) for information or data access; and
- Names and telephone numbers for additional information.

### Main outputs

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) provides the following statistics:

- Local, regional, and national occupational earnings
- Quarterly changes in employer costs - Employment Cost Index (ECI)
- Annual employer cost levels - Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC)
- Incidence and provisions of employee benefits

Summary data on occupational injuries, illnesses, and fatalities with two statistical products:

- Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII)
- Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI)

Collective bargaining agreements for private sector and State and local government

Work stoppages data on strikes and lockouts idling 1,000 workers or more

If you have comments about the *OCWC Customer Service Guide* or want additional copies, call (202) 691-6199, or write to:

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Survey Data Analysis and Publications  
Room 4175  
2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC 20212

Jerry King and Krista Sunday of Survey Data Analysis and Publications prepared the *OCWC Customer Service Guide*, under the direction of Frances Harris, project director.

## Pledge to our customers

### We promise to—

**Let you know in advance when we will release our data.** We will meet the release dates, as published in this brochure and online.

**Be available when you need us.** Electronic access through the Internet, 24-hour fax-on-demand service and 24-hour recorded messages are available, to provide your most-requested information. Information specialists are available during business hours 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. eastern time.

**Distribute data in the form that fits your needs, as resources allow.** Available formats include: Internet, fax-on-demand, recorded messages, telephone, fax on request, TDD, and print materials such as news releases, reports, bulletins, brochures, and flyers. Some very large files are also available on CD-ROM and magnetic tape.

**Provide you with the name and phone number of a person who can meet your data needs.** This *OCWC Customer Service Guide* includes the names of many OCWC subject matter specialists. If you ask us something we cannot answer, we will refer you to someone who can. We want to make your information search as fast and direct as possible.

**Help you understand the uses and limitations of our data.** Call us with any questions you have.

**Attempt to meet your needs.** If you have comments on specific products or recommendations, call us with your suggestions!

# National Compensation Survey – Wages

<http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/home.htm>

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) provides comprehensive measures of occupational earnings, compensation cost trends, and detailed benefit provisions.

**Wage data** are available for select metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, regionally (nine census divisions), and nationally. Some data available:

- Average hourly wages for up to 480 occupations in as many as 81 metropolitan and some nonmetropolitan localities
- Hourly, weekly, and annual earnings
- Mean weekly hours for full- and part-time workers
- Earnings by work level that permit wage comparisons across occupational groups
- Wage data shown by occupation, sector of the economy (private industry and State and local governments), selected worker characteristics (such as full-time and part-time status, bargaining status, and time and incentive), and establishment employment size

## Publications

National Compensation Survey, National Summary  
National Compensation Survey, National Bulletin  
National Compensation Bulletins (by metropolitan and nonmetropolitan area)  
National Compensation Bulletins (by region):

New England  
Middle Atlantic  
West South Central

East South Central  
South Atlantic  
West North Central

## Periodicity

Annual  
Annual  
As available  
Annual

East North Central  
Mountain  
Pacific

## Contact Information

General information and requests for hard copies  
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E-mail requests

(202) 691-6199  
(202) 691-6325  
octlinfo@bls.gov

## Examples of Wage Data Use

- ***Negotiating wage contracts*** – Mean and median wages for occupations and occupational groups in an area can be used as a point of departure for wage negotiations. If certain occupations are not published, data on *benchmark occupations*—those occupations that may be common in a number of establishments—may be used to compare an employer’s pay to other pay in the area.
- ***Determining compensation rates*** – Private companies, labor organizations, and government agencies use the NCS to help determine compensation rates for pay ranges and merit increases.
- ***Determining prevailing wage rates*** – Legislation such as the Service Contract Act and the Davis-Bacon Act require employers to pay the *prevailing wage rate* of the area for certain work. In such cases, a Government agency, such as the Employment Standards Administration (ESA), may use BLS survey data as a tool in determining the prevailing rate. Survey results, however, are not automatically the prevailing rate. BLS does not set, nor enforce, prevailing wage rates.
- ***Setting compensation rates for workers with different duties and responsibilities*** – The NCS is frequently used to help evaluate wage rates for different job levels of an occupation. Job levels represent the different duties and responsibilities within an occupation. Levels are derived from generic standards used for all occupations, so occupational pay can be compared at each job level. A common point-factor analysis is applied to each occupation to measure the requirements of the position and derive the job levels. Each selected job can be slotted into a work level based on 9 factors: Knowledge, supervision received, guidelines, complexity, scope and effect, personal contacts, purpose of contacts, physical demands, and work environment.
- ***Comparing geographical area wages*** – Frequently, private companies use wage data to identify areas for expansion or relocation. Additionally, individuals may find wage data useful when choosing an area to seek employment. (See question B on the following page.)
- ***Evaluating wage distributions*** – Wages are presented in many formats, including percentiles (10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th). Percentiles describe the distribution of an occupation’s employment by the average wage rates for its jobs.
- ***Paying market value*** – Many users want to pay at or above the mean wage rate to attract top quality professionals into a job that is hard to fill. Users can access percentile data to target a specific value at which to compete.



