

San Luis Valley

Job Vacancy Survey

November 2002

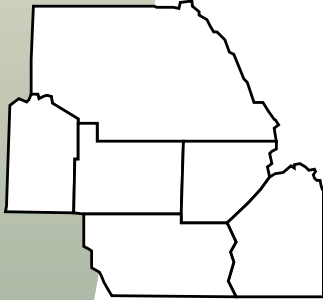


**Alamosa
Conejos
Costilla
Mineral
Rio Grande
& Saguache
Counties**



**Workforce Research & Analysis
Labor Market Information
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment**





San Luis Valley Region Job Vacancy Survey

*Conducted
September 12-17, 2002*

State of Colorado

Bill Owens, *Governor*

Colorado Department of Labor & Employment

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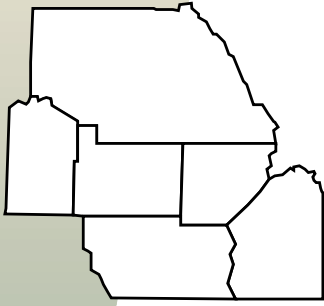
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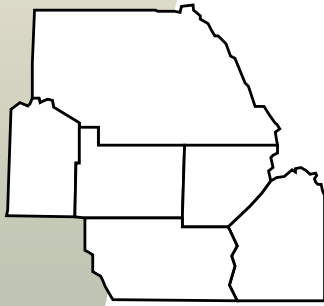
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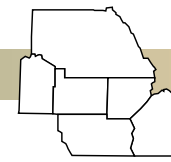


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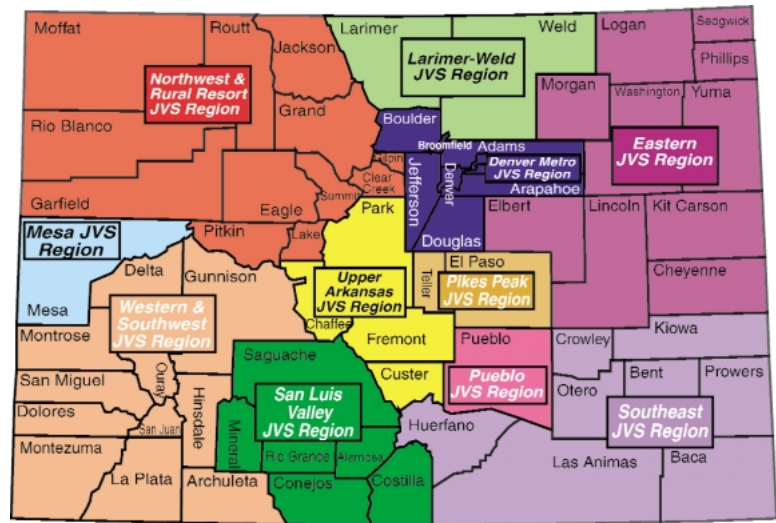
Introduction

The unemployment rate, along with the level and growth rate of employment, has been used as an indicator of labor market conditions for decades. While this indicator provides information about changes in the supply and demand for labor, it reveals nothing about the skills most sought after by employers. As such, individuals preparing themselves for the job market have done so with limited knowledge of what skills are necessary to successfully compete in the contemporary labor market. Employers have had an equally difficult time determining appropriate compensation levels due to a limited knowledge of what similar firms in their region are currently offering.

Job seekers and employers, as well as Workforce Centers and economic developers need more than a measure of demand for workers at a specific point in time. They also need a measure of where in the economy that demand is located and what education and experience levels are most preferred. The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) developed the Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) to meet this need. The JVS is designed to provide a snapshot estimate of job vacancies along with detailed information and analysis on accompanying wages, skill requirements and work experience.

The CDLE’s survey unit collects original data by conducting phone interviews with a representative

Colorado Job Vacancy Survey Regions



sample of employers in a given region. The department’s economists analyze the raw data, estimate the number of vacancies in the area and publish the report within weeks of the original data collection, providing a timely portrait of the employment situation.

The survey is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration. The survey is produced for each region in Colorado by Labor Market Information’s office of Workforce Research and Analysis.

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How to Use This Report

With the analysis of labor market conditions, many questions regarding labor demand and supply, as well as labor skills requirements, often arise...

- ◆ Is there a labor shortage in the region?
- ◆ If so, what types of labor are in short supply?
- ◆ Is there a shortage of skills?
- ◆ What skills are necessary to fill current vacancies?

The answers to these and similar questions are important in the decision-making processes of employers, employees, job seekers, trainers, and planning officials. While Labor Market Information (LMI) provides data on the local labor force supply, the Job Vacancy Survey complements this by providing information about the demand for labor and offers a more complete picture of local labor markets.

Employers

The Job Vacancy Survey measures the area's current vacancies along with education and experience requirements. This report can serve as a strategic planning tool in the following areas:

◆ *Employee Recruitment*—

If findings indicate that employers have had positions open for a significant period of time, and compensation is sufficient, it might indicate a shortage of applicants in the area. Therefore, recruitment efforts could be focused outside of the region in areas where the necessary skills are more likely to be found.

◆ *Employee Training*—

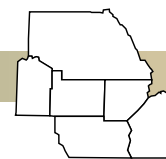
A firm may also choose to increase investment in training for their current employees instead of expanding recruitment efforts.

◆ *Compensation and Benefits Planning*—

The Job Vacancy Survey provides wages offered for surveyed job openings. Tables in this report also detail current wages by occupation from Occupational Employment Statistics data. Together these pieces of information can be used to develop wage guidelines for compensation practices.

◆ *New Site Selection*—

Employers considering relocating or expanding to the area can study the survey and determine how easily the company's employment needs will be met by reviewing current vacancies. Companies need a sufficient, qualified labor pool to operate. High labor demand within a particular industry segment along with indications of difficulty filling these positions should caution a firm requiring a similar labor profile.



Job Seekers

The Job Vacancy Survey provides job seekers with a broad view of which industries are hiring, which occupations are in demand along with currently offered salaries and benefits, and what education and experience levels are required. This report is a roadmap that can be used to determine where the best paying jobs are given an individual's skills and level of education. Job seekers can also use Labor Market

Information's occupational projections, which provide a long-term outlook of occupational demand, along with the survey, which illustrates the current level of demand in the local job market to determine how current employment opportunities can contribute to their long-term career goals. Career minded individuals can tailor education, training, and work-experience to fit future high-demand positions.

Workforce Centers

The Job Vacancy Survey is designed to aid Colorado's Workforce Centers and other job placement organizations. As Workforce Centers serve job seekers and employers, the report acts as a handy reference for information on current vacancies, position requirements, wages and benefits offered, seasonal employment trends, and dominant regional industries. Workforce Center representatives can increase placement success by directing job seekers toward high demand occupations and industries.

Public officials, educational institutions, and government agencies can use this survey information

to effectively apply resources to education, training, and job placement programs.

While this report is a picture of the area's current employment needs and historical seasonal patterns, other Labor Market Information products provide projections of occupational growth and anticipated openings (www.coworkforce.com/lmi/oeo/oeo.htm). The projections highlight growing as well as declining occupations. Investments in the workforce can be directed toward occupations or industries that continuously contribute to the local economy or to those where there is a constant need for workers.

Economic Developers

Economic development professionals can use the Job Vacancy Survey to track the labor situation in key industries and evaluate the area's economic growth and development potential. The survey results help determine where bottlenecks may occur should current vacancies persist. Economic developers can

also generate a comprehensive picture of the region by determining where current labor demand stands today, as identified by the survey, and where the local market is trending using Labor Market Information's employment projections.

Caveats

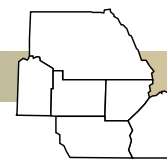
The Job Vacancy Survey statistics are indicators of the demand for workers in the region and should not be interpreted as actual values. We rely on information from surveyed companies to obtain a representative sample of institutions and the occupations that fuel them. Not all surveyed firms participate; however, the employers who do participate enable the production of statistically reliable results.

The study provides estimates of job openings for a point-in-time; they do not necessarily portray the distribution of job vacancies in the region. This report does not attempt to explain the cause of vacancies—whether these current vacancies are due to actual growth or to job turnover in an occupation. Readers should also keep in mind that the authors are not attempting to project the level of vacancies into the future. Be aware that events having occurred since the time period analyzed such as plant closings or the migration of people in and out of the area might

significantly affect the vacancy status of some occupations. Job openings are very dynamic – current openings are being filled, new positions are being created, and some roles are being phased-out.

Occupational demand is subject to seasonal changes and affected by business cycles. For example, the reader would want to be aware that a decrease in vacancies for construction workers from April to November could represent seasonal variations, not necessarily a long-term decrease in the demand for such workers. When several years of survey data have been collected, we may be able to identify patterns that more accurately reflect changing labor market conditions. Regional surveys are timed to make these comparisons possible.

Given the caveats, appropriate application by the user is a key element in this report being a useful tool for job vacancy analysis.



Executive Summary

The second San Luis Valley Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) was conducted from September 12th through September 17th, 2002. The goal of the survey is to provide current information about employers' demand for new workers so that employers, job seekers, economic developers, educators and workforce centers can make more informed decisions in the San Luis Valley Region.

Over the survey period a sample of private employers with at least five employees, as well as all large

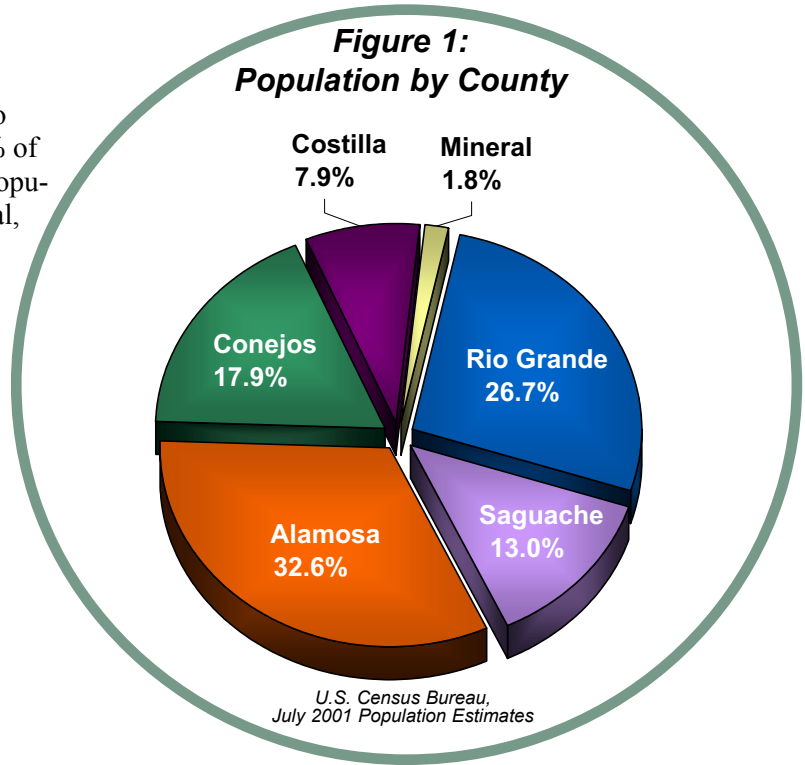
employers and Government agencies were contacted. Employers were asked if they were actively hiring at the time of the survey and a variety of questions about the positions they are seeking to fill.

