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Helpful Links

Labor Market Publications
Nebraska INFOlink - Employment Data
Previous Issues
NEworks.nebraska.gov
Reader Feedback Survey

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Nebraska Workforce Trends is published by the Nebraska Department of Labor - Labor Market Information in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program provides information on employment and wages for hundreds of occupations. Data is gathered for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) from semi-annual surveys of non-farm establishments for all full-time and part-time employees conducted by state agencies. Surveys are conducted twice a year to take a snapshot of the state’s economy at different points in time. The year is split into two survey panels; one in May and the other in November. Both survey panels ask employers to provide information on their employment on the 12th of that month so states can collect job titles and wages for all employees during the same payroll period.

The OES Process

The survey materials used to gather OES data are produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The sample of establishments surveyed is selected from those reporting unemployment insurance in each state. Sampled areas include establishments in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas in every state, across all surveyed industries and varying businesses sizes. Sample sizes vary by state. In Nebraska, an average panel consists of around 1,800 businesses or 3,600 businesses in a calendar year.

To begin a panel, a state analyst mails out a pre-notification letter to the majority of selected establishments and makes phone calls to businesses in the panel to confirm the appropriate contact information for that business. This process is meant to speed up the collection process times and make sure the reports are getting to the right person and department of an establishment. After a business receives the information requesting their participation in the survey, they have multiple ways of reporting the data. Establishments can respond to surveys by uploading an Excel file to a secure website, or by fax, phone, or mail.

A sample survey form is above. Once data is received, the establishment’s identity is hidden and linked to a general location. A state analyst then will take the information provided and give each reported job title a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code based on work performed.

The Standard Occupational Codes are broken into 23 different major groups from management positions to military occupations, covering all non-farm establishments across Nebraska. The 23 major groups then break down into minor groups for finer detail. Analysts then give each listed title the correct occupation codes. After the analyst has assigned an occupation code to the job title, a wage code based on the wage provided (as seen in example on page 3) is also assigned. In cases where establishments do not respond, analysts follow up by telephone or email. Once the data is collected and entered, files are sent to be reviewed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for accuracy.
After that, a file is sent to the states, with suggestions, corrections and further direction to clear up any discrepancies.

**Publishing the Data**

Each year, the Nebraska Department of Labor publishes employment and wage information by occupation based on the OES survey. This information is used for different types of requests from schools to economic developers and even businesses looking to move into a particular area. All wages are updated quarterly using the Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors, which are based on the annual data release; employment estimates are not changed each quarter. For example, if you look up 4th quarter 2017 data, that information is based on the May 2016 Occupation Employment Statistics surveys.¹

OES occupation and wage data for the most recent quarter available can be viewed on the NEworks website at [http://neworks.nebraska.gov/oeswage](http://neworks.nebraska.gov/oeswage). An example for entry level, median, and experienced wages for teacher assistants is shown below. Other OES information, such as wages by location, is also available on NEworks.² OES data is also available online at [http://neblswages.nwd.ne.gov/eds.php](http://neblswages.nwd.ne.gov/eds.php). This site includes access to occupational employment and wages within different industries as well as historical wage estimates that are not available on the NEworks site.

### Quarterly Occupational Wage Employment and Annual Wage Data, Teacher Assistants in Nebraska, Q4 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate Type/Statistical Type</th>
<th>Entry Level</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual wage or salary</td>
<td>$21,807</td>
<td>$25,209</td>
<td>$27,521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hourly Wage</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Occupation Employment Statistics.

**The Auto-Coder**

This year is gearing up to be an exciting time for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as they are moving towards a greater focus in uniform coding consistency across all states. In early 2018, states began participating in uploading files to the auto-coder, and in November will begin implementing the new 2018 Standard Occupation Classification codes.

The auto-coder is a process in which states upload Microsoft Excel files and receive potential occupational codes back to review. States have been training the auto-coder for several years using the programs provided through the Bureau of Labor Statistics for occupational coding and data entry, then uploading files to the national database and sending files to regional and national offices. This process enables the auto-coder to learn different occupations and job titles along with all the abbreviations and acronyms that are provided from the states through the OES surveys.