# Common Wage Data Use Questions

## A. *How can I make geographical area wage comparisons?*

NCS produces wage data for major metropolitan areas, census regions, and the Nation. Users frequently request wage data for two cities or two regions. This can be done using the Public Data Query or through searching Internet publications: <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/home.htm>.

Here is an example of a geographical area wage comparison. Mr. Smith owns the ABC Company of Los Angeles, California. He is considering opening a new shipment facility in either Rockford, Illinois, or Lincoln, Nebraska. His company primarily employs truck drivers. Mr. Smith first accesses the Rockford publication on the BLS website or page. He sees, on page 4 of the April 2000 NCS locality publication, that truck drivers in private industry average \$17.07 per hour. Mr. Smith then accesses the March 2000 publication for Lincoln. He learns that in Lincoln (see page 3), truck drivers average \$12.00 per hour. Mr. Smith's company can now use these wage data in making cost comparisons between the two cities.

Furthermore, a truck driver for The ABC Company can evaluate these same wage data, and make informed decisions regarding a possible move to the company's new location.

## B. *How can I use percentiles data to analyze current pay rates and set pay ranges?*

Percentiles data available online at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/home.htm> are designed to give users a description of the distribution of an occupation's earnings. Percentiles (10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th) designate the position in the major metropolitan area's earnings distribution. In the NCS, these percentiles describe the distribution of the average earnings for jobs, not the earnings of individual workers. For example, at the 50th percentile – the median – half of the workers are in jobs that on average pay the same as or more than the wage rate shown, and half are in jobs that pay the same as or less than the wage rate shown. At the 25th percentile, one-fourth of the workers are in jobs that pay the same as or less than the rate shown. The 10th, 75th, and 90th percentiles follow the same logic. Two examples of percentiles data use are shown below.

*Analyzing current pay rates* – You can take percentiles data and compare them with an individual wage rate. For instance, your company, in Austin, Texas, employs a secretary at \$8.00 an hour. You obtain the percentiles data from the Austin locality publication. On page 27 of the May 2000 Austin publication, you find secretaries listed. When you look across the columns, you see that secretaries' jobs in the 10th percentile pay \$10.95. This means that 90 percent of secretaries are in jobs that—on average—pay more than what your company pays your secretary. By analyzing this, your company can make an informed decision on a possible pay increase.

*Setting pay ranges* – Companies frequently use the 25th and 75th percentiles to set pay ranges for jobs. For example, the 25th percentile wage can be used as a salary minimum, and the 75th percentile wage is then used as a salary maximum. The median, or 50th percentile, can be used as the middle of the pay range; or, the company can set the middle of the pay range above the median to attract workers in positions that are hard to fill.

# National Compensation Survey – Employment Cost Index

<http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm>

The **Employment Cost Index (ECI)** provides data on changes in labor costs and is a principal economic indicator. Following are some main features of ECI data:

- Quarterly and annual percent changes in the index of employers’ costs of compensation, including wages and salaries and benefits, by major industry division and major occupational group (blue-collar, white-collar, and service occupations) for private industry and State and local government
- Quarterly and annual percent changes in employers’ costs for compensation, including wages and salaries and benefits, by bargaining status (union vs. nonunion by broad industry and occupational group), region (four census-defined regions), and area size (metropolitan vs. nonmetropolitan)
- Provides seasonally adjusted and unadjusted data
- Presents historical data on changes in labor costs
- Uses fixed weights to control for shifts among occupations and industries

## Publications

Employment Cost Index – News release

## Periodicity

Quarterly

## ECI Release Schedule

### ECI Reference Period

### Release Day (Thursday, 8:30am)

March 2002	April 25, 2002
June 2002	July 25, 2002
September 2002	October 31, 2002
December 2002	January 30, 2003

## Contact Information

General information	(202) 691-6199
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# Employer Costs for Employee Compensation

<http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm>

The Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC) is an annual output, based on ECI data, showing the employers' average hourly cost for total compensation and its components. Here are some key features:

- Provides employer costs per hour worked (in dollar amounts) for wages and salaries and individual benefits or benefit categories by industry, occupation, bargaining status, full-time/part-time status, region, area size, and establishment employment size
- Shows compensation costs as a total and broken out by wages and salaries, total benefit costs, and various benefit costs for:
  - Paid leave, supplemental pay, insurance, retirement and savings, legally required benefits, and other benefits
- Provides cost data by both dollar figures and percentages of compensation
- Breaks out data on workers in several ways:
  - Civilian workers as white-collar, blue-collar, or service
  - State and local government workers as white-collar, service occupations, or service industries
- Reports compensation costs by major occupation, industry, region, union and non-union status, establishment size, and full-time and part-time status
- Uses current weights to reflect today's labor force composition