A total of 365 employers representing approximately 57% of the region's total employment, responded to the survey. They include 54 Government agencies, 13 large employers and 298 small to mid-sized entities. The major findings of the survey are as follows:

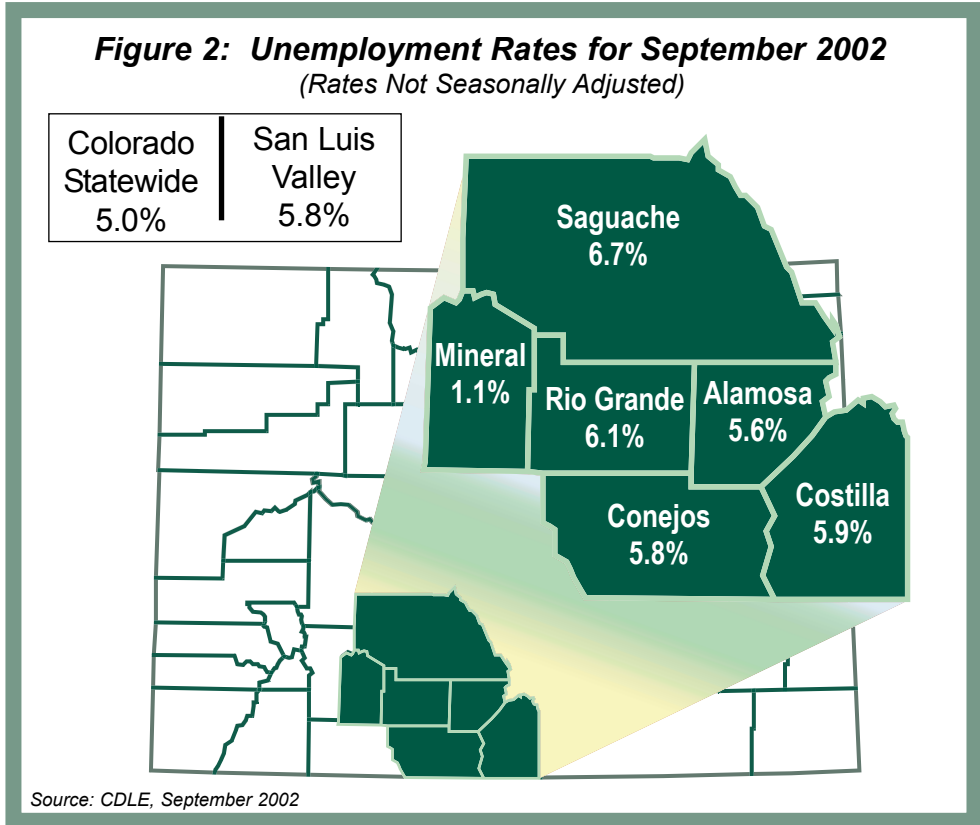
- ◆ An estimated 210 jobs were open for immediate hire in the region during the survey period compared with 270 jobs in fall 2001.
- ◆ Eleven percent of the responding employers report having at least one vacancy.
- ◆ The overall average wage for all vacancies is \$10.60 per hour.
- ◆ Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations account for almost 30% of all vacancies.
- ◆ Ninety percent of the vacancies are full-time and 98% of the vacancies are permanent.
- ◆ Almost half of the vacancies in the San Luis Valley Region require education beyond a high school diploma/GED.
- ◆ The vast majority of vacancies occur in Service Producing Industries.
- ◆ Almost 60% of the job openings include some form of medical insurance.
- ◆ Employers consider more than 75% of the vacancies to be at least somewhat difficult to fill.
- ◆ Almost half of the positions have been open less than 30 days.
- ◆ Sixty five percent of the vacancies either have no experience requirements or require general work experience.

San Luis Valley Region

The counties of Alamosa and Rio Grande account for almost 60% of the San Luis Valley Region's population while Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, and Saguache make up the remaining 40%. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the region's population at 46,867 in July of 2001.



The region employed 19,647 people in September 2002 out of a labor force of 20,860¹. The region's preliminary unemployment rate is higher than both the state as a whole and the national rate of 5.4%. The unemployment rate in the San Luis Valley Region has remained almost unchanged from September 2001. Rates are fairly similar in all of the counties except for Mineral at 1.1%. While Mineral County has an extremely low unemployment rate, there are only 379 people in the labor force.



¹CDLE, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

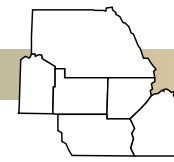
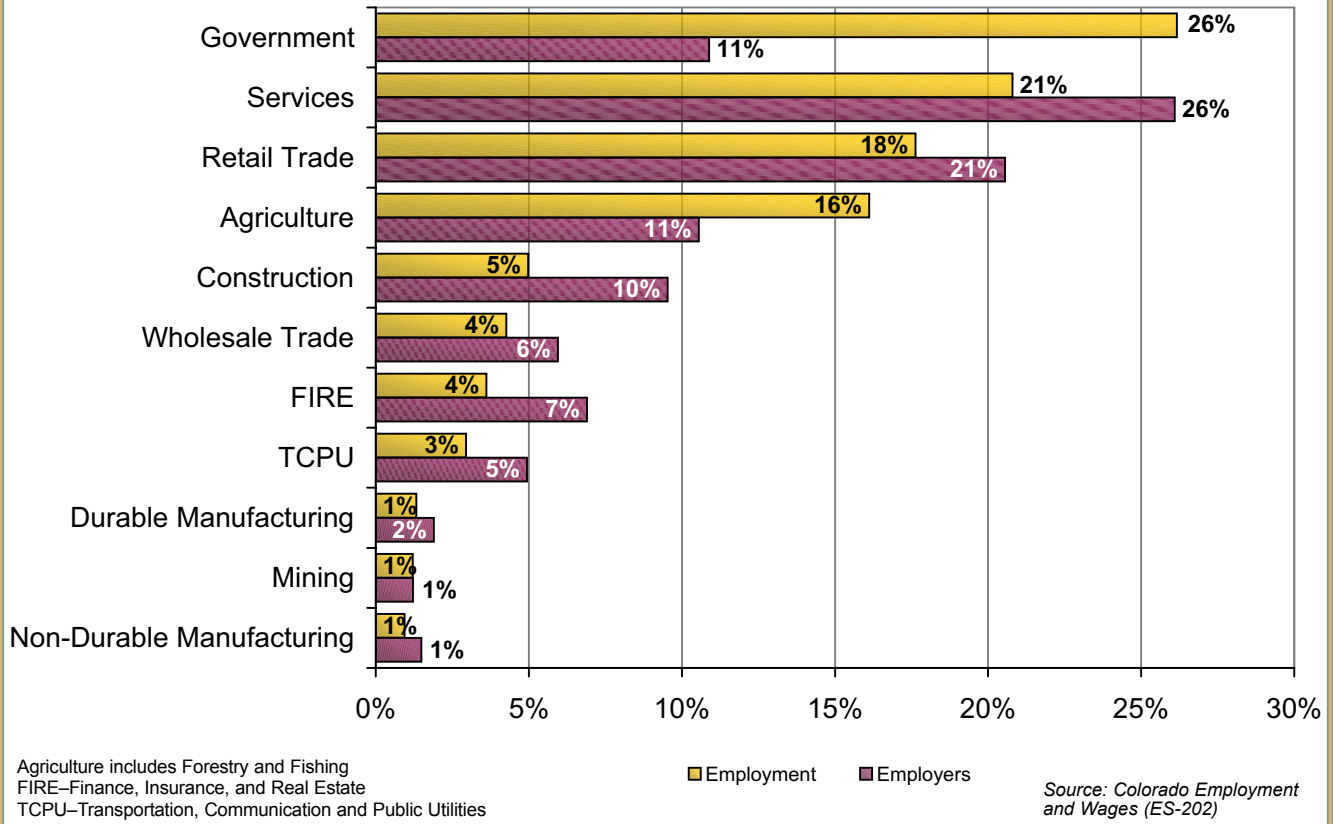


Figure 3: San Luis Valley Region Employers & Employees, 3rd Quarter, 2001

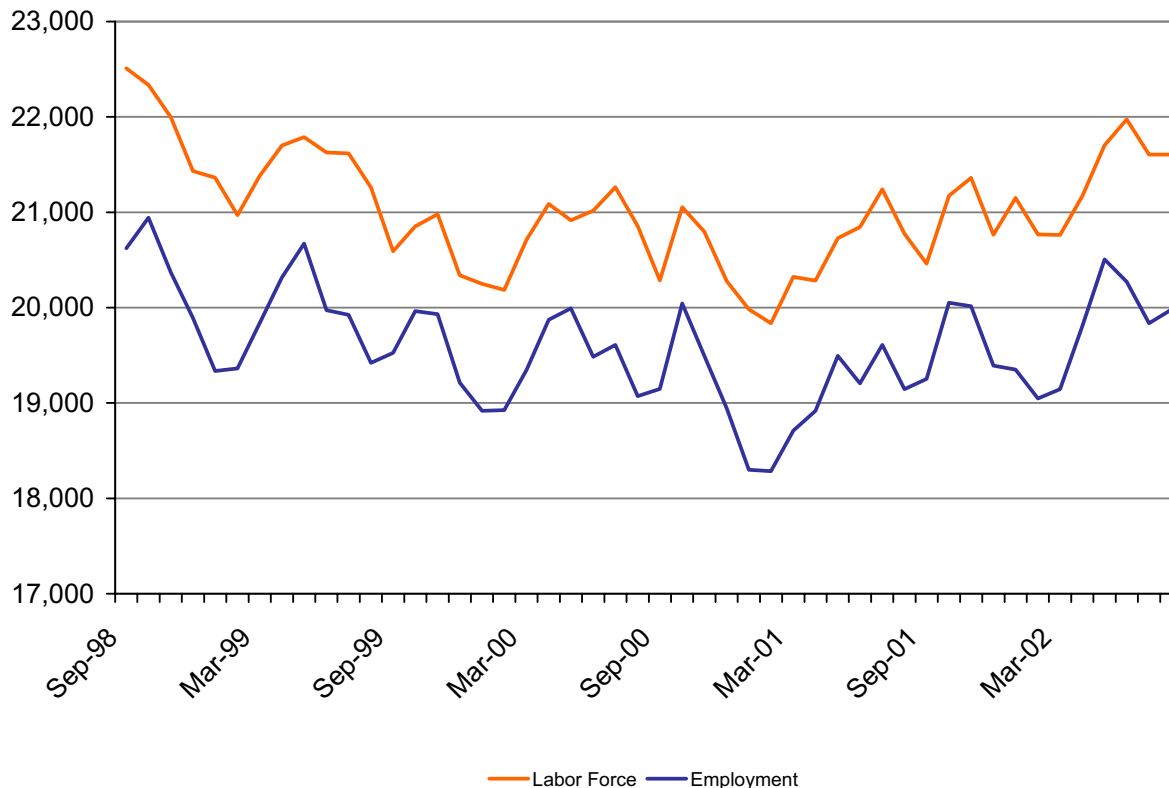


Federal, state and local Government agencies employ more workers than any other industry in the San Luis Valley Region. The Services, Retail Trade, and Agriculture industries also employ large numbers. Combined, employers in these industries make-up 69% of the total employers and 81% of the employment.

It is important to note that the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment and Wages (ES-202) program collects information on firms whose employees are

covered by unemployment insurance. Nationally, this program captures 94% of total employment. Agriculture, however, is an industry in which much of the employment is not covered. Many agricultural employers are exempt from paying unemployment insurance tax, and therefore are not represented in Employment and Wages numbers. Simply put, agricultural employment may represent a much larger part of the San Luis Valley Region labor market than indicated by the 16% reported under the Employment and Wages program.

