

Welcome to Labor Market Information 101!

This presentation is designed to provide an overview of labor market information data and concepts, with an emphasis on data that the Department of Economic Research (DER) publishes in cooperation with the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Employment Training Administration (ETA).



Contents

- [Introduction to LMI](#)
 - This section introduces the Department of Economic Research (DER)'s mission and covers the most basic questions about Labor Market Information (LMI), including what LMI is and how it can be used.
- [Definitions & Key Concepts](#)
 - This section introduces terminology, context, and framework for various LMI concepts and ideas.
- [Program/Data Details](#)
 - This section provides an overview of each of the major LMI data sets that DER publishes, including links to download data. It also discusses how these data sets can be used and provides recommendations for additional LMI sources outside of DER.
- [Technical Notes](#)
 - This section covers some of the common technical and statistical concepts related to LMI.
- [Appendix](#)
 - This section includes additional resources and reference materials.

Introduction to LMI

This section introduces the Department of Economic Research (DER)'s mission and covers the most basic questions about Labor Market Information (LMI).

Contents:

[DER Mission Statement](#)

[Accessing Resources from DER](#)

[What is LMI?](#)

[Who uses LMI?](#)

[Why is LMI Important?](#)

[How can LMI Data from DER
be used to support Workforce
Development?](#)

DER produces and distributes various data, research, analysis, and additional resources to state and regional policymakers, workforce development agencies, and others interested in better understanding the Massachusetts labor market.

DER Mission Statement, 2025



Access DER's publicly available resources and data at mass.gov/economicresearch

Latest from DER section is updated every month!

- **Searching for data?** Check out DER's [data index page](#) that includes a full list of available data for Massachusetts and its regions, or DER's [frequently asked questions page](#) for commonly requested resources.
- **Curious about data visualizations?** DER offers a [variety of interactive dashboards](#) that you can use to explore and share data.
- **Interested in economic research?** Find the latest research publications on DER's [Reports and Releases](#) page.



What is LMI?

- Labor Market Information includes quantitative and qualitative data and analysis related to employment or the labor force
- LMI includes information on jobs and people (employed and unemployed); occupations and industries; establishments and households; as well as wages and other factors that impact employment and/or the labor force



Who uses LMI?

- Policymakers in state, local, and federal government
- Workforce development and training agencies
- Employers and businesses
- Jobseekers
- Students, educators, and academic institutions
- Researchers
- Advocacy organizations



Why is LMI important?

- LMI encourages data-driven decision making for wide range of stakeholders
- LMI is important for:
 - Understanding local and regional economies
 - Efficient resource allocation
 - Understanding compensation and wages
 - Guiding policy and strategy

How can LMI Data from DER support workforce development?

Source	Data	Benefits/Use Cases
Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)	Estimates employed, unemployed, and labor force (number of people)	• Used to calculate Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs) • Aids in understanding how workforce development funding is allocated
Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS)	Estimates employment (number of jobs) and wages for occupations	• Can help identify wage rates at specific jobs within specific areas • Can be used to identify which occupations in an area earn a living wage
Short and Long-term Occupational Projections	Estimates employment (number of jobs) over a period of 2 to 10 years	• Can help identify which jobs are likely to grow within specific areas
Staffing Patterns	The distribution of occupations working within an industry	• Provides a breakdown of industry employment by occupations • Can be used to understand how employment and wages of a specific occupation vary by industry

Definitions & Key Concepts

This section introduces terminology, context, and framework for various LMI concepts and ideas.

Contents:

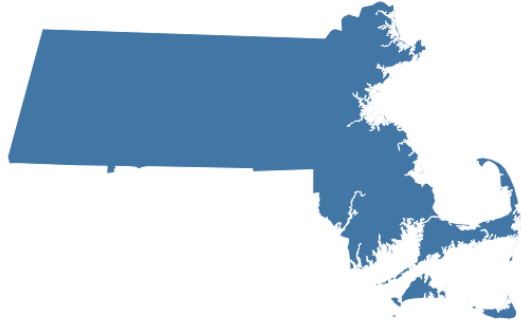
[Geographies](#)

[Units of Analysis and Framework](#)

[North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\)](#)