## Publications

Employer Costs for Employee Compensation – News release

## Periodicity

June, last Thursday

## Contact Information

General information	(202) 691-6199
Fax requests	(202) 691-6325
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## Examples of ECI and ECEC Data Use

- ***Federal pay adjustments*** – The ECI is used to determine Federal white-collar pay adjustments under the Federal Employees Pay Comparability Act.
- ***U.S. economic policy decisions*** – The Federal Reserve uses the ECI as a major economic indicator for monetary policy decisionmaking.
- ***Escalator clauses in collective bargaining contracts*** – Wage escalator clauses are frequently seen in union contracts. These clauses allow for a pay increase that is dependent upon results of the ECI. (See question B on the following page.)
- ***Escalator clauses in U.S. government contracts*** – Various ECI series are used as labor cost escalators in U.S. government contracts. For example, the Production and Logistics Division of the Department of Defense uses the wages and salaries and benefit costs series as escalators in numerous defense contracts, including contracts for computer research. The Contracts Division of the Environmental Protection Agency uses the total compensation private industry/white-collar series as the designated cost escalator in at least 10 contracts for systems design services.
- ***Adjustments to Medicare reimbursements for hospitals, physician, and related services*** – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services uses data from the ECI to determine allowable increases in reimbursements to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health care organizations, and physicians under Medicare's Prospective Payment Systems (PPS). The PPS designates the level of reimbursement for Medicare-covered services, based on the diagnosis and geographic location of care. PPS reimbursements are adjusted annually based on a number of factors, including changes in compensation for medical and related personnel. ECI data are used for many of these compensation changes.
- ***Economic price adjustments in long-term purchase contracts*** – Several large firms in aerospace and other industries have long-term purchase contracts that specify the ECI is to be used to adjust the labor cost portion of contracts.
- ***Escalator clauses in foreign government contracts*** – Foreign governments sometimes use ECI series in contracts with U.S. firms. For example, the government of Switzerland uses the manufacturing durable goods series as a wage escalator in a contract with a U.S. firm that makes computers.
- ***Economic consulting and forecasting*** – Various ECI series are used in models for economic forecasting, including forecasting the ECI values for clients' use in budgeting and other activities. ECI series are also used in developing inflation indexes of personnel and other costs for elementary and secondary schools and colleges.
- ***Costs associated with employee compensation*** – Employer Costs for Employee Compensation focuses on costs associated with providing total compensation packages that include wages and salaries and benefits. A user can look at this publication and see what portion of a total compensation figure is attributable to wages and salaries and various benefits per hour worked.

# Common ECI and ECEC Data Use Questions

## A. How do I calculate the percent change between two time periods?

The formula for calculating the percent change between two time periods is  $[(x/y - 1) \text{ times } 100]$  (where  $x$  = ending quarter's index value and  $y$  = beginning quarter's index value). For example, to calculate the percent change in wages and salaries for private industry workers from June 1997 to June 1999:

1. Determine index numbers for beginning quarter and ending quarter:  
 $x = 139.7$  (June 1999) and  $y = 129.7$  (June 1997)
2. Divide the ending quarter by the beginning quarter:  $139.7/129.7 = 1.0771$
3. Subtract 1 from the quotient derived in number 2:  $1.0771 - 1 = 0.0771$
4. Multiply the value from number 3 by 100:  $0.0771 \times 100 = 7.71$
5. Round the value from number 4 to 1 decimal place: 7.7 percent

## B. How can I set up a wage escalation clause in a contract?

Following are recommended steps to employ when using escalation:

1. **Establish the costs to be escalated** - Specify labor cost component to escalate (wages and salaries, benefits costs, or total compensation); indicate the specific occupations covered; indicate the month or year of the base labor costs; and specify how long the contract will be in effect.
2. **Select an appropriate index and series** - Choose the index and series to use that is reflective of the occupations you are trying to escalate. An important consideration when choosing a series for escalation is the sampling error. Series with smaller numbers of workers may have larger sampling error or may be dominated by a small number of employers.
3. **Clearly identify the selected index and series** - Cite the index and series by its complete title. Specify sources for obtaining the index.
4. **State the frequency of escalation** - Time intervals such as quarterly, annually, etc.
5. **Provide for missing or discontinued data** - Procedures should be provided in the event that required data are missing or discontinued (although both are rare).
6. **Define the mechanics of price adjustment** - Simple percentage method, escalation of a portion of the base price, index points, composite indexes, or limits for price adjustment.

For more detailed information on escalator clauses, view "Escalation in Employer Costs for Employee Compensation: A Guide for Contracting Parties," *Compensation and Working Conditions*, Spring 1997, at <http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cwchome.htm>. (Prior issues can be found under *Archives*.)

# National Compensation Survey – Benefits

<http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/home.htm>

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) covers the incidence and detailed provisions of selected employee benefit plans in small private establishments, medium and large private establishments, and State and local governments. Data are presented as the percent of employees who have access to, or participate in, certain benefits or as average benefit provisions (for example, the average number of paid holidays provided to employees each year). Estimates are published by broad occupational groups, full- and part-time status of employees, union and nonunion status, and by broad geographic regions and industry sectors. The NCS provides incidence and extensive provisions data for two major benefit areas: (1) Health insurance and (2) Retirement, with both defined benefit and defined contribution components.