Figure 4: Employment & Labor Force Trends for the San Luis Valley Region



Source: CDLE, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 4 shows a 4-year history of both the region's labor force and the employment levels between September 1998 and September 2002. Several different conclusions may be drawn from this graph:

◆ **The labor force and employment levels have both decreased since 1998.**

Because labor force and employment levels vary from season to season, change does not occur smoothly. Both levels gradually decreased until February of 2001 and have since gradually increased.

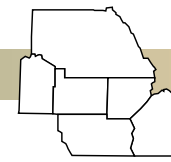
◆ **The unemployment level has decreased.**

The unemployment level is the gap between the labor force and employment. The larger the distance between the two lines, the larger the number

of unemployed. In September 1998 there were 1,885 unemployed compared to 1,213 in September 2002. In that time the unemployment rate dropped from 8.4% to 5.8%.

◆ **In addition, Figure 4 demonstrates the region's seasonal trend.**

Both employment levels and the labor force peak in the late fall and spring and then bottom out in late summer and winter. The Job Vacancy Survey is conducted in September at a point where the labor market is neither at its seasonal low nor high. Interestingly, the region's labor force does not fluctuate quite as much as the employment level. This suggests that the unemployment rate will be highly affected by seasonal fluctuations.



The Job Vacancy Survey Sample

The San Luis Valley Region survey was conducted from September 12th through September 17th, 2002. For the purpose of this report, private employers with 5 or more employees as well as all Government employers are referred to as the sample universe. Firms with fewer than 5 employees make up 65% of all employers in the region, but only 16% of the total employment. Employment in the sample universe accounts for approximately 84% of the region's total employment.

The Job Vacancy Survey separates employers into either Government or private industry. Private firms are then split into large and small to mid-size categories. Firms with at least 75 employees are considered large employers. Attempts are made to contact all Government agencies and large firms. The remaining small to mid-size firms are split into industry groups.² To achieve a solid representation from each group, a response rate of at least 50% is required.

Government makes up 28% of the employment in the sample universe, while private industry employers make up the remaining 72%. Large firms account for 24% of private industry employment in the sample universe. Firms employing from 5 to 74 individuals

are considered small to mid-size employers, and account for the remaining 76% of the private industry employment. Over the survey period, a total of 365 employers (54% of employers in the sample universe), representing approximately 57% of the region's total employment, responded to the survey. Out of these, 54 are Government agencies, 13 are large employers and 298 are from the small to mid-sized category.

The response rate for the survey is 82% and the cooperation rate is 99%. The response rate measures how successful the survey is at collecting information from eligible employers. The cooperation rate measures the willingness of employers to participate in the survey once they are contacted.

The survey is designed to create estimates of the total number of vacancies in the survey region based on establishment size and industry type. Statistical methods for estimating vacancies provide reliable information about the region as a whole without having to survey every employer in the region. In the San Luis Valley Region Job Vacancy Survey, numbers of vacancies by establishment size and industry type are estimated, but other vacancy characteristics are based solely on information provided by employers.

Table 1: Industry Categories

Government	
Public Administration	
Private Industry	
Goods Producing Industries	Service Producing Industries
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing (except Agricultural Services)	Transportation, Communications, and Public Utilities
Mining	Wholesale Trade
Construction	Retail Trade
Manufacturing	Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate Services (including Agricultural Services)

²Based on the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification Manual.

Data Collection

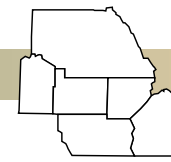
Data for the Job Vacancy Survey are collected using a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) process. While this system of data collection has been in use in the public sector for several years, Colorado is the first state in the nation to pioneer the use of CATI data collection for the Job Vacancy Survey.

Professional interviewers, trained in economic data collection processes, gather information from a call center located in the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. This interview process results in increased control over the survey process, better accuracy, and dependable results.

Employers are asked if they have job vacancies or open positions which they are actively seeking to fill.

Those that are actively hiring are then asked to provide more detail about each position—compensation offered, levels of education and experience required, and the employer’s perceived difficulty in filling the vacancy along with the number of days the position has been open. Employers are also asked if sign-on bonuses and health insurance coverage are offered for these positions. These data are collected in addition to the minimum and maximum wages in order to describe more fully the compensation offered.

The survey is conducted so as to ensure the statistical integrity of this report. When necessary, employers are contacted a second time to clarify responses.



Vacancies: Industry, Size and Status

During the survey period, an estimated 210 vacancies were open for immediate hire with firms having at least 5 employees in the San Luis Valley Region. The total number of estimated vacancies are down from the 270 found in the fall 2001 Job Vacancy Survey.

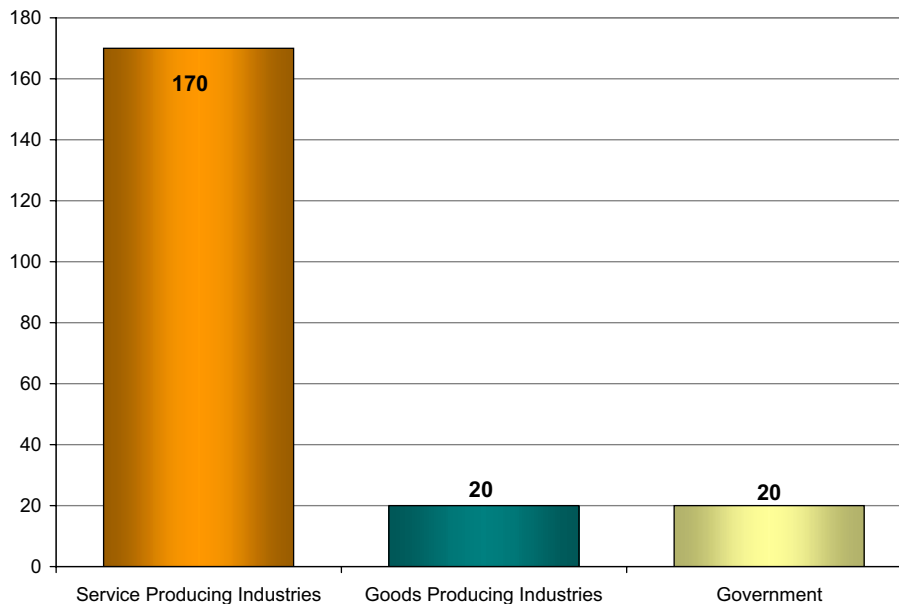
The region’s estimated vacancy rate is 1.5%. The vacancy rate is the total number of estimated vacancies divided by total employment. In this survey, Goods Producing Industries have a vacancy rate of 1.4%, Service Producing Industries 2.0% and Government 0.5%.

The total and industry specific vacancy rates are two of the most important pieces of information that the Job Vacancy Survey produces. Unfortunately, because the San Luis Valley Region survey is only a year old, it is difficult to determine exactly what a vacancy rate of 1.5% tells us about the demand for workers in the economy. Watching the change in the

vacancy rates through several economic recessions and expansions will help to better gauge the relationship between vacancies and the demand for labor. When several years of Job Vacancy Survey results are available the vacancy rate will become a telling indicator of the demand for new workers, much as the unemployment rate serves as a telling measure of the available supply of workers.

Figure 5 demonstrates that the majority of the openings occur in Service Producing Industries. Not only does this category employ 65% more workers than Government and Goods Producing Industries combined, but it also has many high-turnover, high-demand occupations. In this survey registered nurses; licensed practical and vocational nurses; and fast food cooks are the most frequently found occupations in the Service Producing industries category. Government and Goods Producing industries make up less than 20% of the estimated total of open jobs.

Figure 5: Estimated Vacancies by Industry Group

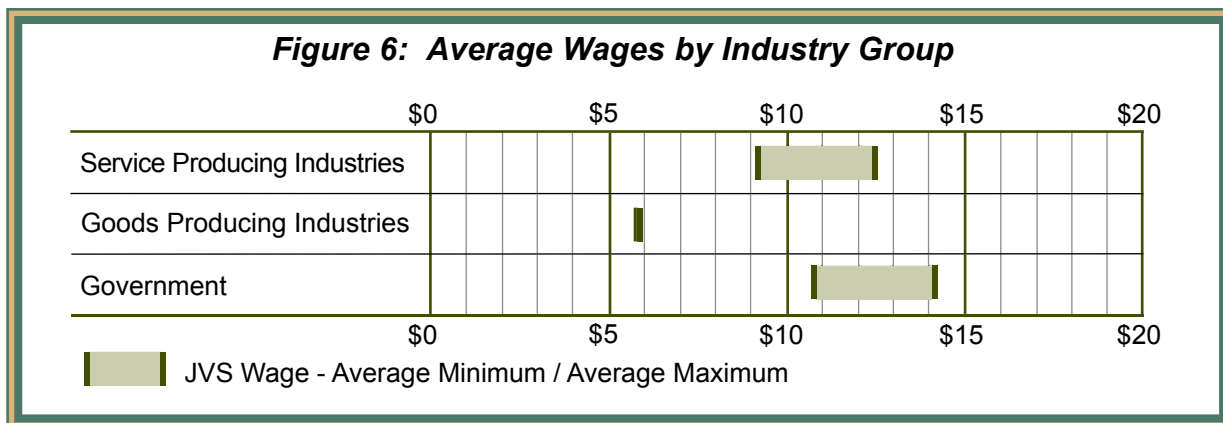


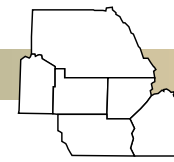
Because wages offered vary according to an individual's qualifications, employers were asked to provide the range of wages offered for the vacancies. The average wage is then calculated based on the midpoint of that range. The overall average wage offered for all vacancies in the region is \$10.60 per hour. In the fall 2001 survey, the average wage was \$9.00 per hour. This does not imply that the overall wage level has changed.

Over time the Job Vacancy Survey will show changes in the wage level, but individual reports are heavily affected by the particular occupations that employers are looking to fill during the time of the survey. Given that the type and distribution of vacancies found this year is different from a year ago it is difficult to determine whether the increase in the overall wage is due to a different occupational mix or an actual increase in the wage level. The former scenario

is more likely than the latter, but as more Job Vacancy Surveys are conducted it will be easier to answer this question.

The results of the fall 2002 Job Vacancy Survey are heavily influenced by the demand for Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations. This occupational group accounts for almost 30% of all the vacancies reported. The average wage for this group is \$19.30 per hour, greatly affecting the overall average wage. In fact, if you exclude Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations the overall average wage drops by \$2.70 to \$7.90 per hour. The reader should keep in mind that all estimates, proportions and averages in this report are profoundly affected by this occupational group. Government wages are almost twice as high as wages in Goods Producing Industries as shown in *Figure 6*.



