

### Working for less in Toledo: Most common jobs pay too little

The economy comes down to people: people who work, buy and sell. An economy that relies on working people who can't afford to get by is shaky even in the best of times. Now more than ever, Ohioans need leaders who put people first. Reporting to work in the midst of a pandemic is a frightening new reality for many working Ohioans. Others are out of work to comply with Gov. DeWine's stay-at-home order. Many still wait for unemployment compensation to arrive. Many have lost health insurance and some worry how they will cope if they or a family member falls ill.

As Ohioans scramble to take care of one another and meet basic needs, low wages compound the hardship. New data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show a jobs landscape already drastically outmoded. Nearly 60,000 Lucas, Fulton and Wood County residents who were working this March are out of work today.<sup>1</sup> But looking at the jobs that dominated greater Toledo through May of 2019 sheds light on the challenges workers still at or recently laid off from work face today. These data show that even before the pandemic and after a decade of economic growth, many people in Toledo and surrounding communities lived on the brink.

#### Working for Less

Most common occupations in the Toledo metropolitan area by employment, 2019

Top 10 occupations 2019	Total Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Salary	Median annual earnings as a share of poverty
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	9,940	\$20.01	\$41,620	195%
Retail Salespeople	7,340	\$12.17	\$25,310	119%
Cashiers	7,080	\$9.97	\$20,750	97%
Registered Nurses	6,400	\$30.69	\$63,830	299%
Laborers and Freight, Stock & Material Movers	6,230	\$13.29	\$27,650	130%
Office Clerks	6,110	\$16.33	\$33,960	159%
Stockers and Order Fillers	5,710	\$12.38	\$25,740	121%
Waiters and Waitresses	5,330	\$9.52	\$19,810	93%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	5,100	\$11.09	\$23,060	108%
Janitors and Cleaners, except Maids and Housekeeping	5,100	\$12.45	\$25,900	121%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Survey, May 2019 estimates, available at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>, accessed April 8, 2020. Largest detail occupations in Toledo by employment. Median annual earnings shown as a share of the poverty threshold for a family of three in 2019 (\$21,330). The gross monthly income threshold for food assistance is 130% of poverty (\$27,729) or less. Red text highlights the occupations paying a typical wage below this threshold. Asterisk (\*) indicates that a job would likely be considered "essential" under Gov. DeWine's stay-at-home directive.

<sup>1</sup> Initial unemployment compensation filings four weeks ended April 11, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2v6bfBZ>.

Too many greater Toledo jobs pay too little. Wages in seven of the top 10 jobs paid so little that a family of three would need food aid, up from four in 2000. Wages so low would not even have been possible half a century ago. At its peak in 1968, the federal minimum wage was worth over \$12 per hour in today's dollars: more than the median wage in three of Toledo's 10 most common jobs.

Wrong Direction					
Most common Toledo MSA occupations, employment and median annual wage: 2000, 2018, and 2019					
Top 10 occupations 2000	Earnings as share of poverty	Top 10 occupations 2018	Earnings as share of poverty	Top 10 occupations 2019	Earnings as share of poverty
Retail Salespeople	111%	Food Prep and Serving Workers, incl. Fast Food	92%	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	195%
Cashiers	98%	Assemblers, Fabricators and Team Assemblers	188%	Retail Salespeople	119%
Assemblers, Fabricators and Team Assemblers	210%	Retail Salespeople	114%	Cashiers*	97%
Registered Nurses	288%	Cashiers	94%	Registered Nurses*	299%
Laborers and Freight, Stock & Material Movers	170%	Laborers and Freight, Stock & Material Movers	134%	Laborers and Freight, Stock & Material Movers*	130%
Food Prep and Serving Workers, incl. Fast Food	93%	Registered Nurses	306%	Office Clerks	159%
Waiters and Waitresses	89%	Office Clerks	155%	Stockers and Order Fillers*	121%
General and Operations Managers	416%	Waiters and Waitresses	94%	Waiters and Waitresses	93%
Office Clerks	145%	Janitors and Cleaners, except Maids and Housekeeping	114%	Home Health and Personal Care Aides*	108%
Maintenance and Repair Workers	257%	Stockers and Order Fillers	115%	Janitors and Cleaners, except Maids and Housekeeping*	121%

Source: BLS, OES Survey, 2000 state estimates and May 2019 estimates, accessed April 8, 2020 at <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>. Largest detail occupations in the Toledo MSA by employment. Median annual earnings shown as share of poverty threshold for a family of three in 2000 (\$14,150), 2018 (\$20,780), and 2019 (\$21,330). Red font indicates occupations that have median annual earnings under 130% of poverty, the typical threshold for food aid, for a family of three. Asterisk (\*) indicates likely "essential" occupation.

Paltry wages left many with no savings to withstand a coronavirus layoff. Policy Matters Ohio has set out four policy priorities to help working people through the crisis and beyond. Ohio lawmakers can protect people today and build a stronger state for tomorrow by protecting essential workers, shoring up unemployment comp, providing paid sick leave, and making sure all working people, no matter what job they do, get a fair return for their work.