The NCS provides incidence and limited provisions data for the following benefits:

- Life insurance
- Leave
  - Vacations
  - Holidays
  - Sick leave
- Short- and long-term disability
- Work schedules
- Flexible benefit plans and reimbursement accounts

Some ways that data are presented include:

- Private sector occupational break outs by professional, technical, and related occupations; clerical and sales occupations; and blue-collar and service occupations
- Government occupational break outs by white-collar occupations, except teachers; teachers; blue-collar and service occupations

There are also data on access to: Educational assistance, wellness programs, employee assistance programs, non-production bonuses, severance pay, subsidized child care, adoption assistance, supplemental unemployment benefits, travel accident insurance, long-term care insurance, subsidized commuting, flexible work place, and fitness center benefits.

**Publications** (See page 13 for details of future publication plans.)

**Periodicity**

News releases

*Employee benefits in:*

Small private establishments	Biennial
Medium and large private establishments	Biennial
State and local governments	Biennial

Bulletins

*Employee benefits in:*

Small private establishments	Biennial
Medium and large private establishments	Biennial
State and local governments	Biennial

## Contact Information

General information	(202) 691-6199
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E-mail requests	<a href="mailto:ocltinfo@bls.gov">ocltinfo@bls.gov</a>

## Examples of Benefits Data Use

- ***Planning and improving company benefits*** – BLS data are commonly used as a guide, when companies choose provisions for their benefit plans. In addition, companies may improve benefit packages to remain competitive in the labor market. For example, a computer company may have a difficult time finding qualified computer engineers; or, a car dealership may not be able to attract the best salesperson. Instead of simply raising the wage, many companies will enhance or add new benefits.
- ***Lowering turnover rates*** – To attract and retain workers, employers may provide additional benefits. These prospective benefits can be traditional or emerging. Employers can search benefits data to evaluate benefits that employees are currently being offered nationwide.
- ***Aiding collective bargaining negotiations*** – Collective bargaining units go through renegotiation of their contracts at various times. The bargaining unit may want to add a new benefit such as subsidized commuting to an agreement. The bargaining unit and the employer can use benefits data to assist them in making decisions.
- ***Understanding health benefits data*** – Health benefits data are broken out into average contributions for medical coverage and average plan limits. A new company can reference these averages when selecting group health plan coverage—comparing the averages to proposals that health plan companies have given the new company. An established company can compare its current premiums paid for health benefits to the averages nationwide. This helps the established company assess its health benefits or negotiate contracts with health benefit companies.
- ***Assessing and formulating public policy*** – BLS benefits data were used to design defined-benefit and thrift and savings plans for Federal employees. In the debate over a universal health care system, EBS data on employee premium sharing were considered in formulating proposals. Data on the amount of retirement income from employer plans has helped to frame the debate over Social Security reform. Additionally, policy makers used benefits data when drafting the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.
- ***Researching current benefit issues*** – Students, consultants, and researchers use benefits data frequently. Students may be writing a thesis or trying to identify a noteworthy item on which to focus an assignment. Consultants may be trying to recommend benefit actions to a company or provide supporting data to clients. Researchers sometimes want to investigate a particular issue in benefits or may focus on a few years of previous data to develop research on trends or other benefit issues.

## Common Benefits Data Use Question

*I understand that benefits data are going to be changing in format and compilation. Could you explain how these data will change?*

Previously, State unemployment insurance (UI) reports for the 50 States and the District of Columbia were used as the list from which the sample was selected – the *sampling frame*. The sample design was a 2-stage probability sample of detailed occupations. The first stage of sample selection was the probability sample of establishments; the second stage was a probability sample of occupations within those establishments.

Data were collected in three surveys: medium and large private establishments in odd years and small private establishments and State and local governments in even years. With the exception of broad incidence data, which were produced by major region, all NCS benefits data were national. Data were presented for three broad occupational groupings: Professional, technical, and related; clerical and sales; and blue-collar and service employees. Broad incidence data were also available by goods- and service-producing, union affiliation, and full- and part-time status.

The benefits sample of establishments was a subset of the ECI sample. It included establishments having 100 employees or more at the time of selection for medium and large private establishments; and employers with fewer than 100 employees for small private establishments and all State and local governments.

The last benefits publication under the old survey design is the 1998 bulletin on Employee Benefits in State and Local Government Establishments. Beginning with the 1999 news release on Employee Benefits in Private Industry, benefits data are collected and published as part of the National Compensation Survey (NCS) program. All private industry establishments, regardless of size, will be studied each year, and data on incidence and key provisions for all benefits plans and detailed plan provisions for healthcare and retirement plans will be collected. Publications will be enhanced over the next several years, as more detailed data are added to the survey collection process. We plan to publish all incidence and provisions data with greater detail by industry group, occupational group, metropolitan area, census region, establishment size, profit versus nonprofit status, and time versus incentive status, as well as cross-tabulations including percentage of costs borne by employees.



# Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

<http://www.bls.gov/iif/home.htm>

The **Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses** (SOII) provides national data on the number and frequency of injuries and illnesses in private industry. Counts and incidence rates by industry are available for:

- Total recordable cases
- Lost workday cases
- Cases with days away from work
- Cases with days of restricted work activity only
- Cases without lost workdays

Illness counts and rates are also available for seven categories of illnesses, including skin diseases and disorders and disorders associated with repeated trauma.

This survey also profiles demographics of the injured or ill worker and the characteristics of those cases that involve days away from work. Demographic data are available by occupation, age, sex, race, and length of service.

Case characteristic information is available as a count, percent distribution of cases, and frequency rate. Cases are described according to the:

- Nature of the disabling condition
- Part of body affected
- Event or exposure leading to condition
- Source (what directly produced or inflicted condition)

Number of days away from work are provided, including the median number of days and a distribution of the number days away from work per case.

## Publications

News releases

*Occupational Injuries and Illnesses*

*Occupational Injuries and Illnesses by Selected Characteristics*

## Periodicity

Annual

Annual

Bulletin

*Occupational Injuries and Illnesses: Counts, Rates, and Characteristics*

Annual

Report

*Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (rates and numbers)*

Annual

## Contact Information

General information

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Fax requests

(202) 691-6325

E-mail requests

[oshstaff@bls.gov](mailto:oshstaff@bls.gov)

# Examples of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Data Use

- ***Injury and illnesses comparisons*** – Incidence rates are given by industry, establishment size, and for many case types. Using incidence rates allows a firm to evaluate its injury and illness experience and compare its experience to other firms doing the same type of work and in the same employment size group.
- ***Understanding types of injuries and illnesses*** – Specific case and demographic data are available from the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, and fatality data are available from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries.
- ***Disarming potential hazards in the workplace*** – Employers and employees can access definitive statistics on what kinds of serious injuries and illnesses occur to others whose work and workforce size are similar to theirs. BLS safety and health data permit employers to learn the circumstances surrounding those incidents, so they can disarm potential hazards at their company.
- ***Implementing safety and health State programs*** – Policy makers need to know how the safety and health of workers in their State compares with that of workers in other States doing comparable work. This survey helps these managers determine any additional need for State safety and health programs.
- ***Developing effective training packages and educational materials*** – Safety and health consultants need to understand job hazards fully in order to develop these packages and materials. This survey collects information on work activity that can help consultants piece together what precipitated a particular accident or exposure.
- ***Researching particular safety problems*** – Researchers frequently need to direct limited resources at widespread problems, such as proper manual lifting techniques and the best designs for tools, safety gear, and ergonomic equipment. Researchers find these survey data useful in focusing on these work problems.
- ***Examining injury and illness severity*** – The number of workdays lost or on which work is restricted is collected for individual cases involving days away from work. The severity of various worker and case characteristic categories, such as back injuries and wrist and hand disorders, can be compared. This information is useful to employers and others in setting their priorities for preventing injuries and illnesses.
- ***Safety inspections*** – Safety inspectors need to know how best to allocate their time among and within establishments. By identifying the types of establishments in which injuries and illnesses most frequently occur and the characteristics of injuries and illnesses, these survey data help in selecting which firms to visit and the hazards for which to look. These visits are also opportunities for inspector and employer to consult on ways to eliminate work hazards.

# Common Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

## Data Use Question

### *How can I compute my firm's incidence rate for safety management?*

Incidence rates can be used to show the relative level of injuries and illnesses among different industries, firms, or operations within a single firm. Because a common base and a specific period of time are involved, these rates can help determine both problem areas and progress in preventing work-related injuries and illnesses.

An incidence rate of occupational injuries and illnesses can be calculated quickly and easily. The formula requires:

- (a) ***The number of nonfatal injuries and illnesses.*** Count the number of OSHA recordable cases for the year from the Log and Summary of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (Log) OSHA No. 200, or note the TOTALS line for the yearly total on the Log for nonfatal injuries and illnesses with lost workdays and injuries and illnesses without lost workdays. (The number of injuries and illnesses can also be obtained from the BLS Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses form, if your company was surveyed for the calendar year for which incidence rates are desired.)
- (b) ***The number of hours all employees actually worked.*** Use payroll or other time records. *Hours worked* should not include any non-work time, such as vacation, sick leave, holidays, etc., even though paid. (If actual hours worked are not available for employees paid on commission, by salary, or by the mile, etc., hours worked may be estimated on the basis of scheduled hours or 8 hours per workday.)