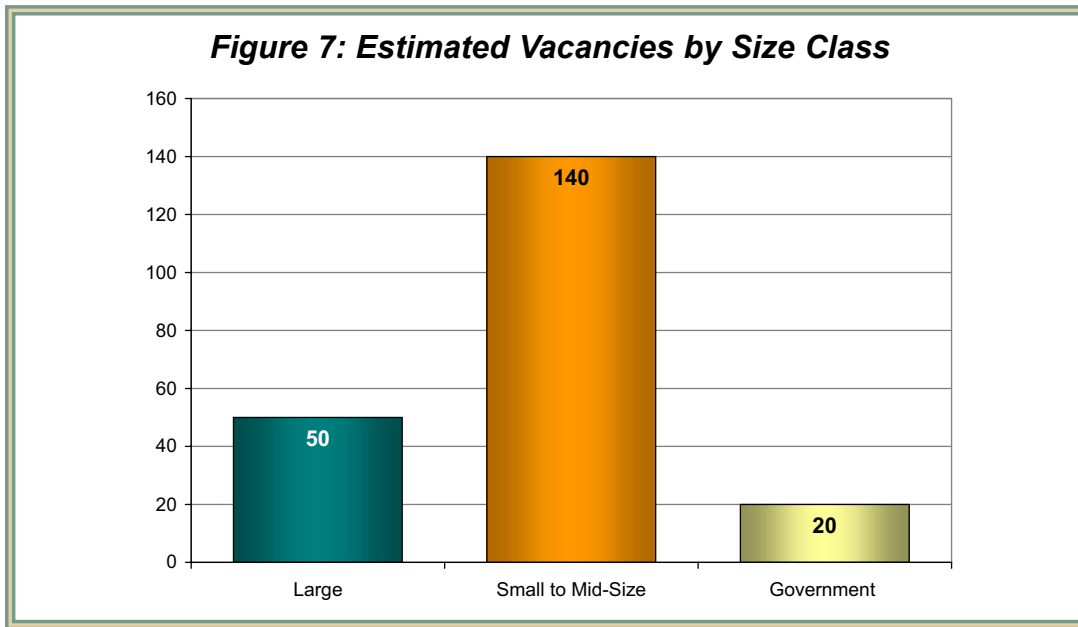


Most vacancies are found in the small to mid-size (5 to 74 employees) category. Large employers and Government agencies combined make up 33% of the vacancies.

Does this imply that job seekers should target small to mid-size firms? Not necessarily. It is important to consider the fact that while large firms (private firms with 75 or more employees) make up only 2.5% of all

firms in the region, they have a larger number of vacancies per employer. Overall, there are more vacancies in small to mid-size firms, but because they make up such a large proportion of all firms, there are actually fewer vacancies per employer in the small to mid-size category than with Government or large employers. There are 2.9 vacancies per large private employer, 0.3 vacancies per Governmental employer and 0.2 vacancies per small to mid-size employer.

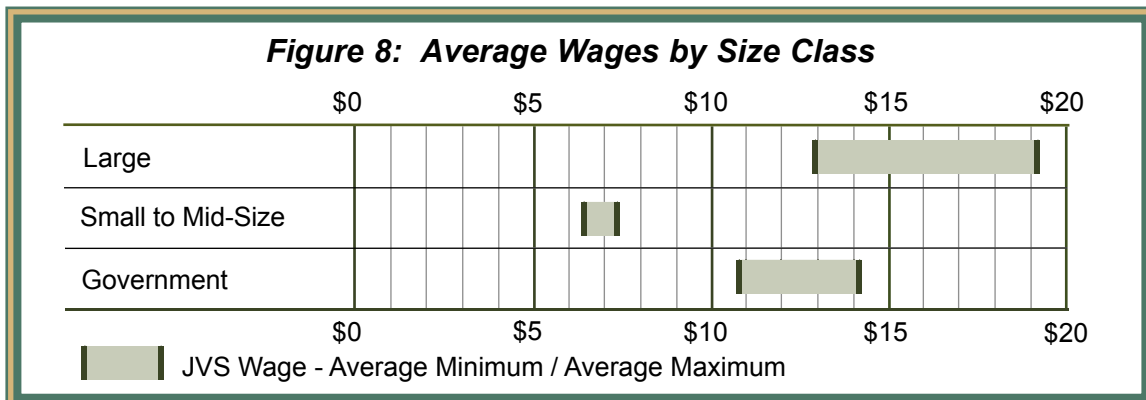
Figure 7: Estimated Vacancies by Size Class



Large employers and Government agencies offer higher wages than small to mid-size firms. The particular occupations found in a size class play a large role in determining the average wage in that category. Two-thirds of the vacancies in the large employers

category are for healthcare related occupations. Government agencies are dominated by: Education, Training and Library; and Office and Administrative Support occupational groups. These relatively high paying occupations increase the average wages reported.

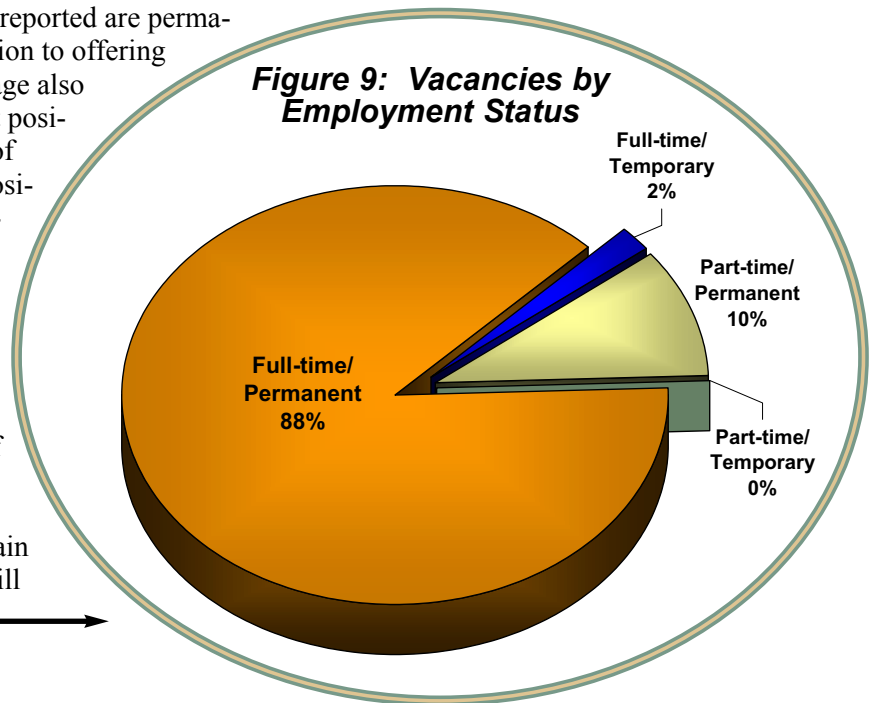
Figure 8: Average Wages by Size Class



Ninety-eight percent of the vacancies reported are permanent employment opportunities. In addition to offering greater stability, these positions on average also offer higher wages. Full-time/permanent positions make up 88% of the total number of vacancies found. Full-time/temporary positions make up 2% of the reported vacancies, and part-time/permanent make up 10%. No vacancies were reported for part-time/temporary positions.

Temporary positions typically make up a small proportion of total vacancies despite the dramatic rise in popularity of temporary workers during the 1990s.³ Temporary workers can provide a cost effective and productive solution to certain staffing needs, but most vacancies are still filled permanently.

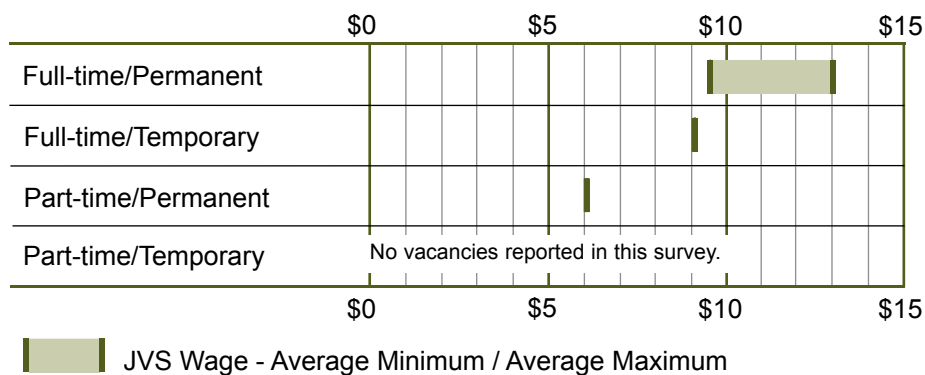
Figure 9: Vacancies by Employment Status



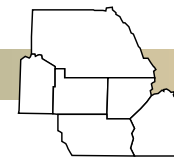
Full-time/permanent positions offer significantly higher wages than either part-time or full-time/temporary positions. Most of the vacancies in the

part-time/permanent category were in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations which tend to offer lower wages.

Figure 10: Average Wages by Employment Status



³Daily temporary employment increased 157% from 1990-2000. American Staffing Association.

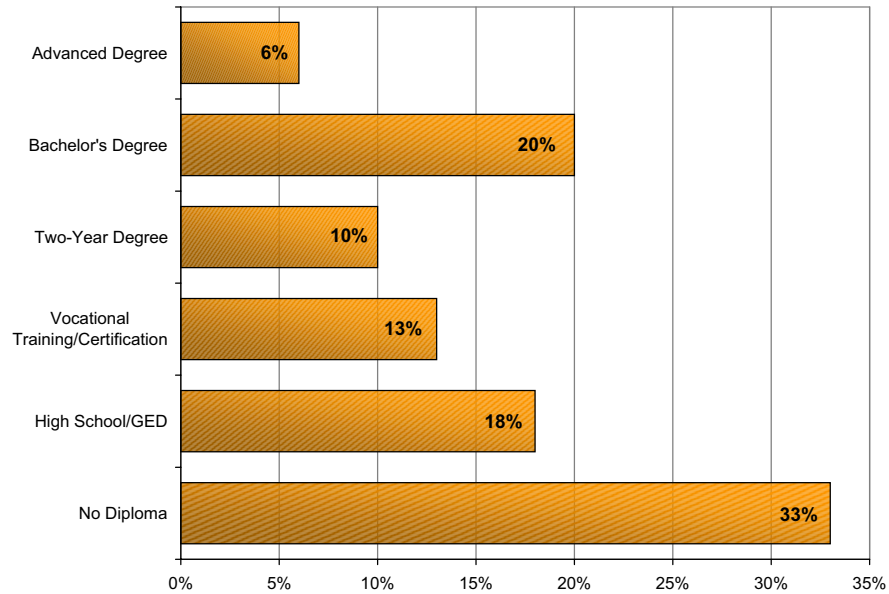


Vacancies: Education and Experience Requirements

The majority of economic reporting treats all workers as if they are part of the same labor market. For example, if the unemployment rate is high, one might assume there are many qualified candidates and no job openings. The reality is that even in recessions there are many employers who cannot find qualified candidates for their open positions. Because a region's overall labor force is made up of hundreds of smaller labor groups, only a certain number of qualified candidates who have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience can compete for a given job. It is important, therefore, that job seekers, employers, economic developers and career advisors have accurate information regarding what types of education and experience are in highest demand.

