



## FACT SHEET 07-51

# Highest and Lowest Paying Occupations in Nevada, 2006

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### Introduction

The formulation of targeted economic development plans and programs requires socio-economic data from various sources. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation annually produce occupational employment and wage data. From the 2006 Nevada Occupational Employment Statistics Survey, occupational employment and wage data are available for 645 Nevada occupations. These occupations accounted for 1.26 million jobs with an annual average wage of \$46,091. This fact sheet will discuss the highest and lowest paying occupations in the state of Nevada and compare the state to national trends. Education requirements for each occupation are discussed in a University of Nevada Cooperative Extension fact sheet titled "Future Demand for Education and Training in Nevada: 2004-2014."

### Highest and Lowest Paying Occupations in Nevada

For economic development planning, it may be of interest to know the top five paying occupations, as well as the five lowest paying occupations. Planners can use this information to target industries that bring in jobs with higher paying wages versus industries that pay the least.

**The highest paying occupations in Nevada for 2006 were:** *Surgeons, obstetricians and gynecologists, internists, family and general practitioners and all other physicians and surgeons.*

The highest annual average wage was for surgeons. Their average salary of \$187,630 was just over \$3,400 higher than the national

average for this occupation. Overall, 20 of the 25 highest paying occupations in Nevada had average annual salaries that were above the national average. Obstetricians and gynecologists, dentists, podiatrists and engineering managers had salaries that were below the national average. Lawyers had salaries equal to the national average. The majority of these occupations required an education level of at least a bachelor's degree.

**The lowest paying occupations in Nevada for 2006 were:** *Gaming dealers, fast food cooks, farm and ranch animal farm workers, combined food preparation and serving workers, including fast food and child care workers.*

Gaming dealers had the lowest annual average wage. Their average salary of \$13,780 was approximately \$3,200 lower than the national average for this occupation. Eleven of the 25 lowest paying occupations in Nevada had average annual salaries that were above the national average. Dishwashers had the highest positive margin of difference in average salary, with Nevada workers earning \$20,080 compared to the national average of \$16,190. A majority of these low paying occupations required only short-term, on-the-job training.

### Highest Paying Occupations in Nevada

The major Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) group of Healthcare Practitioner and Technical Occupations accounted for 13 of Nevada's 25 highest paying occupations. Further, the top six occupations and 10 of the top 15 occupations in annual average wage were contained in this major SOC. Among the remaining highest paying occupations, there were five management occupations, two legal occupations and two architecture and engineering occupations.

Table 1 depicts the 25 highest paying occupations in Nevada. These occupations accounted for 28,000 jobs, or 2.2 percent of all Nevada occupations. The annual average wage of these 25 occupations in 2006 was \$127,328, with surgeons garnering an average annual wage of \$187,630, which was the highest annual average wage in Nevada.

### Lowest Paying Occupations in Nevada

The major SOC group of food preparation and serving related occupations accounted for eight of the 25 lowest paying occupations in Nevada,

while the personal care and service occupations accounted for seven of the 25 lowest paying occupations. These two groups comprised seven of the top 10 lowest paying occupations in Nevada in terms of annual average wage. Among the remaining lowest paying occupations, four were in transportation and material moving occupations.

Table 2 shows the 25 lowest paying occupations, which accounted for 196,410 total jobs or 15.6 percent of all jobs in Nevada. The annual average wage for these 25 occupations in 2006 was \$18,266.

**Table 1. Twenty-five Highest Paying Occupations in Nevada.**

NV Rank	Occupation	Employment	NV Annual Average Wage	US Rank
1	Surgeons	**	\$187,630	2
2	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	**	\$173,640	3
3	Internists, General	**	\$169,350	6
4	Family and General Practitioners	**	\$158,080	9
5	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	**	\$151,520	11
6	Psychiatrists	**	\$150,920	8
7	Real Estate Brokers	390	\$147,170	73
8	Chief Executives	810	\$144,640	10
9	Dentists, General	820	\$137,090	13
10	Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners, All Others	260	\$130,050	57
11	Nuclear Engineers	140	\$127,790	36
12	Judges, Magistrate Judges and Magistrates	190	\$122,870	29
13	Aerospace Engineers	**	\$118,270	43
14	Podiatrists	60	\$118,150	15
15	Optometrists	180	\$117,650	27
16	Chiropractors	220	\$116,490	70
17	Lawyers	4,760	\$113,660	16
18	Engineering Managers	930	\$107,900	18
19	General and Operations Managers	15,930	\$103,030	26
20	Veterinarians	350	\$102,950	68
21	Computer and Information Scientists, Research	**	\$100,260	28
22	Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers and Athletes	130	\$100,150	54
23	Public Relations Managers	280	\$97,210	35
24	Pharmacists	2,060	\$94,070	34
25	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	490	\$92,670	59