An incidence rate of injuries and illnesses can be computed from the following formula:

$$(\text{Number of injuries and illnesses} \times 200,000) / \text{Employee hours worked} = \text{incidence rate}$$

(The 200,000 hours in the formula represents the equivalent of 100 employees working 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year and provides the standard base for the incidence rates.) You can use the same formula to compute incidence rates for:

- Lost workday injury and illness cases
- Lost workday injury-only cases
- Lost workday illness-only cases
- Injury and illness cases without lost workdays
- Injury-only cases without lost workdays
- Illness-only cases without lost workdays

NOTE: When comparing rates for illnesses or characteristics of injury and illness cases with days away from work, use 20,000,000 hours instead of 200,000 hours to get a rate per 10,000 full-time employees.

# Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

<http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm>

The BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) provides data on fatal workplace injuries and how they occur.

Workplace fatality data are presented by industry and occupation and are cross-tabulated by selected demographic data and case characteristics.

Demographic data:

- Sex
- Age
- Race
- Occupation
- Industry of employer
- Wage and salary workers
- Self-employed workers
- Government workers

Case characteristics:

Event or exposure

- ◆ Transportation incidents
- ◆ Homicides
- ◆ Falls
- ◆ Fires and explosions
- ◆ Struck by objects
- ◆ Electrocutions

Source and secondary source of injury

- ◆ Machinery
- ◆ Tools and equipment
- ◆ Vehicles
- ◆ Chemicals
- ◆ Parts and materials

State and area data are also available by:

- Major event or exposure
- Major industry division
- Major occupational group
- Selected metropolitan area

## Publications

News release

*Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries*

Report

*Fatal Workplace Injuries: A Collection of Data and Analysis*

Articles

*Compensation and Working Conditions*

## Periodicity

Annual

Annual

Occasional

## Contact Information

General information

(202) 691-6175

E-mail requests

[cfoistaff@bls.gov](mailto:cfoistaff@bls.gov)

## Examples of CFOI Data Use

- ***Increasing safety awareness*** – CFOI data provide employers and their workers with information on life-threatening hazards associated with particular industries, occupations, equipment, and activities.
- ***Setting priorities*** – CFOI data are used by policy analysts to set priorities in developing injury prevention efforts and in directing resources appropriately.
- ***Conducting research*** – Researchers use CFOI data to determine patterns in occupational fatalities by industry, occupation, worker demographics, and types of fatal event.
- ***Assessing safety standards*** – Safety professionals use CFOI data to assess and improve existing safety standards.

# Common CFOI Data Use Questions

***A. I'm conducting a safety training session for a construction firm. Where can I get information on the number and types of fatalities that occur in the construction industry?***

The construction industry averaged over 1,100 fatal occupational injuries per year between 1994 and 1999. The annual BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries news release provides tables and a brief analysis of these and other occupational fatality cases by industry and occupation and provides information on demographics, type of fatal event, and the State of incident. This news release, along with additional, more detailed tables, is available on the BLS Safety and Health website: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm>. The CFOI Program also produces an annual publication, which presents a comprehensive set of tables detailing the results for that particular year and includes recently published research articles on related topics. These sources can be useful in developing a safety presentation for construction—or for any other industry.

***B. I've been hearing a lot lately about workplace violence. Is it true that workplace homicide is on the increase?***

Actually, the number of workplace homicides has declined in recent years. Looking at chart 2 of the 1999 CFOI news release, one can see a dramatic drop in job-related homicides, from 1,080 in 1994 to 645 in 1999. In addition, although it is commonly believed that workplace homicide typically occurs among co-workers, robbery has been shown to be the primary motive behind job-related homicides. The article, "Work-related Homicides: The Facts" in the Spring 2000 issue of *Compensation and Working Conditions (CWC)* provides a detailed look at this problem. (CWC website: <http://www.bls.gov/pub/cwc/cwchome.htm>. Prior issues can be found under *Archives*.)

***C. How can I get a quick fact or two about fatalities in a certain industry or occupation over a period of years?***

BLS recently added a web-based search tool to find basic fatality information. This new application can be found under the *Selective Access* section of the BLS Website: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm>. Also, a Safety and Health Statistics section can be found in the Bureau's periodical *Compensation and Working Conditions*.

# Collective Bargaining

<http://www.bls.gov/cba/home.htm>

The collective bargaining agreements file, which holds private sector and State and local government agreements covering 1,000 workers or more, has been maintained by BLS since 1947. Currently, this file contains agreements for some 2,200 bargaining situations. The file room is in Washington, D.C., and is open to the public Monday through Friday. A list of the bargaining situations for which BLS has contracts can also be found at <http://www.bls.gov/cba/cbaindex.htm>. Bargaining situations listed online are updated twice a year. If you are not sure whether you are viewing the most recent agreement, call one of the collective bargaining agreement file telephone numbers listed below.

The **Work Stoppages** program continues to publish data in the quarterly periodical, *Compensation and Working Conditions*, and in the annual news release on major work stoppages. (Major work stoppages are those strikes or lockouts that idle 1,000 workers or more.) Current issues of *Compensation and Working Conditions* are available at: <http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cwchome.htm>.

