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HIGHLIGHTS OF BIRMINGHAM, AL NATIONAL COMPENSATION SURVEY FEBRUARY 2004

Workers in the Birmingham metropolitan area averaged \$16.36 per hour during February 2004, according to a new survey released by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin reported that white-collar workers averaged \$19.35 per hour and accounted for 58 percent of the workers in the area. Blue-collar employees averaged \$14.06 per hour and represented 21 percent of the workforce, while the remainder worked in service occupations and earned \$10.84 per hour. (See table 1.)

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) presents straight-time earnings for occupations in establishments employing 50 or more workers in private industry and State and local governments. The survey excludes agricultural establishments, private households, the self-employed, and the Federal Government. This NCS covered 84 firms representing 219,600 workers in the Birmingham metropolitan area, which includes Blount, Jefferson, St. Clair, and Shelby Counties in Alabama. Seventy-nine percent of those represented worked in private industry.

In the Birmingham metropolitan area, average hourly wages were published for 11 detailed occupations. (See table 1.) Among white-collar workers, clinical laboratory technologists and technicians averaged \$17.17 per hour; secretaries, \$13.89, and general office clerks, \$11.69. Blue-collar occupations included stock handlers and baggers earning \$10.05 per hour. In the service occupations, nursing aides, orderlies and attendants averaged \$9.45 per hour; guards and police, except public service, \$8.84; and janitors and cleaners, \$8.29.

The NCS also provides broad coverage of selected occupational characteristics. (See tables 2 and 3.) For example, full-time employees in the Birmingham area averaged \$17.05 per hour and part-timers earned \$8.30. Union workers in blue-collar jobs averaged \$17.41 per hour, while their nonunion counterparts made \$13.18. Private industry workers at establishments employing 50-99 workers averaged \$16.21 per hour, while those in establishments with 500 or more employees earned \$17.68.

The NCS is part of a statistical program that has integrated three separate surveys of wages and benefits into one comprehensive compensation program increasing the amount of data available. Data provided by the NCS may be used by businesses for establishing pay plans, making decisions concerning plant relocation, and in collective bargaining negotiations. Individuals may use such data to help choose

potential careers. Average rates of pay are also available for levels of work within an occupation based on knowledge, skill, independent judgment, supervision received, and other factors required on the job.

Survey Availability

Complete survey results are contained in the Birmingham, AL National Compensation Survey February 2004 (Bulletin 3120-69). While supplies last, single copies of the bulletin are available from the Atlanta Information Office by calling 404-331-3415. In addition, data contained in the bulletin are available on the Internet in both text and PDF formats at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/home.htm>. Select survey tables can also be obtained from the Bureau's fax-on-demand service in Atlanta by dialing 404-331-3403 and requesting document 9440.

For personal assistance or further information on the National Compensation Survey, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Atlanta Information Office at 404-331-3415 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings,¹ all workers:² Selected occupations, private industry and State and local government, National Compensation Survey, Birmingham, AL, February 2004