\*\*Employment data not reported

**Table 2. Twenty-five Lowest Paying Occupations in Nevada.**

NV Rank <sup>1</sup>	Occupation	Employment	NV Annual Average Wage	US Rank <sup>1</sup>
1	Gaming Dealers	24,660	\$13,780	7
2	Cooks, Fast Food	12,220	\$15,130	2
3	Farmworkers, Farm and Ranch Animals	**	\$15,720	37
4	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	18,680	\$16,350	1
5	Child Care Workers	1,690	\$16,630	24
6	Amusement and Recreation Attendants	2,880	\$17,290	11
7	Bicycle Repairers	**	\$17,380	65
8	Waiters and Waitresses	38,360	\$17,610	9
9	Parking Lot Attendants	3,140	\$17,680	17
10	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession and Coffee Shop	5,180	\$17,760	6
11	Dining room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	14,720	\$17,970	4
12	Lifeguards, Ski Patrol and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers	1,350	\$18,580	15
13	Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	4,720	\$18,620	33
14	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	510	\$18,810	41
15	Ushers, Lobby Attendants and Ticket Takers	2,900	\$18,990	10
16	Packers and Packagers, Hand	5,630	\$19,130	27
17	Service Station Attendants	770	\$19,410	26
18	Food Servers, Non-restaurant	1,770	\$19,490	30
19	Cashiers	36,570	\$19,650	13
20	Molding, Coremaking, Casting Machine Setters, Operators and Tenders; Metal and Plastic	390	\$19,720	152
21	Dishwashers	9,760	\$20,080	3
22	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge and Coffee Shop	5,480	\$20,090	5
23	Transportation Attendants, Except Flight Attendants and Baggage Porters	710	\$20,220	42
24	Personal and Home Care Aides	2,130	\$20,220	14
25	Gaming and Sports Book Writers and Runners	2,190	\$20,330	38

<sup>1</sup>Rank of 1 indicates lowest ranking job, rank of 25 indicated 25<sup>th</sup> lowest paying job.

\*\*Employment data not reported.

### Highest and Lowest Paying Occupations in the United States

Knowledge of Nevada occupational trends that are similar or dissimilar to the overall national trend may allow the state of Nevada's economic development practitioners to target appropriate economic activities. Also, analysis of this data may provide information to Nevada decision makers to develop appropriate public policies to enhance high paying occupations in the state.

### Highest Paying Occupations in the United States

In comparison to the highest paying occupations in Nevada, Table 3 depicts the 10 highest paying occupations in the United States, which accounted for 597,660 jobs, or 0.45 percent of total U.S. occupations in 2006.

Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations accounted for 14 of the United States' 25 highest paying occupations. Further, the top nine occupations and 13 of the top 15 occupations in annual average wage were

contained in this major SOC. Among the remaining highest paying occupations, there were seven management occupations, and two transportation and material moving occupations.

### Lowest Paying Occupations in the United States

In comparison to the lowest paying occupations in Nevada, Table 4 depicts the 10 lowest paying occupations in the United States, which accounted for 7,356,270 jobs, or 5.5 percent of total U.S. occupations in 2006.

Food preparation and serving related occupations accounted for ten of the 25 lowest paying occupations in Nevada, while personal care and service occupations accounted for six of the 25 lowest paying occupations. These two groups comprised the top 10 lowest paying occupations in the United States in terms of annual average wage.

Among the remaining lowest paying occupations, two were transportation and material moving occupations, two were production occupations and two were farming, fishing and forestry occupations.

**Table 3. Ten Highest Paying Occupations in the United States.**

US Rank	Occupation	Employment	US Annual Average Wage	NV Rank
1	Anesthesiologists	29,890	\$184,340	—*
2	Surgeons	51,900	\$184,150	1
3	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	22,520	\$178,040	2
4	Orthodontists	5,200	\$176,900	—*
5	Oral and maxillofacial Surgeons	5,320	\$164,760	—*
6	Internists, General	48,700	\$160,860	3
7	Prosthodontists	480	\$158,940	—*
8	Psychiatrists	24,730	\$149,990	6
9	Family and General Practitioners	109,400	\$149,850	4
10	Chief Executives	299,520	\$144,600	8

\*Occupation not reported in Nevada statistics.

**Table 4. Ten Lowest Paying Occupations in the United States.**

US Rank <sup>1</sup>	Occupation	Employment	US Annual Average Wage	NV Rank
1	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	2,461,890	\$15,930	4
2	Cooks, Fast Food	612,020	\$15,960	2
3	Dishwashers	502,770	\$16,190	21
4	Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	401,790	\$16,320	11
5	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge and Coffee Shop	340,390	\$16,860	22
6	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food concession and Coffee Shop	524,410	\$16,950	10
7	Gaming Dealers	82,960	\$17,010	1
8	Shampooers	15,580	\$17,050	—*
9	Waiters and Waitresses	2,312,930	\$17,190	8
10	Ushers, Lobby Attendants and Ticket Takers	101,530	\$17,500	15

<sup>1</sup>Rank of 1 indicates lowest ranking job, rank of 10 indicates 10<sup>th</sup> lowest paying job.

\*Occupation not reported in Nevada statistics.

### Conclusions

Economic development planners should consider occupational wages when targeting new businesses in Nevada. Planners have to balance targeting businesses with higher paying occupations with businesses that employ lower

paying occupations. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the top 25 highest paying occupations account for only 2.2 percent of total 2006 Nevada employment while the 25 lowest paying occupations account for 15.6 percent of the states total.

### References

*May 2006 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimate*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007.  
*May 2006 Nevada Occupation Employment and Wage Estimate*, Nevada Workforce Informer, 2007.