## Contact Information

File room location:

Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Division of Compensation Data Analysis and Planning  
Room 4175  
2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE  
Washington, DC 20212

Collective bargaining agreements file	(202) 691-6282
	(202) 691-6284
	(202) 691-6288
	(202) 691-6275
	(202) 691-6281
Work stoppages	(202) 691-6282
	(202) 691-6281

## Examples of Collective Bargaining Uses

- **Mediators and arbitrators** – When there are disputes in collective bargaining contracts, mediators and arbitrators can review other company agreements for insights into approaches for resolution.
- **Economic researchers and analysts** – In analyzing growing trends, researchers and analysts can view collective bargaining agreements to see what types of benefits and issues are covered by an agreement. They can also look for emerging issues that may influence the future direction of bargaining.
- **Labor unions** – When a union is newly formed or is renegotiating a contract, union officers can view other bargaining contracts. This allows union officers to make informed decisions about topics and contract language to include or not include in contract negotiations.
- **Lawyers** – In cases involving labor issues, lawyers can view various collective bargaining agreements for comparison or inclusion in their arguments or to understand what provisions were in effect at a specific point in time.
- **Educators and students** – College students can use the Collective Bargaining Agreements file to obtain research material necessary for a thesis or project in classes such as labor economics or human resources management or in law school. High school students can use the file to gain an understanding of unions or labor negotiations.
- **Business or trade associations and professional groups** – These groups can compare information on wages, hours, and working conditions for various trades or occupations in their own or other regions of the country.
- **Consultants** – Companies and unions often hire consultants to research trends in collective bargaining agreements. These consultants are sometimes given a particular focus, such as contracting out of bargaining unit work, and are required to research the topic in detail. Consultants can use collective bargaining file information to compile comparative data on a particular topic.
- **Employers and employer associations** – Employers may want to understand how other employers have addressed various collective bargaining issues. In dealing with a bargaining unit on a sensitive item, an employer can back up its opinions with documentation on how other employers have handled the same issue.
- **Practitioners in human resources and industrial relations** – Practitioners can survey contracts of other companies to compare particular issues in a pending contract. They can review the technical language used in writing or amending collective bargaining agreements.



# Common Collective Bargaining Questions

## ***A. What types of subjects are commonly seen in collective bargaining agreements?***

A collective bargaining agreement typically contains helpful information regarding the following:

- Wage rates
- Cost-of-living adjustments
- Supplemental pay – premium pay for overtime and work on weekends and holidays, shift differentials, and lump-sum payments
- Insurance benefits – health care, disability, life, and sickness and accident
- Pension benefits – defined benefit, defined contribution, and savings and thrift
- Leave – paid and unpaid vacations, holidays, and sick leave
- Health and safety issues
- Work and family issues
- Job and income security
- Training and educational assistance
- Grievance and arbitration procedures
- Profit-sharing and employee stock option plans

## ***B. How can I use the file?***

Agreements may be examined at our office during normal business hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Agreements may not be taken from the premises, but copies may be made.

Those unable to visit the office may also obtain copies of agreements. Up to 100 pages will be photocopied free of charge. If additional pages are required, there is a charge of \$25.00, plus 25 cents for each page in excess of 100. An estimate of the cost of copying a particular agreement will be given upon request. Billing will be made through the Bureau's Division of Financial Planning and Management.

## ***Compensation and Working Conditions (CWC)***

<http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cwchome.htm>

*Compensation and Working Conditions (CWC)* is published quarterly by the Office of Compensation and Working Conditions. The *CWC* reports on employee compensation, including wages, salaries, benefits, and occupational injuries and illnesses. In addition, the *CWC* contains a current statistical section on employer costs for employee compensation, employee benefits, safety and health, collective bargaining, and other workplace issues.

Subscriptions to *Compensation and Working Conditions* are available by mail, phone, or fax. Subscription price per year: \$19.00 domestic; \$23.75 foreign. **Make checks payable to Superintendent of Documents.**

### **Mail orders:**

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P.O. Box 371954

Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954

**Orders by phone:** (202) 512-1800

**Orders by fax:** (202) 512-2250

Correspondence concerning subscriptions, including requests for missing copies, should be sent to:

Superintendent of Documents  
U.S. Government Printing Office  
Washington, D.C. 20402-0001

Phone: (202) 512-1806

Fax: (202) 512-2168

*Compensation and Working Conditions* also is available on the Internet: **<http://www.bls.gov/opub/cwc/cwchome.htm>**.