Occupation ³	Total		Private industry		State and local government	
	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)
All	\$16.36	5.6	\$15.31	6.4	\$20.47	5.1
All excluding sales	16.74	4.8	15.69	5.6	20.51	5.1
White collar	19.35	8.8	18.16	10.7	23.26	2.9
White collar excluding sales	20.46	5.8	19.43	7.5	23.35	2.9
Professional specialty and technical	23.76	4.4	22.27	5.2	26.78	3.2
Professional specialty	27.22	4.8	25.65	7.7	29.30	3.7
Engineers, architects, and surveyors	30.40	11.8	30.40	11.8	—	—
Mathematical and computer scientists	—	—	—	—	—	—
Health related	22.98	4.8	—	—	25.33	6.2
Registered nurses	—	—	—	—	25.16	6.3
Teachers, college and university	—	—	—	—	—	—
Teachers, except college and university	28.00	1.6	—	—	28.00	1.6
Librarians, archivists, and curators	—	—	—	—	—	—
Social scientists and urban planners	—	—	—	—	—	—
Social, recreation, and religious workers	—	—	—	—	—	—
Writers, authors, entertainers, athletes, and professionals, n.e.c.	—	—	—	—	—	—
Technical	18.02	9.7	18.45	10.9	15.84	4.6
Clinical laboratory technologists and technicians	17.17	9.3	—	—	—	—
Health technologists and technicians, n.e.c.	12.67	7.1	—	—	—	—
Executive, administrative, and managerial	27.60	9.7	27.10	11.2	30.06	15.1
Executives, administrators, and managers	29.32	14.1	28.21	16.2	34.61	14.9
Managers and administrators, n.e.c.	30.33	36.1	30.78	38.5	—	—
Management related	24.50	7.4	25.13	9.9	—	—
Sales	10.93	14.3	10.94	14.7	—	—
Administrative support, including clerical	12.03	5.3	11.87	6.3	12.63	10.2
Secretaries	13.89	3.7	14.51	4.0	12.96	5.1
General office clerks	11.69	6.0	—	—	11.21	6.0
Blue collar	14.06	6.5	14.03	7.3	14.28	3.3
Precision production, craft, and repair	18.15	4.4	17.95	4.6	—	—
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	15.07	2.6	15.14	2.7	—	—
Transportation and material moving	13.20	8.4	12.65	10.9	14.91	2.8
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	9.69	12.7	9.59	14.3	—	—
Stock handlers and baggers	10.05	5.9	10.05	5.9	—	—
Freight, stock, and material handlers, n.e.c.	9.02	13.1	—	—	—	—
Service	10.84	6.0	9.27	5.8	15.98	3.0
Protective service	12.83	19.4	8.98	.5	17.70	1.2
Guards and police, except public service	8.84	1.5	8.78	.5	—	—
Food service	9.51	25.4	9.44	26.8	—	—
Waiters, waitresses, and bartenders	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other food service	13.88	23.3	14.19	25.1	—	—
Health service	9.86	4.4	9.79	4.6	—	—
Nursing aides, orderlies and attendants	9.45	5.2	9.44	5.4	—	—
Cleaning and building service	8.65	11.2	7.58	10.6	12.12	10.9
Janitors and cleaners	8.29	10.1	7.59	10.7	10.83	3.5
Personal service	11.00	3.6	—	—	—	—

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² All workers include full-time and part-time workers.

³ A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy.

⁴ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria, and n.e.c. means "not elsewhere classified." Overall occupational groups may include data for categories not shown separately.

Table 2. Selected worker characteristics: Mean hourly earnings¹ by occupational group,² National Compensation Survey, Birmingham, AL, February 2004

Occupational group	Private industry and State and local government					
	Full-time workers ³	Part-time workers ³	Union ⁴	Nonunion ⁴	Time ⁵	Incentive ⁵
	Mean					
All occupations	\$17.05	\$8.30	\$19.46	\$16.12	\$16.35	–
All excluding sales	17.21	8.40	19.46	16.51	16.73	–
White collar	20.26	8.75	–	19.16	19.33	–
White-collar excluding sales	20.79	9.93	–	20.31	20.45	–
Professional specialty and technical	23.84	–	–	23.78	23.76	–
Professional specialty	27.34	–	–	27.22	27.22	–
Technical	18.10	–	–	16.16	18.02	–
Executive, administrative, and managerial	27.60	–	–	27.60	27.71	–
Sales	13.22	8.14	–	10.93	10.93	–
Administrative support, including clerical	12.35	7.89	–	11.90	12.03	–
Blue collar	14.25	8.98	17.41	13.18	14.02	–
Precision production, craft, and repair	18.33	–	19.48	17.63	18.15	–
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	15.07	–	16.57	14.39	15.07	–
Transportation and material moving	13.53	–	–	12.43	12.89	–
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	9.84	–	12.94	9.32	9.69	–
Service	11.33	7.33	–	10.84	10.84	–
	Relative error ⁶ (percent)					
All occupations	4.7	3.8	8.4	5.9	5.6	–
All excluding sales	4.5	5.6	8.4	5.0	4.9	–
White collar	6.5	8.1	–	9.1	8.8	–
White-collar excluding sales	5.5	12.1	–	5.9	5.9	–
Professional specialty and technical	4.5	–	–	4.7	4.4	–
Professional specialty	4.9	–	–	4.8	4.8	–
Technical	9.6	–	–	5.4	9.7	–
Executive, administrative, and managerial	9.7	–	–	9.7	9.8	–
Sales	16.7	.4	–	14.3	14.3	–
Administrative support, including clerical	5.0	2.3	–	5.4	5.3	–
Blue collar	6.8	6.6	4.7	7.3	6.6	–
Precision production, craft, and repair	4.1	–	7.0	5.0	4.4	–
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	2.6	–	3.3	8.3	2.6	–
Transportation and material moving	8.4	–	–	9.3	8.7	–
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	13.8	–	12.1	13.4	12.7	–
Service	6.1	2.3	–	6.0	6.0	–