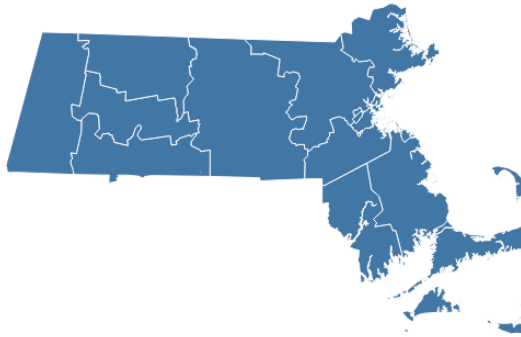
[Standard Occupational Codes \(SOC\)](#)

Geographies



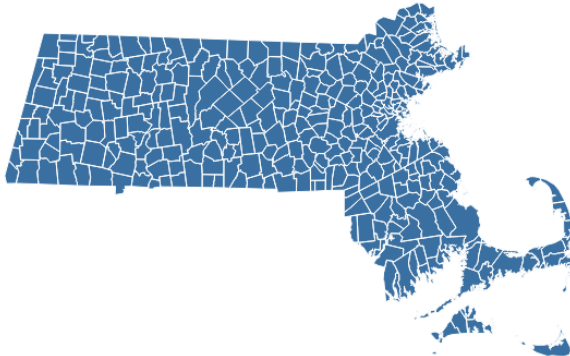
Statewide Data

- Most of the data sets mentioned in this presentation include statewide data for Massachusetts.
- Data for other states can be found through the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Counties

- All of Massachusetts's cities and towns fall into one of 14 counties.
- Counties are combined to make up Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs), also known as Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas.



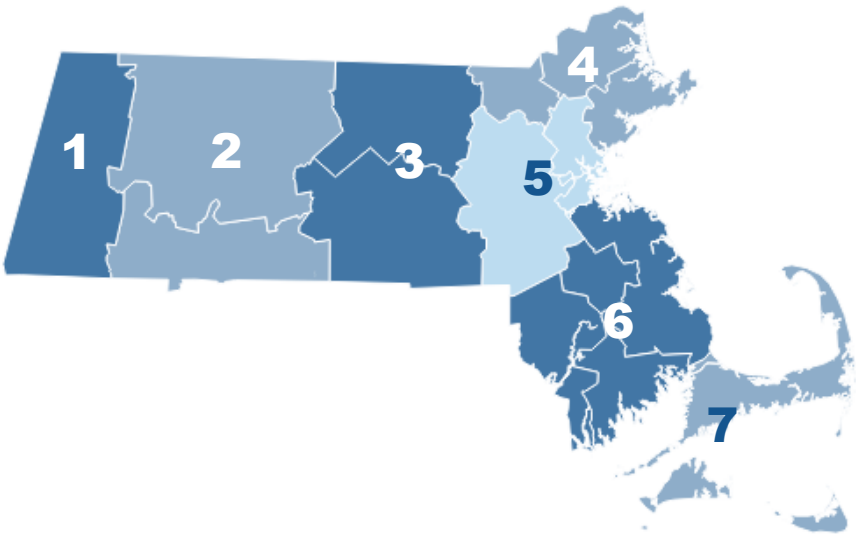
Cities & Towns

- Massachusetts has 351 cities and towns that make up counties.
- Cities and towns are also combined to make Workforce Development Areas (WDAs).
- Not all data is available on a city and town level due to sample sizes and suppression.

Workforce Development Areas / Workforce Skills Cabinet Areas

Every city and town in Massachusetts falls within one of 16 Workforce Development Areas, that then make up 7 Workforce Skills Cabinet Areas

Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) Region	Workforce Development Areas (WDA)
1. Berkshire Region	Berkshire WDA
2. Pioneer Valley Region	Franklin/Hampshire and Hampden WDAs
3. Central MA Region	North Central and Central WDAs
4. Northeast Region	Greater Lowell, Lower Merrimack, and North Shore WDAs
5. Greater Boston Region	Boston, Metro North, and Metro South/West WDAs
6. Southeast Region	South Shore, Brockton, Bristol, and Greater New Bedford WDAs
7. Cape Cod & Islands Region	Cape Cod & Islands WDA