About half of the vacancies in the San Luis Valley Region require education beyond a high school

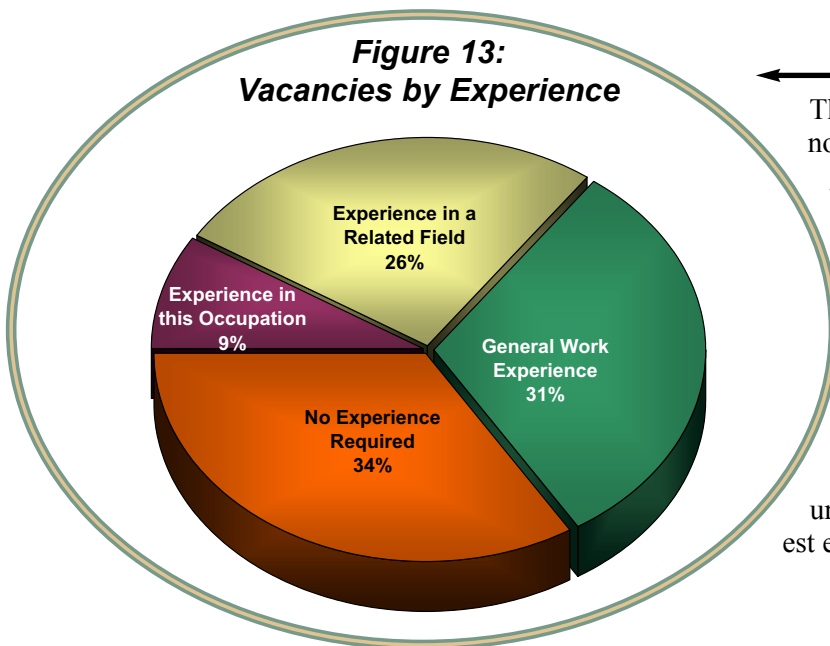
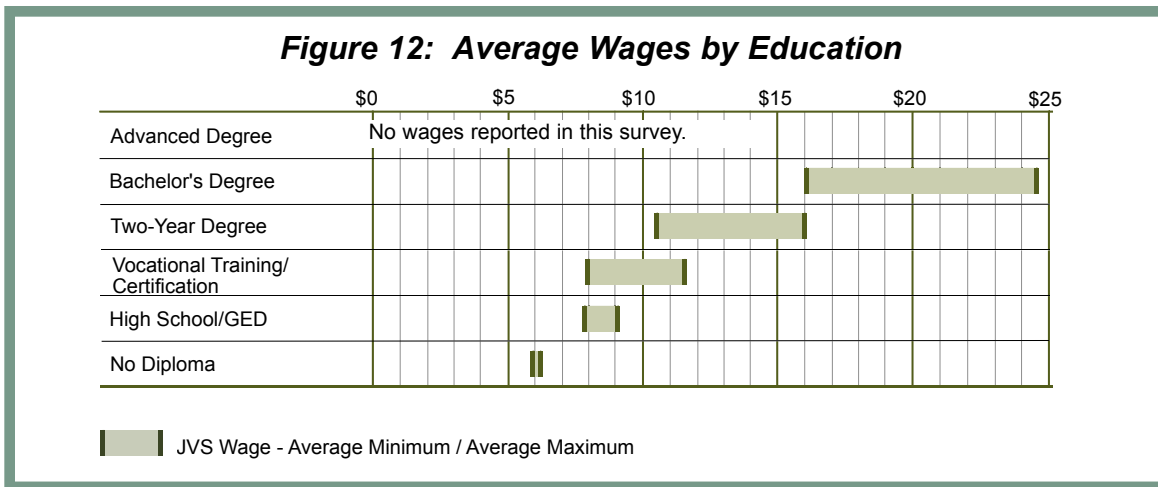
Figure 11: Vacancies by Education



diploma/GED. While the vacancies appear to be relatively well spread out between different educational requirements the picture changes drastically when excluding healthcare occupations. Instead of 49% of the vacancies requiring more than a high school diploma, only 29% of the non-healthcare related positions have this requirement.

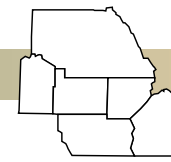
Generally, the more education required for a position, the higher the wages offered. The Bureau of Labor Statistics in its report on *Usual Weekly Earnings of Wage and Salary Workers*⁴ found that full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma

had median weekly earnings of \$386, compared with \$536 for high school graduates and \$940 for college graduates. In this survey, there is a strong relationship between higher education requirements and higher wages.



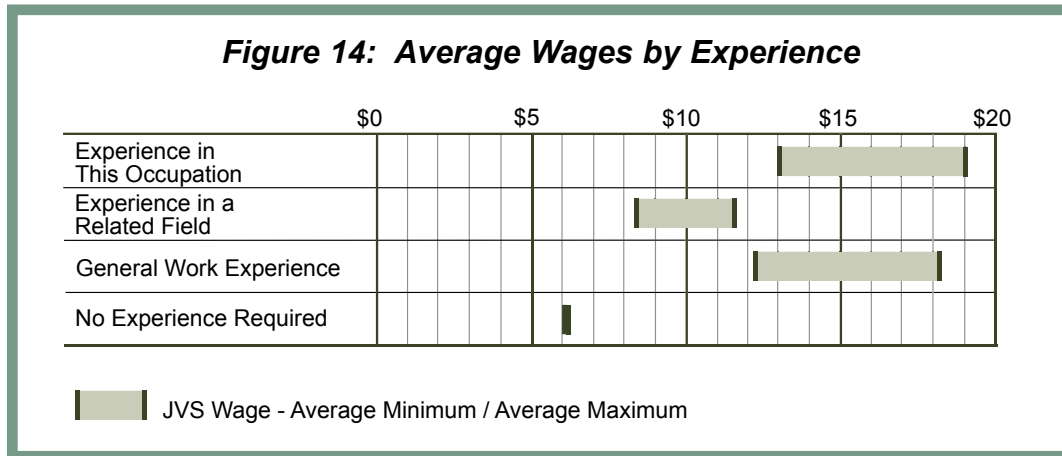
← The majority of vacancies have either no experience requirements or require general work experience. Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations as well as Farming, Fishing and Forestry occupations are most demanded in the no experience category. All of the health-care occupations require at least general work experience and because of the high demand for these positions in the survey they figure most prominently in the three highest experience categories.

⁴1st Quarter, 2002.



Positions needing higher levels of experience generally pay higher wages. Firms typically offer experienced candidates better compensation packages because experience usually increases a worker’s productivity. In San Luis Valley the high demand for registered nurses and other Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occu-

pations brought up the category average for positions requiring general work experience. Most of these positions offer around \$20 an hour. This in part explains why positions requiring general work experience pay significantly higher wages than positions requiring experience in a related occupation.



An interesting relationship exists between the type of education required to fill a position and the level of experience desired. In both the survey and in general, the higher the level of education demanded, the higher the level of experience required as well. Internships and apprenticeships have gained importance and popularity in recent years. To be competitive in today’s job market students must obtain quality experience along with academic knowledge.

Jobs that require no high school diploma are typically low skill, entry-level jobs requiring little experience. In the San Luis Valley Region, 76% of jobs with no education requirement also have no experience requirement. All jobs requiring an advanced degree require at least some work experience.

Table 2: Experience Requirements by Educational Level

	No Experience	General Work Experience	Experience in a Related Field	Experience in This Occupation
No Diploma	76%	15%	9%	0%
High School Diploma/GED	52%	17%	30%	0%
Vocational Training/Certification	0%	35%	59%	6%
Two-Year Degree	0%	33%	42%	25%
Bachelor’s Degree	0%	60%	20%	20%
Advanced Degree	0%	50%	12%	38%

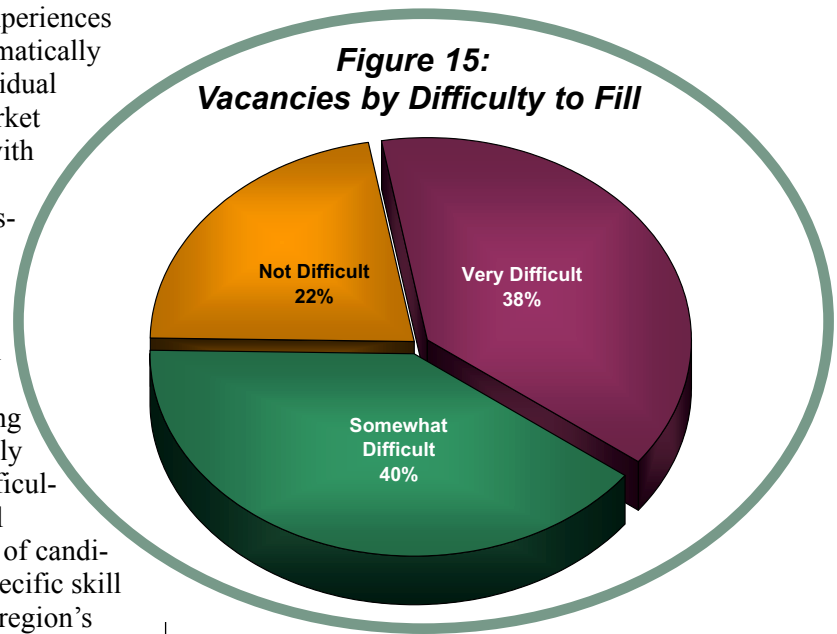
Note: Percentages based on each educational category.

Vacancies: Difficulty to Fill

The level of difficulty an employer experiences when filling a vacancy can vary dramatically depending on the nature of the individual vacancy as well as the prevailing labor market conditions. For example, a large hospital with close ties to the local university may have much less trouble recruiting registered nurses than a small doctor’s office in rural Colorado. Vacancies requiring postsecondary education may also be affected by recruitment timing; openings for a position requiring a bachelor’s degree will most likely be easier to fill immediately following graduation. The composition of the currently available labor pool will also affect the difficulty employers experience when trying to fill vacancies. As noted above, the availability of candidates suited to fill a vacancy requiring a specific skill set is not always sufficient to meet all of a region’s demand.

In addition to asking employers about their perceived difficulty in filling a vacant position, the Job Vacancy Survey also measures the amount of time for which an employer has been actively recruiting for the vacancy. This additional information allows readers to make better judgments regarding the difficulty employers are experiencing than if the survey relied wholly on employers’ opinions.

Figure 15: Vacancies by Difficulty to Fill



In this survey, employers considered over 75% of the vacancies at least somewhat difficult to fill. Many of the positions considered somewhat difficult to fill were for healthcare occupations and Food Preparation and Serving occupations. The majority of vacancies considered very difficult to fill were for low level and low paying production workers and agricultural sorters.

Figure 16: Average Wages by Difficulty to Fill



Positions considered very difficult to fill offer slightly higher wages than positions somewhat or not difficult to fill. Some of the positions considered very

difficult to fill were for agricultural product sorters, vocational teachers and registered nurses.

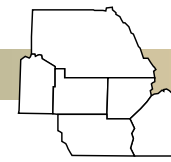
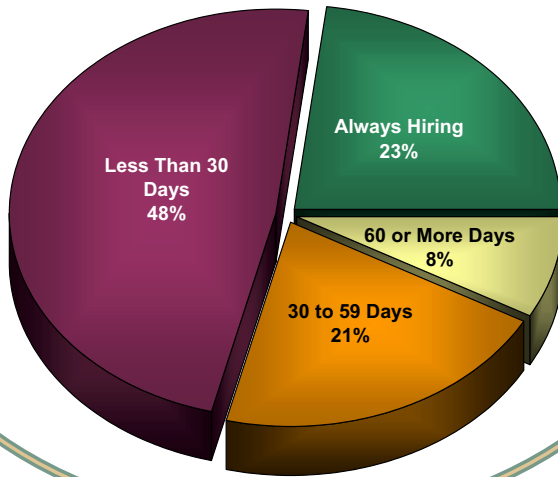


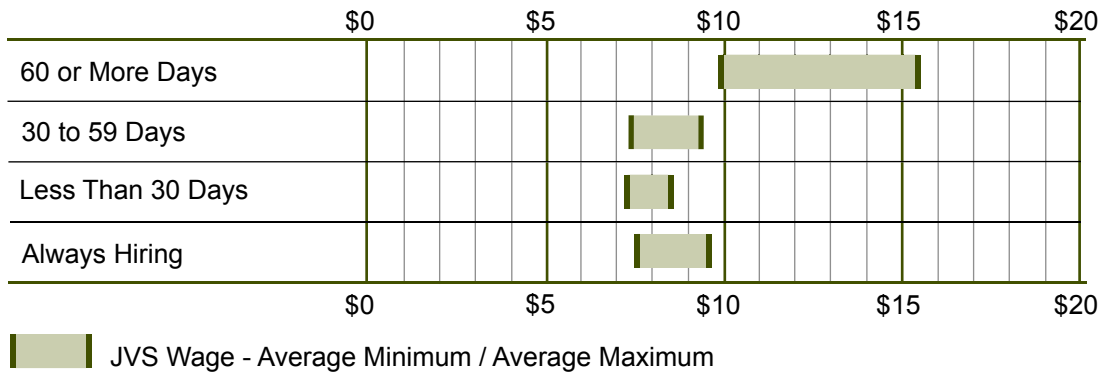
Figure 17: Vacancies by Time Open for Hire



How long a vacancy is open may indicate the degree of difficulty an employer is having in filling the position. Factors include: the availability of qualified candidates; competition among employers for similar candidates; and the willingness of candidates to accept job duties considering wages and benefits offered. Also, employers may allow more time to fill a vacancy in order to ensure the fit of the candidate with the organization, or because there may be a limited number of qualified applicants.

