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SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas
 Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest
 Media contact: (972) 850-4800

Occupational Employment and Wages in New Orleans–Metairie – May 2019

Workers in the New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$22.45 in May 2019, 13 percent below the nationwide average of \$25.72, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Acting Regional Commissioner Michael Hirniak noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including protective service; computer and mathematical; and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance. However, local production worker wages were substantially higher than the national average.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, New Orleans area employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups including food preparation and serving related, healthcare practitioners and technical, and protective service. Nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production, computer and mathematical, and business and financial operations. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2019

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
	United States	New Orleans		United States	New Orleans		
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0		\$25.72	\$22.45	*	-13
Management	5.5	5.2	*	58.88	51.68	*	-12
Business and financial operations	5.6	4.4	*	37.56	32.53	*	-13
Computer and mathematical	3.1	1.3	*	45.08	36.24	*	-20
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.8		42.69	44.01		3
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	0.8	*	37.28	33.95	*	-9
Community and social service.....	1.5	1.4	*	24.27	22.14	*	-9
Legal.....	0.8	1.2	*	52.71	45.55	*	-14
Educational instruction and library	6.1	6.1		27.75	23.50	*	-15
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.4	1.6		29.79	23.30	*	-22
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	7.1	*	40.21	34.65	*	-14
Healthcare support	4.4	3.6	*	14.91	12.69	*	-15
Protective service	2.4	3.3	*	23.98	18.74	*	-22
Food preparation and serving related	9.2	12.2	*	12.82	10.81	*	-16
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.0	3.0		15.03	12.21	*	-19
Personal care and service.....	2.2	2.5	*	15.03	12.48	*	-17
Sales and related	9.8	10.5	*	20.70	17.67	*	-15
Office and administrative support.....	13.3	12.8	*	19.73	17.87	*	-9
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	15.07	19.60	*	30

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2019 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
	United States	New Orleans		United States	New Orleans		
Construction and extraction.....	4.2	4.2		25.28	22.10	*	-13
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.2	*	24.10	23.11	*	-4
Production	6.2	4.3	*	19.30	22.61	*	17
Transportation and material moving.....	8.5	8.6		18.23	18.98		4

Footnotes:

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

Note: * 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—transportation and material moving—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. New Orleans had 47,990 jobs in transportation and material moving occupations, accounting for 8.6 percent of local area employment, compared to 8.5 percent nationwide. The local average hourly wage for this occupational group was \$18.98, compared to the national average of \$18.23.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the transportation and material moving group included hand laborers and freight, stock, and material movers (11,200), stockers and order fillers (7,170), and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (4,440). Among the higher-paying jobs in this group were captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, as well as ship engineers, with mean hourly wages of \$58.66 and \$37.50, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were parking attendants (\$9.82) and cleaners of vehicles and equipment (\$10.80). (Detailed data for transportation and material moving occupations are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete list go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.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 New Orleans area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the detailed occupations within the transportation and material moving group. For instance, sailors and marine oilers were employed at 28.5 times the national rate in the New Orleans area, and captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels, at 18.8 times the U.S. average. These two location quotients in New Orleans were among the highest in all the published metropolitan areas nationwide for these particular occupations. On the other hand, light truck drivers had a location quotient of 1.0 in the greater New Orleans area, 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 Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Changes to the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Data

With the May 2019 estimates, the OES program has begun implementing the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Each set of OES estimates is calculated from six panels of survey data collected over three years. Because the May 2019 estimates are based on a combination of survey data collected using the 2010 SOC and survey data collected using the 2018 SOC, these estimates use a hybrid of the two classification systems that contains some combinations of occupations that are not found in either the 2010 or 2018 SOC. These combinations may include occupations from more than one 2018 SOC minor group or broad occupation. Therefore, OES will not publish data for some 2018 SOC minor groups and broad occupations in the May 2019 estimates. The May 2021 estimates, to be published in Spring 2022, will be the first OES estimates based entirely on survey data collected using the 2018 SOC.

In addition, the OES program has replaced some 2018 SOC detailed occupations with SOC broad occupations or OES-specific aggregations. These include home health aides and personal care aides, for which OES will publish only the 2018 SOC broad occupation 31-1120 Home Health and Personal Care Aides.