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy.

³ Employees are classified as working either a full-time or a part-time schedule based on the definition used by each establishment. Therefore, a worker with a 35-hour-per-week schedule might be considered a full-time employee in one establishment, but classified as part-time in another firm, where a 40-hour week is the minimum full-time schedule.

⁴ Union workers are those whose wages are determined through collective bargaining.

⁵ Time workers' wages are based solely on an hourly rate or salary; incentive workers are those whose wages are at least partially based on productivity payments such as piece rates, commissions, and production bonuses.

⁶ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

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Table 3. Establishment employment size: Mean hourly earnings¹ by occupational group,² private industry, National Compensation Survey, Birmingham, AL, February 2004

Occupational group	Full-time and part-time workers				
	All private industry workers	50 - 99 workers ³	100 workers or more		
			Total	100 - 499 workers	500 workers or more
	Mean				
All occupations	\$15.31	\$16.21	\$15.09	\$13.18	\$17.68
All excluding sales	15.69	16.06	15.60	13.77	17.68
White collar	18.16	23.87	17.34	14.96	19.75
White-collar excluding sales	19.43	24.12	18.70	17.17	19.75
Professional specialty and technical	22.27	—	21.93	23.18	21.02
Professional specialty	25.65	—	24.46	—	23.76
Technical	18.45	—	18.47	—	15.06
Executive, administrative, and managerial	27.10	—	26.18	—	30.90
Sales	10.94	—	10.17	10.17	—
Administrative support, including clerical	11.87	14.24	11.71	11.08	12.20
Blue collar	14.03	13.20	14.50	13.46	16.81
Precision production, craft, and repair	17.95	15.57	19.67	21.28	17.48
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	15.14	13.93	16.28	15.22	—
Transportation and material moving	12.65	—	13.12	11.86	—
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	9.59	9.96	9.39	—	—
Service	9.27	9.26	9.27	9.15	9.52
	Relative error ⁴ (percent)				
All occupations	6.4	13.5	7.0	10.9	6.0
All excluding sales	5.6	13.6	5.9	10.6	6.0
White collar	10.7	14.2	11.7	19.2	9.6
White-collar excluding sales	7.5	15.4	8.2	15.3	9.6
Professional specialty and technical	5.2	—	5.9	9.6	6.2
Professional specialty	7.7	—	6.1	—	5.9
Technical	10.9	—	14.2	—	9.1
Executive, administrative, and managerial	11.2	—	11.2	—	8.6
Sales	14.7	—	4.3	4.3	—
Administrative support, including clerical	6.3	16.6	5.7	7.9	6.1
Blue collar	7.3	5.6	11.2	16.9	4.3
Precision production, craft, and repair	4.6	2.3	5.0	5.2	6.4
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	2.7	6.9	4.7	4.8	—
Transportation and material moving	10.9	—	11.3	10.9	—
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	14.3	5.1	21.9	—	—
Service	5.8	22.5	3.6	4.9	6.2

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy.

³ Establishments classified with 50-99 workers may contain

establishments with fewer than 50 due to staff reductions between survey sampling and collection.

⁴ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria.