

Waging a Living: What do Utah's Occupations Pay?

Figure 1: Median Hourly Wage for All Occupations

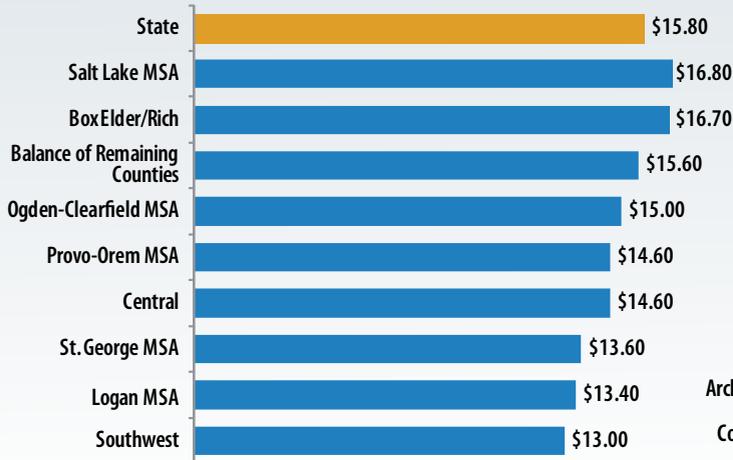


Figure 2: 2012 Annual Median Wage of Highest Paid Utah Occupations



An employer asks, "What wages should I pay to attract and keep high quality workers?" A job seeker inquires, "What wage should I request in my upcoming job negotiation?" A student wonders, "If I choose a certain career, how much can I expect to earn?"

The Utah Department of Workforce Services can help answer all these questions with our recently released occupational wage data.

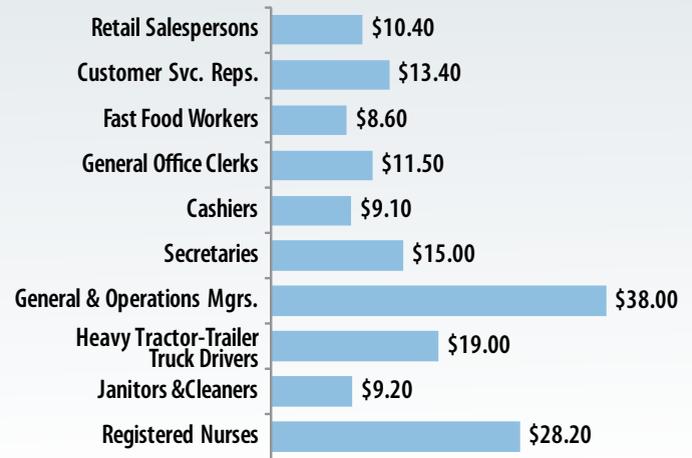
This wage data is collected via the Occupational Employment Statistics program, a nationwide employer survey conducted by individual states under the auspices of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. You won't find a larger or more complete wage survey anywhere. And, all this lovely information is available for Utah and eight substate areas at the click of a mouse (jobs.utah.gov/jsp/almsiswage/wage-home). Compiled median, average and inexperienced (average of the bottom third) wages aid workers, employers and career seekers in making market-driven wage decisions.

Statewide, wages are published for more than 660 occupations. Keep in mind, the Department of Workforce Services does not publish wages for occupations where confidentiality would be compromised or where survey sample size or response does not provide statistically viable data.

Figure 3: Hourly Median Wage of Lowest Paid Utah Occupations



Figure 4: Utah Hourly Median Wage of the Most Common Occupations



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services

Smaller substate areas generate a smaller number of publishable wages.

Location

Not all of Utah's substate areas pay equal wages. Differences in occupational mix, labor market supply and demand, and the relative state of an area's economy all affect wages. Typically, the median wage provides a better measure of central tendency than does the average. Although the Salt Lake City Metropolitan Statistical Area shows the highest median wage, two noticeably less-urban substate areas rank number two (Box Elder and Rich) and number three (balance of counties) for median hourly wages. Box Elder, with its high percentage of higher-than-average paying manufacturing positions, and the Uintah Basin, with booming oil and gas wages, precipitated high rankings for these two areas. On the other end of the scale, the Logan MSA and southwest counties showed the lowest median wages.

Wages

Not surprisingly, the highest-paid occupations in Utah generally fall into two categories: high-skilled medical jobs and high-skilled managerial positions. Remember that some highly paid occupations failed to make the list because their wages did not meet publication or confidentiality standards (such as surgeons). Service occupations requiring few skills dominate the list of Utah occupations with the lowest median wages.

In Utah, occupations that encompass the largest number of workers supply vastly different wages. For example, fast food workers receive one of the lowest median wages of all occupations (\$8.60 per hour). On the other hand, another large occupation, general and operations managers, pays almost five times as much as a fast food worker. In these employment-heavy groups, registered nurses and heavy tractor-trailer truck drivers also receive higher than average wages.

More than 660 occupations reside in our database in addition to those mentioned here. Now that your appetite for wage data has been whetted, aren't you just dying to know the market wage for your occupation or your employees' occupations? Visit our website (jobs.utah.gov/jsp/almisswage/wage-home) for the latest answers to your wage questions. 

“Only in our dreams are we free. The rest of the time we need wages.” –Terry Pratchett