Almost half of all the vacancies have been open for less than 30 days. There is a wide range of positions that have been open for more than 60 days including management, nursing and sales positions. The majority of positions open for more than 30 days but less than 60 days are for Food Preparation and Serving positions. Positions in the always hiring category tend to be for healthcare occupations.

Figure 18: Average Wages by Time Open for Hire



Positions open 60 or more days offer the highest average wages. As higher wages usually accompany occupations that require specialized skills, it may take

an employer longer to recruit and hire a candidate with the desired background.

Vacancies: Additional Compensation

Medical Insurance

Employers frequently offer compensation related benefits to recruit qualified candidates. Some of these perks are paid time off, transportation or parking vouchers and subsidized child-care. One of the most important benefits offered to employees is medical insurance via an employer group plan. Employers may pay all, part or none of the monthly insurance premium.

In this survey 58% of the vacancies reported by employers include some form of medical insurance. Of these, employers offer to pay a part of the premium for the vast majority. Over 20% of the vacancies included payment of the entire medical insurance premium.

Figure 19: Employer's Contribution to Medical Insurance

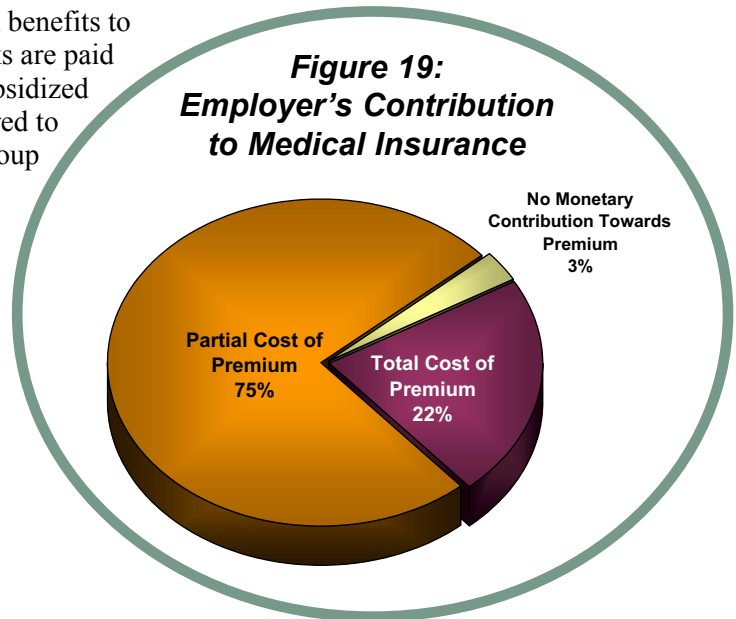
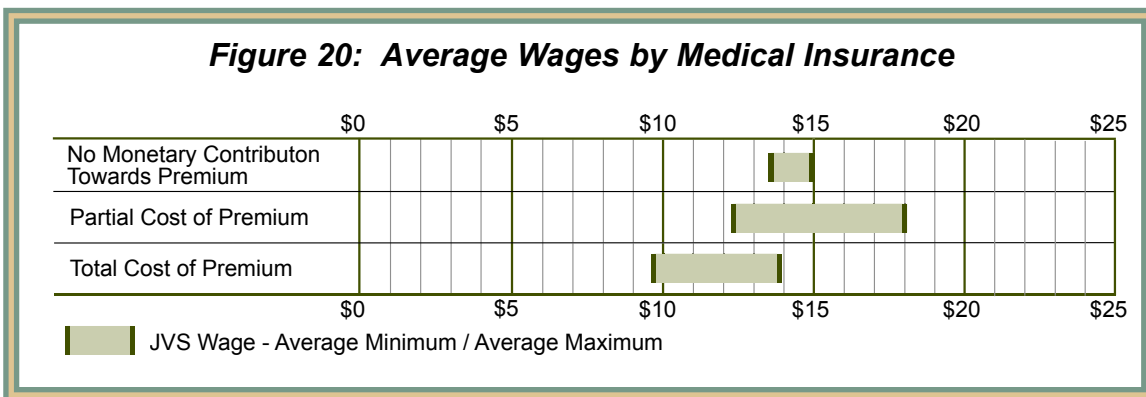
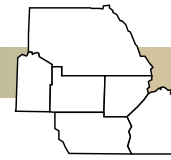


Figure 20: Average Wages by Medical Insurance



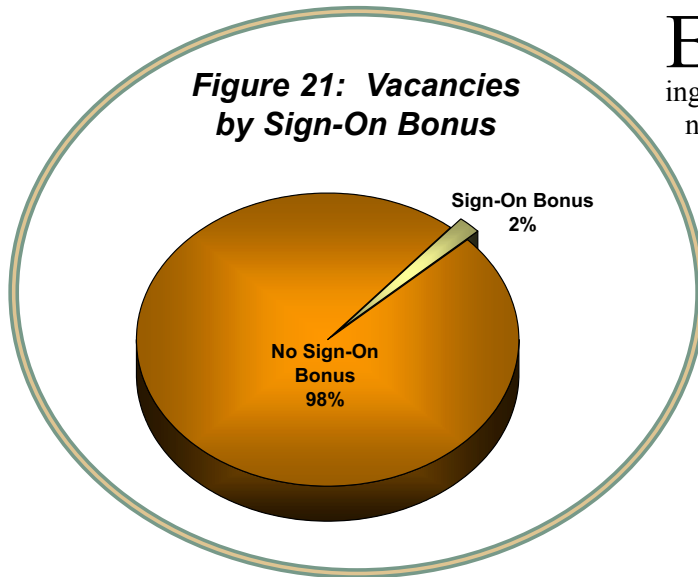
Generally, positions paying a higher proportion of medical insurance premiums also pay higher wages. The higher the skill set demanded by employers, the higher the compensation level required to attract candidates. Paying part or all of a medical insurance premium is an important feature of that compensation package. This is still considered a benefit because group plans are often structured better than individual plans.

In this survey, however, there is no relationship between wages and the proportion of premium paid. Many of the vacancies offering to pay part of the premium were in the healthcare field. Healthcare occupations heavily influenced the average wage in the partial-cost-of-premium category in *Figure 20*.



Sign-On Bonus

Figure 21: Vacancies by Sign-On Bonus



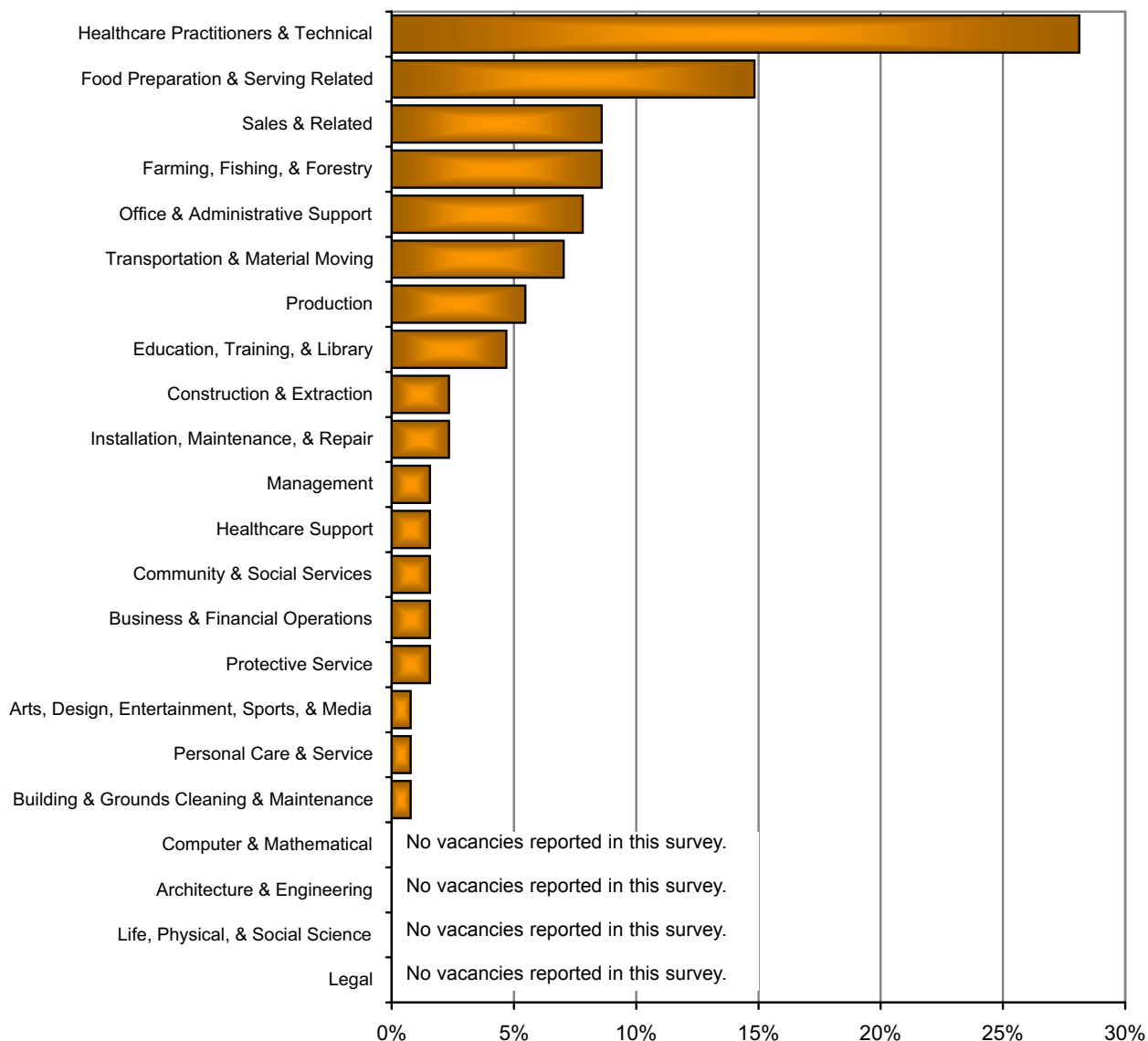
Employers were asked if they were offering sign-on bonuses for the positions for which they were recruiting. Sign-on bonuses became popular lore in the late nineties due to the tight labor market situation, but it is unclear whether the actual size and frequency of a sign-on bonus deserved the hype. Out of the 108 companies in this survey that reported vacancies only 1 offered a sign-on bonus. As the economy continues through the business cycle and the labor market once again tightens, it will be interesting to see how popular sign-on bonuses become as a means of attracting candidates.

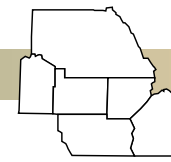
Occupations

The information reported in the Job Vacancy Survey is intended to provide job seekers and employers with useful and current information to help them make informed decisions about job hunting and hiring. Estimating the number of overall vacancies in a region and breaking those numbers down by categories such as industry and size provides

a useful overview of the job market, but when it comes down to filling a particular opening, the more detailed the information the better. Reporting vacancies at the individual occupation level is the most detailed information the survey can provide without breaking confidentiality with those employers who participate in the survey.

