

Working for less: Most common Toledo jobs pay too little, 2019

Too many jobs in Toledo pay too little and many pay less as a share of poverty than they did nearly two decades ago. New data released by the U.S. Department of Labor show that six of the Toledo area’s 10 most common jobs pay the typical worker too little to feed a family of three without food assistance (earnings under 130 percent of poverty, about \$27,000 typically qualify). Of the 10 most common jobs, all but two pay a typical worker less than \$35,000, for full-time year round work, and six pay less than \$25,000.

This data confirms that job quality matters to family stability. During this budget cycle, policymakers should not restrict access to food and health insurance when so many jobs offer neither. The challenge is not requiring people to work, as most already do. Rather, the true challenge is getting employers—many of which are major international corporations with vast profits—to pay a fair wage with benefits and set a schedule that provides stability.

Working for Less				
Most common occupations in the Toledo metropolitan area, by employment, 2018				
Top 10 occupations 2018	Total Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Salary	Median annual earnings as a share of poverty
Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food	10,030	\$9.14	\$19,020	92%
Assemblers, Fabricators, Team Assemblers	8,490	\$18.81	\$39,120	188%
Retail Salespersons	7,780	\$11.34	\$23,590	114%
Cashiers	7,110	\$9.43	\$19,600	94%
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,420	\$13.35	\$27,770	134%
Registered Nurses	6,160	\$30.61	\$63,660	306%
Office Clerks, General	5,920	\$15.48	\$32,210	155%
Waiters and Waitresses	5,820	\$9.44	\$19,630	94%
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	5,290	\$11.36	\$23,620	114%
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	4,890	\$11.45	\$23,820	115%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Survey, May 2018 estimates, available at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>, accessed April 13, 2019. Largest detail occupations in Toledo MSA by employment. Median annual earnings shown as a share of the poverty threshold for a family of three in 2018 (\$20,780). The gross monthly income threshold for food assistance is generally 130 percent of poverty.

Many of Ohio’s most common jobs now simply pay too little to eliminate need. That is also true in Toledo. Policymakers should not restrict access to food and health insurance when so many jobs offer neither. Low wages were not always so ubiquitous in Toledo. In 2000, four of the 10 most common occupations paid so little that a family of three was left dependent on food assistance to get by – now it’s six. Some occupations paid less as a share of poverty in 2018 than they did a decade and a half ago. The new rules of Ohio’s labor market are so tilted in favor of corporate employers that many in Toledo will not be able to work their way to self-sufficiency.

Wrong Direction

Toledo occupations, employment and median annual wage: 2000, 2017, and 2018

Top 10 occupations 2000	Earnings as share of poverty	Top 10 occupations 2017	Earnings as share of poverty	Top 10 occupations 2018	Earnings as share of poverty
Retail Salespersons	111%	Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food	93%	Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food	92%
Cashiers	98%	Retail Salespersons	111%	Assemblers, Fabricators, Team Assemblers	188%
Assemblers, Fabricators, Team Assemblers	210%	Assemblers, Fabricators, Team Assemblers	193%	Retail Salespersons	114%
Registered Nurses	288%	Cashiers	95%	Cashiers	94%
Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers	170%	Registered Nurses	307%	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	134%
Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food	93%	Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers	123%	Registered Nurses	306%
Waiters & Waitresses	89%	Waiters & Waitresses	95%	Office Clerks, General	155%
General and Operations Managers	416%	Office Clerks	153%	Waiters and Waitresses	94%
Office Clerks	145%	Janitors & Cleaners, except Maids & Housekeeping	106%	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	114%
Maintenance and Repair Workers	257%	Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers	189%	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	115%

Source: BLS, OES Survey, 2000, 2017 Toledo MSA estimates and May 2018 estimates, accessed 4/13/19 at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>. Largest detail occupations in Toledo MSA by employment. Median annual earnings shown as share of poverty threshold for a family of three in 2000 (\$14,150), 2017 (\$20,420), and 2018 (20,780). The gross monthly income threshold for food assistance is generally 130 percent of poverty.

Toledo on average had 309,800 jobs last year. That's 900 fewer jobs than in 2007, when the last recession began. Toledo is still struggling for a solid recovery. Most of the top jobs do not offer the same income or stability as top jobs from 2000. Manufacturing, which offered good jobs for less educated workers, took the biggest hit.

Job quality has been eroded. Ohio tax policy has sent big cuts to the wealthiest, shrinking funding for education, infrastructure, and healthcare—investments that help working people and their kids get ahead. Policy Matters Ohio has set out 10 policy priorities that help working people by raising wages, extending overtime protections, providing paid leave, preserving public jobs and more new data show that such policies are essential in Toledo where jobs still make it hard to get by.