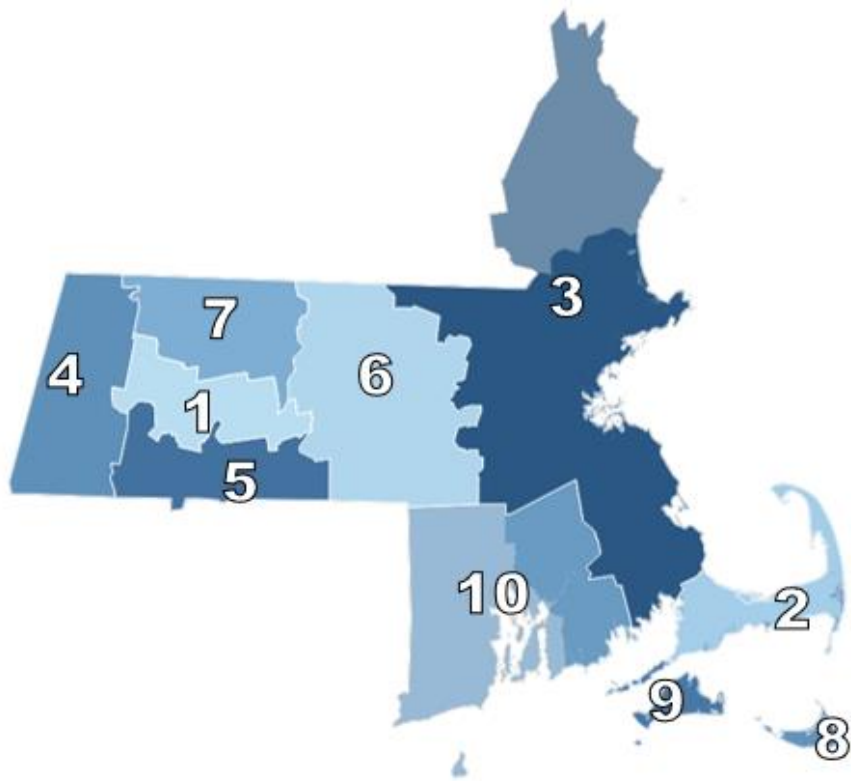


Identify which cities and towns are included in a county, WDA, or WSC region and vice versa using DER’s Cities and Towns Tool

[DER’s Cities and Towns Tool](#)

Metropolitan & Micropolitan Statistical Areas

Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas (collectively referred to as Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs)) are geographic entities used by Federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing federal statistics ([US Census Bureau](#)). They are county-based.



Statistical Area	Included Counties
1. Amherst Town-Northampton, MA Metropolitan	Hampshire County, MA
2. Barnstable Town, MA Metropolitan	Barnstable County, MA
3. Boston-Cambridge-Newton (MA-NH) Metropolitan*	Essex County, MA; Middlesex County, MA; Norfolk County, MA; Plymouth County, MA; Suffolk County, MA plus <i>Rockingham County, NH; Strafford County, NH</i>
4. Pittsfield, MA Metropolitan	Berkshire County, MA
5. Springfield, MA Metropolitan	Hampden County, MA
6. Worcester, MA Metropolitan	Worcester County, MA
7. Greenfield, MA Micropolitan	Franklin County, MA
8. Nantucket, MA Micropolitan	Nantucket County, MA
9. Vineyard Haven, MA Micropolitan	Dukes County, MA
10. Providence-Warwick (RI-MA) Metropolitan**	Bristol County, MA plus <i>Bristol County, RI; Kent County, RI; Newport County, RI; Providence County, RI; Washington County, RI</i>

*LAUS, CES, and OEWS estimates published on the DER website for Boston-Cambridge-Newton (MA-NH) Metropolitan Statistical Area include the New Hampshire counties listed above. QCEW estimates published on the DER website include only the MA counties. Data for full MSAs is available through BLS.

**LAUS, OEWS, and QCEW estimates published on the DER website for Providence-Warwick (RI-MA) Metropolitan Statistical Area include only Bristol County, MA. DER does not publish CES estimates for Providence-Warwick (RI-MA) Metropolitan Statistical Area. Data for full MSAs is available through BLS.