Figure 22: Vacancies by Major Occupational Groups





In order to help make comparisons between the results of this survey and other sources of employment statistics easier, all jobs reported are assigned an occupation code based on the 2000 *Standard Occupational Classification Manual* published by the Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system contains 821 detailed occupation titles that fall into 23 major occupation groups.

Vacancies found in this survey are coded into 18 of the 23 major occupation groups. Not surprisingly, the most frequently occurring job vacancies fall into

occupational groups that are most often associated with the largest industries in the region: Services and Retail Trade.

Because major occupational groups with the most vacancies are not necessarily the groups offering the highest wages, requirements other than the demand for a position influence the wage offered for the vacancy. Furthermore, occupational groups offering the highest wages in this survey typically require higher levels of education and experience: Healthcare Practitioners and Technical as well as Business and Financial Operations occupations command the highest wage ranges.

Figure 23: Average Wages by Major Occupational Groups

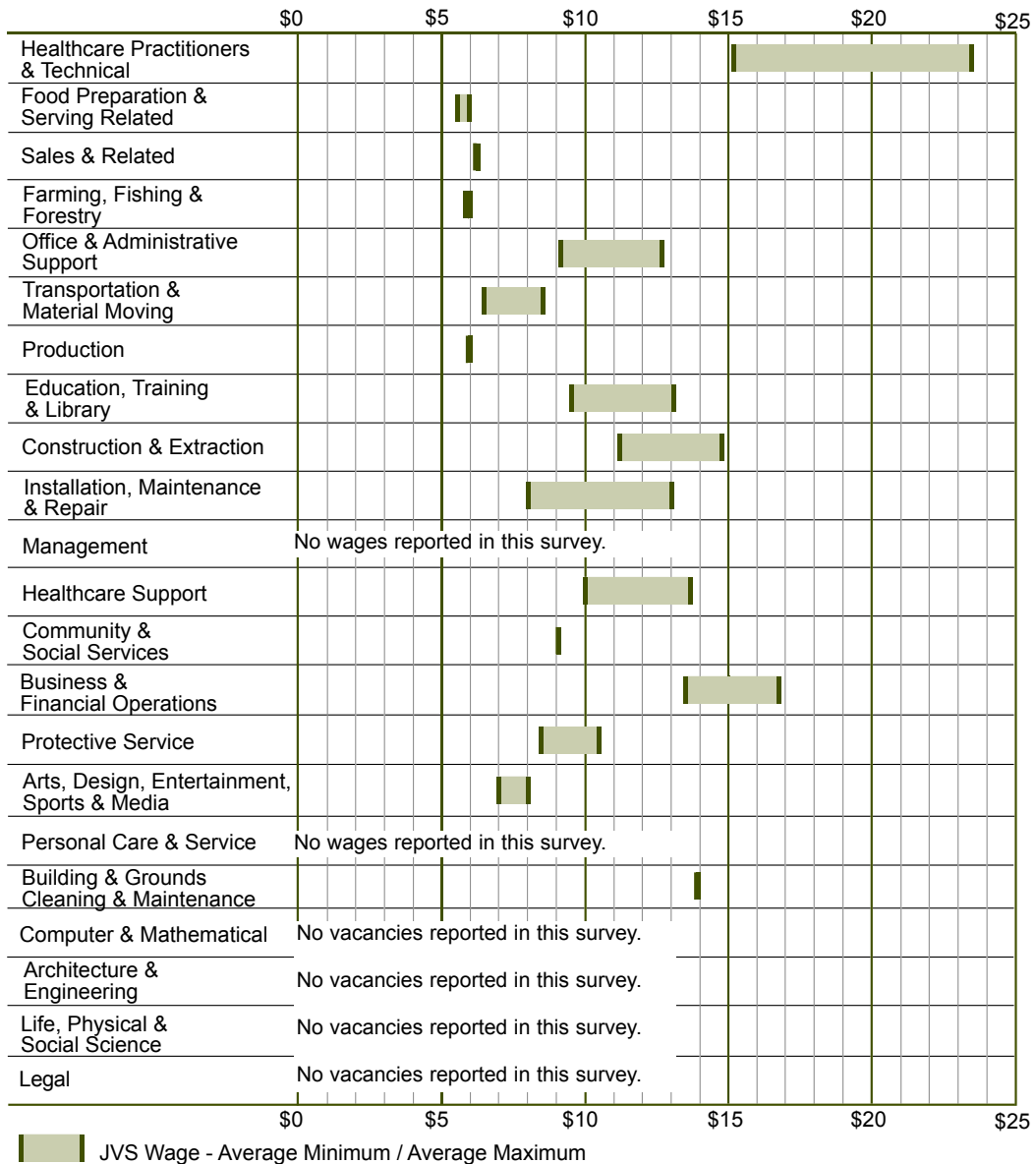


Table 3 contains a list of all of the detailed SOC job titles that were assigned to vacancies reported in this survey. Because a census of large employers and Government agencies is conducted, the list contains titles for nearly all of the vacancies available at the time of the survey for those employers. Just over half of all small to mid-size employers were contacted for the random sample, so the list also includes occupations reported by those employers. Given the large size of the random sample collected, the list of occupations should be fairly comprehensive; however, it is not exhaustive. Most likely, if a different random sample had been drawn there would be some differences in the job titles reported, but there would also be many of the same.

Vacancy Rank

Vacancies are ranked based on the total number reported for each occupation. The top 25% of occupations are ranked as high demand because they are the most frequently occurring vacancies. The bottom 25% are ranked as low demand and the medium demand vacancies include everything in-between.

Average JVS Wage

Wages for each reported vacancy are reported as average wages according to their SOC title. The average

JVS wages are based on information provided by employers and do not reflect information not gathered in the survey or wages paid to currently filled positions. Wage information accompanied 83% of reported vacancies.

Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Wage Data

Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) wage data are also provided for each occupation. OES data are based on a national survey of employers and refer to filled positions, not vacancies. The data provided here are reported for the San Luis Valley Region when available and statewide otherwise. Data were collected in 1999 and 2000 and aged to 2001 using the Employment Cost Index (ECI). A complete description of the OES survey and the ECI is available on the Internet at: <http://www.bls.gov/>.

While the Job Vacancy Survey average wages reflect what was being offered to fill vacancies at the time of the survey, OES wage data reflect what was being paid to filled positions. Together, these data provide employers and job seekers with a good indication of the compensation offered in the current job market.

Table 3: Job Vacancy Survey Occupations with OES Wages

				Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2001)							
				Average Wages			Percentile Distribution				
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	‡ Vacancy Rank	Average JVS Wage	Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
11-0000	Management Occupations		†	12.93	25.82	32.27	12.05	14.20	22.40	30.05	44.58
11-3031	Financial Managers	L	†	14.95	22.13	25.72	14.51	16.18	23.14	26.46	29.66
11-3040	Human Resources Managers	L	†	15.11	20.36	22.98	14.28	16.05	20.28	25.15	27.47
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations		\$15.10	13.15	22.69	27.46	12.11	15.31	23.97	30.21	33.57
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	M	\$15.10	12.68	16.33	18.14	12.11	13.24	14.90	17.51	23.68
21-0000	Community and Social Services Occupations		\$9.10	8.36	12.23	14.16	7.70	8.86	11.68	14.31	17.61
* 21-1099	Community and Social Service Specialists, All Other	M	\$9.10	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations		\$11.30	7.43	13.76	16.93	6.65	8.50	13.72	17.47	21.80
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	L	\$6.30	6.04	8.77	10.13	5.77	6.40	9.07	10.93	12.57
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Vocational Education	L	\$14.60	26,831	34,434	38,235	25,870	28,815	33,549	38,201	45,575
* 25-2032	Vocational Education Teachers, Secondary School	L	\$18.30	27,371	40,698	47,362	24,361	31,107	39,421	49,593	58,551
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	H	\$6.10	12,775	15,688	17,143	12,038	13,026	14,698	18,110	21,708
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations		\$7.50	7.29	12.49	15.09	6.76	8.17	10.88	14.49	19.06
* 27-1019	Artists and Related Workers, All Other	L	\$7.50	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations		\$19.30	10.33	20.12	25.01	9.63	11.41	17.65	24.82	32.27
29-1062	Family and General Practitioners	L	†	33.02	51.53	60.79	31.13	33.59	42.39	75.74	75.74

* OES wages reported for Colorado statewide

† No wage data available

‡ Vacancies are ranked based on the total number reported for each occupation.

H The top 25% are ranked as high demand because they are the most frequently occurring vacancies.

M The medium demand vacancies include everything in-between low and high demand.

L The bottom 25% are ranked as low demand

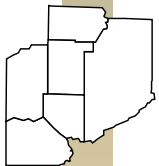


Table 3: Job Vacancy Survey Occupations with OES Wages — Page 2

				Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2001)							
				Average Wages			Percentile Distribution				
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	‡ Vacancy Rank	Average JVS Wage	Entry- Level	Overall	Experi- enced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
* 29-1063	Internists, General	L	†	12.49	38.46	51.44	11.99	13.24	34.25	66.31	†
* 29-1064	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	L	†	47.36	63.81	72.04	21.64	64.83	†	†	†
* 29-1065	Pediatricians, General	L	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
29-1111	Registered Nurses	H	\$21.80	14.97	19.13	21.22	14.43	16.35	19.22	21.55	23.12
* 29-1122	Occupational Therapists	L	†	18.41	23.96	26.73	17.30	20.20	23.78	26.88	30.69
* 29-1123	Physical Therapists	H	†	20.88	25.65	28.04	19.42	22.53	25.25	27.96	33.16
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	L	†	17.11	19.18	20.22	13.50	18.38	19.80	21.24	22.09
* 29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	L	†	18.00	23.75	26.62	16.39	19.58	23.34	27.13	32.26
29-2011	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	M	\$20.10	15.21	18.72	20.49	14.27	16.73	19.46	21.19	22.23
* 29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	H	\$20.10	14.22	18.25	20.25	13.18	15.54	18.38	21.04	23.26
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	H	\$14.20	10.06	11.93	12.86	9.63	10.58	11.99	13.39	14.30
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations		\$11.80	7.08	9.17	10.22	6.36	7.58	8.57	11.46	13.04
31-1012	Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	M	\$11.80	7.74	8.87	9.43	7.39	7.83	8.57	9.79	11.41
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations		\$9.50	8.91	12.16	13.79	8.03	9.52	10.99	14.53	17.60
* 33-9032	Security Guards	M	\$9.50	8.56	11.27	12.62	7.78	9.22	10.41	12.14	17.24
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations		\$5.80	6.08	7.78	8.64	5.83	6.50	7.52	8.51	10.03
* 35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food	H	\$5.50	6.11	8.43	9.58	5.89	6.57	8.14	10.21	11.93
* 35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	H	\$7.00	7.20	9.40	10.49	6.69	7.77	9.34	10.83	12.65
* 35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	L	\$8.30	6.09	7.50	8.21	5.78	6.33	7.25	8.42	9.92

* OES wages reported for Colorado statewide

† No wage data available

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Table 3: Job Vacancy Survey Occupations with OES Wages — Page 3

				Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2001)							
				Average Wages			Percentile Distribution				
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	‡ Vacancy Rank	Average JVS Wage	Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
* 35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	H	\$5.20	6.07	8.68	9.98	5.66	6.08	6.79	9.60	11.08
* 35-3041	Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	H	\$5.50	6.18	8.78	10.08	5.92	6.71	8.51	10.63	12.63
* 35-9011	Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	M	\$5.50	6.09	7.16	7.69	5.73	6.18	6.95	8.05	8.78
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations		\$13.90	6.09	8.71	10.02	5.80	6.37	7.69	10.62	13.23
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	L	\$13.90	6.83	9.57	10.94	6.33	7.38	9.19	10.76	13.14
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations		†	7.35	11.06	12.91	7.03	7.63	8.64	14.04	16.91
* 39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	L	†	7.49	10.39	11.85	6.76	8.48	9.99	11.47	13.91
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations		\$6.20	6.05	9.01	10.50	5.76	6.30	7.34	9.79	15.76
41-2011	Cashiers	H	\$5.50	6.03	7.84	8.73	5.64	6.03	6.69	8.30	14.66
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	M	\$6.80	6.09	8.37	9.52	5.83	6.41	7.43	8.57	12.68
* 41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	M	\$7.50	16.57	27.31	32.66	13.99	19.75	25.60	32.46	38.12
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	L	†	12.06	17.32	19.95	11.30	11.94	13.01	19.13	25.96
41-9099	Sales and Related Workers, All Other	L	†	5.97	9.26	10.89	5.73	6.38	7.64	9.99	17.57
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations		\$11.00	7.25	11.04	12.94	6.69	8.14	10.52	13.35	16.62
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks and Machine Operators	L	\$15.40	9.89	11.88	12.88	9.50	10.54	12.05	13.38	14.19
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	M	\$11.30	7.77	11.14	12.82	7.29	8.61	10.63	13.96	16.21

* OES wages reported for Colorado statewide

† No wage data available

‡ Vacancies are ranked based on the total number reported for each occupation.