## Tools for Data Use

There are many tools available on the BLS website to help users quickly access OCWC data. These tools include the following:

- **Most Requested Statistics** – Using the *Most Requested Statistics* application, users can quickly obtain BLS time series data by selecting from a list that represents the most frequently requested survey data.
- **Public Data Query** – Users of the *Public Data Query* can specify parameters from the data menu and receive instant data output. (This tool requires a Java-enabled browser and takes a few moments to load, as the *Query* is accessing a very large database.)
- **Selective Access** – If a user's computer does not have a Java-enabled browser or is having difficulty running the *Public Data Query*, *Selective Access* can be used to obtain data. *Selective Access* takes the user through a series of questions in order to narrow the data to the selected parameters. (This tool provides the same data as the *Public Data Query*.)
- **Search** – The *Search* feature allows users to enter keyword(s) and receive all documents containing the keyword(s). Users can also specify surveys on which to concentrate the search. This tool is particularly helpful to users who are searching for articles written on a particular topic.
- **BLS News Service** – The news service is a free subscription service that provides a user with news releases delivered directly to their computer by e-mail.

Tools can be accessed through the homepage of the survey or program in which you are interested. The following is a breakdown of each survey or program and the tools available:

Survey or program name	Tools				
	Most Re-quested Statistics	Public Data Query	Selective Access	Search	BLS News Service
National Compensation Survey – Wages <a href="http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ocs/home.htm</a>		✓	✓	✓	
National Compensation Survey – ECI and ECEC <a href="http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ect/home.htm</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
National Compensation Survey – Benefits <a href="http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/home.htm</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Occupational Injuries and Illnesses <a href="http://www.bls.gov/iif/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/iif/home.htm</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Collective Bargaining <a href="http://www.bls.gov/cba/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/cba/home.htm</a>	✓	✓	✓		

## Your Contacts for Labor Statistics

Bureau of Labor Statistics Information Offices can help meet your economic information needs and can answer questions about your participation in BLS surveys.

### **Boston**

JFK Federal Building, E-310  
15 New Sudbury Street  
Boston, MA 02203-1603  
Phone: (617) 565-2327  
Fax: (617) 565-4182

### **Chicago**

Federal Office Building, 9th Floor  
230 S. Dearborn Street  
Chicago, IL 60604-1595  
Phone: (312) 353-1880  
Fax: (312) 353-1886

### **New York**

Room 808  
201 Varick Street  
New York, NY 10014-4811  
Phone: (212) 337-2400  
Fax: (212) 337-2532

### **Dallas**

Federal Building  
525 Griffith Street, Room 221  
Dallas, TX 75202-5028  
Phone: (214) 767-6970  
Fax: (214) 767-3720

### **Philadelphia**

Suite 610 East, The Curtis Center  
170 S. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3305  
Phone: (215) 597-3282  
Fax: (215) 861-5720

### **Kansas City**

City Center Square  
1100 Main, Suite 600  
Kansas City, MO 64105-2112  
Phone: (816) 426-2481  
Fax: (816) 426-6537

### **Atlanta**

Room 7T50  
61 Forsyth Street, SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303-8930  
Phone: (404) 331-3415  
Fax: (404) 331-3445

### **San Francisco**

71 Stevenson Street  
P.O. Box 193766  
San Francisco, CA 94119-3766  
Phone: (415) 975-4350  
Fax: (415) 975-4371

# Other Sources for Compensation and Working Conditions Data

Phone numbers begin with area code (202)

Topic	Name of source	Phone number	Internet address
COBRA issues	Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration	219-8776	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba">http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba</a>
Earnings, by demographics	Labor Force Statistics	691-6378	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm</a>
Earnings, by employment status	Labor Force Statistics	691-6378	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm</a>
Earnings, by industry (State and local)	Current Employment Statistics	691-6559	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/sae/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/sae/home.htm</a>
Earnings, by industry (U.S.)	Current Employment Statistics	691-6555	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm</a>
Earnings, national occupational	<i>Occupational Outlook Handbook</i>	691-5700	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/emp/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/emp/home.htm</a>
Earnings, real	Current Employment Statistics	691-6555	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/ces/home.htm</a>
ERISA issues	Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration	219-8776	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba">http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba</a>
Foreign compensation costs	Foreign Labor Statistics	691-5654	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/fls/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/fls/home.htm</a>
Health benefits	Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration	219-8776	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba">http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba</a>
Laws, benefits	Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration	219-8921	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba">http://www.dol.gov/dol/pwba</a>
Laws, compensation	Employment Standards Administration	693-0051	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa">http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa</a>
Laws, working conditions	Occupational Safety and Health Administration	693-1999	<a href="http://www.osha.gov">http://www.osha.gov</a>
Pay levels	Covered Employment and Wages	691-6561	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/cew/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/cew/home.htm</a>
Safety issues	Occupational Safety and Health Administration	693-1999	<a href="http://www.osha.gov">http://www.osha.gov</a>
Wage levels	Occupational Employment Statistics	691-6569	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/oes/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/oes/home.htm</a>
Wages, by industry, county; ownership	Covered Employment and Wages	691-6561	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/cew/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/cew/home.htm</a>
Wages, minimum	Labor Force Statistics	691-6378	<a href="http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm">http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm</a>
Wages, prevailing – construction	Employment Standards Administration	693-0087	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa">http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa</a>
Wages, prevailing – services	Employment Standards Administration	693-0073	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa">http://www.dol.gov/dol/esa</a>