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**Current SOC Coding Process**

Analysts receive data from surveys

Analysts assign codes to each job title based on survey information.

Preliminary list of codes is sent to regional & national offices for review.

Analysts implement feedback/revisions from regional & national offices.
SOC Coding Process Using Auto-Coder

Analysts receive and compile data into spreadsheet ➔ File is uploaded to auto-coder ➔ Auto-coder generates report with two codes per job title and their probability scores ➔ Analysts receive report and assign codes

The national office then takes those files that they have received and loads them through a process called auto-batching where the software learns reported job titles over time in a particular industry based on submitted files from the states.

When an analyst receives a file back from the auto-coder, there are two codes provided with a calculated probability score. State analysts then look at all codes returned and make sure that every code provided is the correct occupation code for that corresponding industry and business. By this training process, the accuracy of the auto-coder should lead to a greater consistency in occupational coding across different states. However, the process is still in its infancy at this time and all data is manually reviewed for accuracy.

2018 Standard Occupation Classification Codes

In November of 2018, the BLS will release a new batch of Standard Occupational Codes for the first time in 9 years. The 2018 SOC system will contain 867 detailed occupations, a gain of 27 detailed occupations from 2010. In the new 2018 system, a total of 391 occupations will remain unchanged. About 355 occupations will have a definition change, 131 will have a title change and 115 will have a code change, leaving about 88% of all codes unchanged. Many of these changes will be in the computer and mathematical and healthcare practitioners groups. These code changes will lead to even greater accuracy pinpointing occupations for more specific occupational profiles and clearer data.

As job structures, staffing patterns and industries change, the Bureau of Labor Statistics is trying to stay on top of getting new occupation titles updated, along with finer detail in breakouts of previously clumped together occupations, to make sure that users of our data can have the information and quality statistics they need.

Sources:
Nebraska Statehood Day

Jodie Meyer, Research Analyst

Date of Statehood - March 1, 1867

Population

- Nebraska Territory, 1860: 28,841
- Nebraska (state), 1870: 122,993
- Nebraska - July 1, 2017: 1,920,076

Demographic Statistics, 2016

Population by Gender

- Male: 49.8%
- Female: 50.2%

Population by Age

- 75.1% Population age 18 and older
- 15% Population age 65 and older
- 36.3 Median age in Nebraska

Nebraska Population by Race, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>2016 Population Estimate</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,674,863</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>89,879</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>15,865</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>41,548</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1,227</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race</td>
<td>38,348</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>45,386</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nebraska Rankings

December 2017 Preliminary Unemployment Rate: **4th lowest in U.S. at 2.7**

Percentage of People 16 to 64 years who are in the labor force, including armed forces: **3rd at 80.9 percent**

Occupation and Industry Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Largest</th>
<th>Highest paying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation, 4th Quarter 2017</strong></td>
<td><strong>Occupation, 2nd Quarter 2017</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>Orthodontists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29,780 employed</td>
<td>$149.33/hr (average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry, 2nd Quarter 2017</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average Weekly Wages (Industry) 2nd Quarter 2017</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90,999 avg. employment</td>
<td>$1,811/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Establishments (Industry) 2nd Quarter 2017</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,622 establishments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources:
Wages of Farmworkers and Laborers

Jennifer Gildersleeve, Research Analyst

Annual Mean Wage of Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery and Greenhouse, May 2016

Farmworkers and laborers manually plant, cultivate, and harvest fruits, nuts, vegetables, and field crops. They may also clean, grade, pack and load harvested products, repair fences and farm buildings, or participate in irrigation activities. Common industries employing those in this occupation include support activities for crop production, miscellaneous nondurable goods merchant wholesalers, and lawn and garden equipment and supplies stores. There were an estimated 273,450 workers employed in this occupation in May of 2016 across the country, with an estimated 800 employed in Nebraska. The average hourly wage nationwide was $11.45. The average annual wage is calculated by multiplying the average hourly wage by 2,080 hours. Nationwide, the average annual wage for this occupation was $23,820. The map above displays the average annual wage for this occupation by state in May of 2016.1

