

### Working for less: Most common Lima jobs pay too little\*

Too many jobs in Lima 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 seven of the Lima 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 typically qualify). At a time when state and federal policymakers are determined to erect new barriers to food assistance and health care, these new data show that 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 their workers a fair wage with benefits and set a schedule that provides some measure of job security.

Working for Less				
Most common occupations in the Lima metropolitan area, by employment, 2017				
Top 10 occupations 2017	Total Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Salary	Median annual earnings as a share of poverty
Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food-	2,160	\$9.11	\$18,960	93%
Registered Nurses+	1,890	\$31.81	\$66,170	324%
Retail Salespersons-	1,550	\$9.63	\$20,030	98%
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers-	1,240	\$10.49	\$21,830	107%
Cashiers-	1,180	\$9.20	\$19,140	94%
Waiters & Waitresses-	1,160	\$9.09	\$18,920	93%
Nursing Assistants+	880	\$12.88	\$26,800	131%
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers-	860	\$10.10	\$21,010	103%
Janitors & Cleaners, except Maids & Housekeeping+	850	\$12.21	\$25,390	124%
Office Clerks-	850	\$14.53	\$30,230	148%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Survey, May 2017 estimates, available at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>, accessed April 13, 2018. Largest detail occupations in Lima MSA by employment. Median annual earnings shown as a share of the poverty threshold for a family of three in 2017 (\$20,420). The gross monthly income threshold for food assistance is generally 130 percent of poverty. Red text highlights the occupations paying a typical wage below this threshold. (-) indicates a median wage lower than the state median for that occupation. (+) indicates a median wage higher than the state’s for that occupation.

Many of Ohio’s most common jobs now simply pay too little to eliminate need. That is also true in Lima. Policymakers should not restrict access to food and health insurance when so many jobs offer neither. Low wages were not always so ubiquitous in Lima. In 2000, six 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 seven. Some occupations paid less as a share of poverty in 2017 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 Lima will not be able to work their way to self-sufficiency.

\* By Hannah Halbert, with research assistance from Isaac Miller

Wrong Direction			
Lima occupations, employment and median annual wage: 2000 and 2017			
Top 10 occupations 2000	Earnings as share of poverty	Top 10 occupations 2017	Earnings as share of poverty
Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food	90%	Food Prep & Serving Workers, including Fast Food+	93%
Retail Salespersons	102%	Registered Nurses+	324%
Cashiers	94%	Retail Salesperson-	98%
Registered Nurses	273%	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers-	107%
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	119%	Cashiers	94%
Office Clerks	114%	Waiters & Waitresses+	93%
Team Assemblers	189%	Nursing Assistants+	131%
General & Operations Managers	372%	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers-	103%
Janitors & Cleaners, except Maids & Housekeeping	145%	Janitors & Cleaners, except Maids & Housekeeping-	124%
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	118%	Office Clerks+	148%

*Source:* BLS, OES Survey, 2000 Lima MSA estimates and May 2017 estimates, accessed 4/13/18 at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>. Largest detail occupations in Lima MSA by employment. Median annual earnings shown as share of poverty threshold for a family of three in 2000 (\$14,150) and 2017 (\$20,420). The gross monthly income threshold for food assistance is generally 130 percent of poverty. Red font notes occupations that have median annual earnings under 130% of poverty for a family of three. (+) indicates earnings increased since 2000, (-) indicates the earnings decreased since 2000, as a share of poverty

Lima on average had 53,500 jobs last year. That’s 2,300 fewer jobs than in 2007, when the last recession began. Lima is still struggling for a solid recovery. Plus, many jobs that have grown over recent years offer less income and stability than those lost. Trade, Transportation and Utilities took the biggest hit. One top job, registered nurse, provides better earnings. Its continued strength relies in part on maintaining health coverage. Other growing sectors, like leisure and hospitality, often have poor pay and benefits.

Job quality has been eroded. Tax policy has sent big cuts to the wealthiest, shrinking funding to support 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. These new data show that such policies are essential in Lima where jobs still make it hard to get by.