For more information on the occupational classification system used in the May 2019 OES estimates, please see www.bls.gov/oes/soc_2018.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm#qf10.

The May 2019 OES estimates use the metropolitan area definitions delineated in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin 17-01, which add a new Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for Twin Falls, Idaho. For more information on the area definitions used in the May 2019 estimates, please see www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm.

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 580 areas, including states and the District of Columbia, metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs), nonmetropolitan areas, and territories; national industry-specific estimates at the NAICS sector, 3-digit, most 4-digit, 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.

The OES survey is a cooperative effort between BLS and the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). BLS funds the survey and provides the procedures and technical support, while the State Workforce Agencies collect most of the data. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.1 million establishments. Each year, two semiannual panels of approximately 180,000 to 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 2019 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2019, November 2018, May 2018, November 2017, May 2017, and November 2016. The unweighted sampled employment of 83 million across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57 percent of total national employment. The overall national response rate for the six panels, based on the 50 states and the District of Columbia, is 71 percent based on establishments and 68

percent based on weighted sampled employment. The sample in the New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area included 3,917 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_tec.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.

The May 2019 OES estimates are the first set of OES estimates to be based in part on survey data collected using the 2018 SOC. These estimates use a hybrid of the 2010 and 2018 SOC systems. More information on the hybrid classification system is available at www.bls.gov/oes/soc_2018.htm.

The May 2019 OES estimates are based on the 2017 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). More information about the 2017 NAICS is available at 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 **New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes.

For more information

Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed information about the OES program is available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_doc.htm.

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 for transportation and material moving occupations, New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2019

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	47,990	1.0	\$18.98	\$39,480
Aircraft cargo handling supervisors.....	40	1.1	26.87	55,880
First-line supervisors of transportation and material moving workers, except aircraft cargo handling supervisors.....	2,090	1.2	27.23	56,640
Commercial pilots.....	70	0.5	(4)	124,560
Air traffic controllers.....	80	0.9	43.74	90,980
Airfield operations specialists.....	30	0.8	18.70	38,890
Ambulance drivers and attendants, except emergency medical technicians.....	(5)	(5)	13.26	27,580
Driver/sales workers.....	1,330	0.8	13.24	27,540
Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers.....	4,440	0.6	21.77	45,270
Light truck drivers.....	3,490	1.0	18.36	38,180
Bus drivers, transit and intercity.....	1,210	1.8	15.41	32,060
Passenger vehicle drivers, except bus drivers, transit and intercity.....	1,360	0.5	14.31	29,770
Motor vehicle operators, all other.....	380	1.8	13.71	28,510
Sailors and marine oilers.....	3,390	28.5	20.63	42,900
Captains, mates, and pilots of water vessels.....	2,380	18.8	58.66	122,010
Ship engineers.....	350	10.9	37.50	77,990
Bridge and lock tenders.....	120	10.3	18.66	38,800
Parking attendants.....	860	1.5	9.82	20,420
Automotive and watercraft service attendants.....	570	1.3	13.20	27,470
Traffic technicians.....	30	1.2	18.73	38,950
Passenger attendants.....	(5)	(5)	12.10	25,180
Aircraft service attendants and transportation workers, all other.....	850	6.4	16.93	35,220
Conveyor operators and tenders.....	(5)	(5)	16.31	33,930
Crane and tower operators.....	770	4.4	25.64	53,330
Dredge operators.....	40	6.4	19.72	41,020
Industrial truck and tractor operators.....	1,930	0.8	18.47	38,410
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment.....	950	0.7	10.80	22,470
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand....	11,200	1.0	14.28	29,690
Packers and packagers, hand.....	670	0.3	12.83	26,680
Stockers and order fillers.....	7,170	0.9	12.50	25,990
Pump operators, except wellhead pumpers.....	150	4.0	22.64	47,090
Refuse and recyclable material collectors.....	350	0.8	17.54	36,490
Tank car, truck, and ship loaders.....	440	9.9	22.31	46,400
Material moving workers, all other.....	(5)	(5)	17.79	36,990

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the New Orleans-Metairie, LA Metropolitan Statistical Area, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations may not sum to the totals due to rounding, and because the totals may include occupations that 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) Estimates not released.