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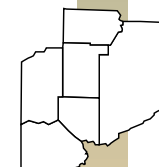


Table 3: Job Vacancy Survey Occupations with OES Wages — Page 4

				Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2001)							
				Average Wages			Percentile Distribution				
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	‡ Vacancy Rank	Average JVS Wage	Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	L	\$7.00	8.33	10.60	11.74	7.75	8.77	10.02	11.20	14.07
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	L	\$6.50	8.35	11.14	12.52	7.38	9.73	11.95	13.01	13.65
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	L	\$6.00	7.35	13.67	16.83	6.78	8.32	14.92	18.14	20.82
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	L	\$16.50	9.69	13.19	14.95	9.25	10.46	12.38	15.87	19.40
* 43-6013	Medical Secretaries	L	\$11.00	9.53	11.84	13.00	9.05	9.96	11.39	13.54	15.93
43-6014	Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	M	\$12.40	8.77	11.78	13.29	7.98	9.39	10.93	14.70	16.71
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations		\$5.90	6.16	7.41	8.03	5.78	6.18	6.85	7.99	10.16
45-2041	Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products	H	\$5.90	6.12	6.77	7.09	5.72	6.11	6.75	7.49	8.37
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations		\$13.00	9.06	12.13	13.67	8.45	9.68	10.94	14.20	17.43
* 47-2121	Glaziers	L	\$7.00	11.90	18.66	22.04	10.23	13.98	19.27	24.04	26.70
47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	M	\$16.00	9.68	13.59	15.55	8.53	10.99	14.81	16.23	17.10
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations		\$10.50	7.36	13.25	16.19	6.82	8.30	12.23	16.74	23.36
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	M	\$15.00	8.81	11.89	13.42	7.70	8.72	12.27	13.32	13.95
* 49-9098	Helpers--Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	L	\$6.00	7.86	11.62	13.50	7.51	8.47	10.53	14.26	17.51
51-0000	Production Occupations		\$5.90	6.12	9.96	11.87	5.86	6.47	8.42	13.06	16.98
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other	H	\$5.90	6.19	6.22	6.24	5.72	5.98	6.42	6.86	7.13

* OES wages reported for Colorado statewide

† No wage data available

‡ Vacancies are ranked based on the total number reported for each occupation.

H The top 25% are ranked as high demand because they are the most frequently occurring vacancies.

M The medium demand vacancies include everything in-between low and high demand.

L The bottom 25% are ranked as low demand

Table 3: Job Vacancy Survey Occupations with OES Wages — Page 5

				Occupational Employment Statistics Wage Data (2001)							
				Average Wages			Percentile Distribution				
SOC Code	SOC Occupational Title	‡ Vacancy Rank	Average JVS Wage	Entry-Level	Overall	Experienced	10th	25th	50th	75th	90th
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations		\$7.50	6.14	9.58	11.29	5.94	6.64	8.45	11.00	15.45
* 53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	L	†	6.06	11.22	13.79	5.80	6.46	10.03	13.97	20.63
53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	L	\$11.00	8.06	12.46	14.66	7.35	8.79	10.67	15.66	17.47
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	H	\$7.00	7.41	9.15	10.03	7.02	7.88	8.99	10.54	12.10

* OES wages reported for Colorado statewide

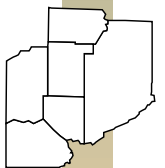
† No wage data available

‡ Vacancies are ranked based on the total number reported for each occupation.

H The top 25% are ranked as high demand because they are the most frequently occurring vacancies.

M The medium demand vacancies include everything in-between low and high demand.

L The bottom 25% are ranked as low demand



Methodology

Many challenges exist in collecting and analyzing the data for the Job Vacancy Survey. Because methods selected to carry out a survey impact the final results, great effort is put into

making this survey statistically viable and, most importantly, accurate. Methods used in this survey will continue to be reviewed and, where statistical viability and accuracy can be improved, modified.

Computer Assisted Telephone Interview

CDLE's professional survey unit developed the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) to maximize accuracy and usefulness, while minimizing length and survey bias. In accordance with

recognized survey research standards, the following selection of questions are taken directly from the phone interview script.

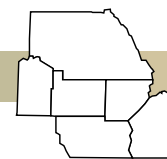
In General

1. *How many employees do you have working within the region?*
2. *Do you have any job vacancies for which your firm is actively recruiting?*
3. *How many job vacancies is your firm recruiting to fill?*

For Each Vacancy

1. *What is the job title?*
2. *Briefly, what are the job duties?*
3. *Which of the following best describes this vacancy?*
 - ♦ Full-time/Permanent
 - ♦ Full-time/Temporary
 - ♦ Part-time/Permanent
 - ♦ Part-time/Temporary
4. *What is the maximum wage offered for this vacancy?*
5. *What is the minimum wage offered for this vacancy?*
6. *Is a sign-on bonus offered? If yes, how much?*

7. *Is medical insurance offered?*
8. *If yes, does your firm pay the total cost of the premium, partial cost of the premium or do you make no contribution at all to the premium?*
9. *Which of the following best describes the education level required to fill this vacancy?*
 - ♦ No diploma required
 - ♦ High school or GED diploma
 - ♦ Two-year degree
 - ♦ Bachelor's degree
 - ♦ Advanced degree
10. *What best describes the type of experience required to qualify for this vacancy?*
 - ♦ No experience is required
 - ♦ General work experience
 - ♦ Experience in a related field
 - ♦ Experience in this occupation
11. *How long has this vacancy been open?*
 - ♦ Less than 30 days
 - ♦ 30 to 59 days
 - ♦ 60 or more days
 - ♦ Always hiring for this position
12. *How difficult is this vacancy to fill?*
 - ♦ Not difficult
 - ♦ Somewhat difficult
 - ♦ Very difficult



Survey Sample Methodology

This survey is designed to estimate the number of vacancies in the region and to provide detailed vacancy characteristics. Employers with at least five employees are placed into either government or private industry categories. Firms with fewer than five employees make up a very large portion of all employers in the region, but a small proportion of total employment. The possibility of employing statistical methods to estimate vacancies for this group is currently being explored.

Private firms are grouped by employment level into either large or small to mid-size categories. Attempts are made to contact each large private employer and government agency in the region. Small to mid-size firms are further divided by major industry and randomly sampled until a representative response is obtained for each category.

The original list of private industry firms used for the survey, along with their contact information, staff size and industry classification is obtained from the America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS) database. Government contact information is provided by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's ES-202 employer database.

Data Editing

Once data collection is complete, measures are taken to prepare the data for analysis. To ensure accuracy, follow-up phone calls are made when employer responses need clarification.

Occupational Coding

The job title and duties reported by employers are used to code vacancies in accordance with the latest release of the Standard Occupational Classification system. For more information on this occupational classification system, please refer to the *Definitions* section.

Wage Conversion

Standard conversions are used to translate salaries into hourly wages: 2,080 hours for annual, 173.3 hours for monthly.

All wages reported below the federal minimum wage are adjusted to that amount. Currently, the federal minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour.

Definitions

These definitions are meant to clarify data gathered for the Job Vacancy Survey. For other data sources referenced in the document, please see that source for a complete definition.

Average

The arithmetic average (also called the mean) for a group of items is defined as the sum of the values of the items divided by the number of items.

Average Minimum and Average Maximum Wage

When surveyed employers report wages offered for current vacancies, both a minimum and a maximum wage are recorded. All minimum wages are averaged to determine the reported average minimum wage. The same is true for the reported average maximum wage.

Employer

A person or establishment that pays one or more people a wage or salary.

Employment

Includes people who did any work for pay or profit in the reference period, worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, or were temporarily absent from their jobs.

Full-time and Part-time Employment

To be classified as full-time employment, a position must require a minimum of 35 hours of work per week. Part-time employment refers to cases where a position requires less than 35 hours of work a week.

Industry Classification

Employers are grouped into industries on the basis of their principal product or activity in accordance with the *1987 Standard Industrial Classification Manual*.

Job Seekers

People actively looking for employment or researching career options.

Job Vacancy

A specific position of employment at an establishment with the condition that there is work available for the position and the employer is actively recruiting for the position. The definition does not include positions that are anticipated, but not yet created.

Job Vacancy Rate

The number of openings in a specific industry or category expressed as a share of the total employment in that same industry.

Labor Force

Consists of all employed or unemployed civilians who are eligible to work, plus members of the Armed Forces stationed in the United States.

Level of Education

Refers to completed education programs—high school diplomas, associate, professional, vocational, bachelor's, and graduate degrees all are examples of completed programs.

Medical Insurance Premium

Refers to payments that a holder of an insurance policy pays in order to keep his/her policy current.

Permanent and Temporary Employment

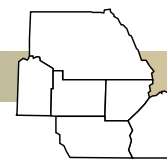
A vacancy is classified as permanent if it will be filled for more than six months. Temporary employment refers to those positions that will be filled for six months or less.

Sign-on Bonus

An additional financial incentive offered by a firm to a new employee to influence his/her decision to agree to employment with that firm. The bonus, for purposes of this survey, is a monetary lump sum.

SOC

The Standard Occupational Classification is a system for classifying all occupations in the economy, including private, public, and military occupations. This classification system replaces all occupational



classification systems previously used by federal statistical agencies. It will be used by all federal statistical agencies and programs collecting occupational data, providing a means to compare occupational data across agencies. It is designed to cover all occupations in which work is performed for pay or profit, reflecting the current occupational structure in the United States.

Survey Sample Universe

All private industry and government employers with five or more employees in the region. Government entities are drawn from ES-202 while private companies come from the ALMIS database.

Unemployment

Includes people 16 years of age and over who had no employment during the reference period, were

available for work (except for temporary illness), and have made specific efforts to find employment. People who did not look for work because they were on temporary layoff or waiting to start new jobs within the next 30 days are also counted among the unemployed.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate represents the number unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

Wage

The monetary return per hour of work. The definition does not include benefits (*e.g.*, insurance, retirement program, or stock plans).