OES estimation process

**What is the process for creating the occupation and wage estimates?**

Wage estimates are updated to March of the current year using Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors. These estimates are based on 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes at the four-digit level and the full 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code manual. Occupation and wage estimates are not provided for farms, the self-employed, owner/partners in unincorporated firms, the military, household workers or unpaid family workers.

Estimates for some occupations or wage levels may be suppressed because they do not meet BLS publication standards or due to small sample size. These include occupations with an estimated employment of fewer than 10 people. Blanks in the data columns indicate suppressed data.

**Estimate changes**

The May 2015 estimates resulted in new metropolitan statistical area (MSA) definitions and name changes, which were originally approved by the BLS in 2013. For Washington state, a new Walla Walla MSA was added to include Columbia and Walla Walla counties. Pend Oreille and Stevens counties were moved under the new Spokane-Spokane Valley MSA. Adams and Grant counties were moved under the Eastern WA nonmetropolitan area. New area breakouts are represented in greater detail in the [2017 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates](https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/labor-market-info/Libraries/Occupational-reports/OES/Occupational%20Employment%20and%20Wage%20Estimates%20Report%202017.pdf) report. One estimation change from 2016 is that percentile wages can now be estimated up to $99.99/hour or $207,980/year. National estimates, state estimates and more information about the program are available online at [www.bls.gov/oes](http://www.bls.gov/oes/).

**Estimate definitions**

**Percentiles** – The percentile columns reflect the percentage of all wage earners that earn below the wage rate specific for a given occupation.

**Entry** – The mean hourly or annual wage of the bottom 1/3 for a given occupation.

**Experienced** – The mean hourly or annual wage of the upper 2/3 for a given occupation.

**Mean** – The average hourly or annual wage for a given occupation.

**Median** – the middle or center of a set of data.

**How often are the estimates updated?**

Annually. Wage estimates are updated to March of the current year using Employment Cost Index (ECI) factors.