(Continued on next page)
In May of 2016, Nebraska was the top paying state in the country for this occupation, with an annual mean wage of $33,290—nearly $10,000 more than the national average. Other top-paying states in this occupation included Illinois, Nevada, Alaska, and Delaware, with annual wages ranging from $29,340-$30,930. Grand Island, Neb. had the second highest annual mean wage for a metropolitan area at $41,480 (this represents an hourly wage of $19.94). There were an estimated 150 workers in this occupation in the Grand Island area in May of 2016. More information on this occupation is available on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website.

Source:

Openings & Expansions

Kermit Spade, Research Analyst

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Category</th>
<th>Business Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail/Sales</td>
<td>Adorned Bridal</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Entertainment</td>
<td>Country Cookin’ (relocation)</td>
<td>Beatrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh Thyme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flanders Foods (expansion, 30-50 jobs)</td>
<td>Hastings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McDonald’s (new location)</td>
<td>North Platte/Lexington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>Arbor Psychiatric and Wellness Center</td>
<td>Beatrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Services</td>
<td>Sandler Training</td>
<td>Omaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Coast Business Advisors</td>
<td>Omaha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McCook Mechanical Services</td>
<td>McCook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Openings and expansions listed are a sampling of activity reported for that month. Some activity may have occurred outside the month. If you have an opening or expansion to report, contact us at LMI_NE@nebraska.gov.

Sources:
Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Strictly Business Magazine, Nebraska Department of Labor
In each new issue of Trends, the Economic Indicators section will feature a chart or graph focused on one of the economic indicators listed in the table on the next page. This month, we’ll be focusing on the Consumer Sentiment Index.

According to the University of Michigan, “The Surveys of Consumers pioneered the development of measures of consumer confidence, and remains the pacesetter in the use of the data for understanding the important influence of consumer spending and saving decisions on the course of the national economy. The surveys have proven to be an accurate indicator of the future of the national economy. The data is widely used by a broad range of business firms, financial institutions, and federal agencies. The Index of Consumer Expectations is an official component of the Index of Leading Indicators developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce.”

Source:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Current Time Period</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Midwest Region</th>
<th>Nebraska</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Weekly Manufacturing Hours</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>+/−0.0</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+0.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Unemployment Claims</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>+1.5%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Manufacturers' New Orders for Consumer Goods</td>
<td>December, 2017</td>
<td>+0.4%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISM Manufacturing: New Orders Index©</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>−3.0%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Manufacturers' New Orders: Nondefense Capital Goods Excluding Aircraft</td>
<td>December, 2017</td>
<td>−0.3%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;P 500©</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>+4.7%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-Year Treasury Constant Maturity Minus Federal Funds Rate</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>+1.2%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan, Consumer Sentiment Index</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>−0.2%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Price Index, not seasonally adjusted</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>+0.5%</td>
<td>+0.6%</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Cost Index</td>
<td>4th Quarter, 2017</td>
<td>+0.6%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer Price Index: All Commodities</td>
<td>December, 2017</td>
<td>+0.3%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate, seasonally adjusted</td>
<td>January, 2018</td>
<td>+/-−0.0%</td>
<td>−0.1%*</td>
<td>+/-0.0%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real GDP, billions of chained 2009 dollars</td>
<td>4th Quarter, 2017</td>
<td>+2.6%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Taxable Sales</td>
<td>November, 2017</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrel of Crude Oil, WTI-Cushing, Spot Price</td>
<td>December, 2017</td>
<td>+$1.24</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance on Current Account (millions of dollars)</td>
<td>3rd Quarter, 2017</td>
<td>−19.2%</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:**