Units of Analysis & Framework



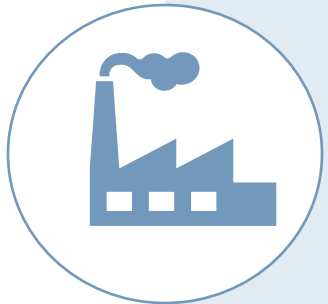
People

- People are classified as employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force.
- Employed individuals can hold multiple jobs.
- Labor market data often includes demographic information (age, gender, race, education, etc.) to understand workforce composition and trends.
- Labor market data is typically restricted to the civilian, non-institutionalized 16 and older population.



Jobs

- A job represents a specific position held by an individual within an establishment, involving a set of tasks and responsibilities in exchange for compensation.
- Jobs are typically described by a combination of characteristics, including occupation (e.g., teacher, nurse, engineer), industry (e.g., healthcare, education, manufacturing), and wage or salary.



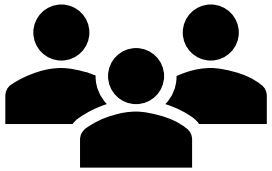
Establishments

- An establishment is a physical location where business is conducted, or services are provided.
- Public and private entities are counted as establishments.
- Jobs are associated with establishments based on the number of people employed at each establishment.



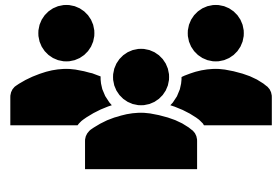
People

- LMI is usually focused on the typical working population, the 16 and older non-institutionalized population
- People can be employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force



Employed

Includes people working part-time and full-time with one or more jobs

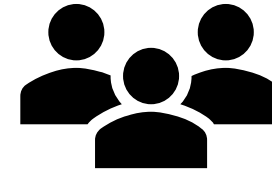


Unemployed

anyone not currently employed but actively seeking and available for work; not contingent on UI benefits

People in the Labor Force

The labor force only includes those in work or seeking and available for work



Inactive / Marginally Attached Workers Retirees Family Caregivers

People not in the Labor Force

Retired people, family caregivers, and others who are not seeking and/or are unavailable for work

Standard Occupational Codes (SOC)

"The 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is a federal statistical standard used by federal agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into one of 867 detailed occupations according to their occupational definition." (Bureau of Labor Statistics)



aggregate
↑
↓
granular

SOC Example: Surgical Technicians		
Digits/Code	Level of Detail	Title
<u>29</u> -0000	Major Groups	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
<u>29-2</u> 000	Minor Groups	Health Technologists and Technicians
<u>29-205</u> 0	Broad Occupations	Health Practitioner Support Technologists and Technicians
<u>29-2055</u>	Detailed Occupation	Surgical Technicians

Links for more information:

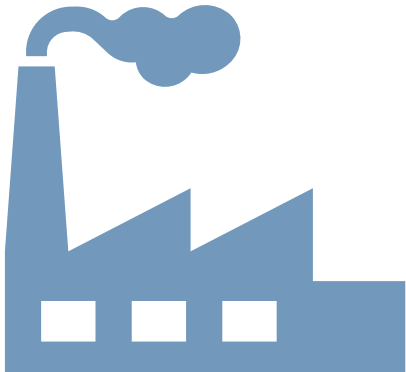
[About SOC \(BLS\)](#)

[2018 SOC System](#)

[2018 SOC FAQ \(download\)](#)

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

“The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.” (US Census Bureau). A firm may have multiple establishments with multiple NAICS codes - for example, a firm that has a warehouse and a retail location.



aggregate



granular

NAICS Example: Other Outpatient Care Centers		
Digits/Code	Level of Detail	Description
<u>62</u> 0000	Economic Sector	Healthcare and Social Assistance
<u>621</u> 000	Subsector	Ambulatory Health Care Services
<u>6214</u> 00	Industry Group	Outpatient Care Centers
<u>62149</u> 0	NAICS Industry	Other Outpatient Care Centers
621492	National Industry	Kidney Dialysis Center

Links for more information:

[About NAICS Codes \(Census\)](#)

[NAICS FAQ](#)

[2022 NAICS Manual \(Download\)](#)

Program/Data Details

This section provides an overview of each of the major LMI data sets that DER publishes, including links to download data. It also discusses how these data sets can be used and provides recommendations for additional LMI sources outside of DER.

Contents:

[Quick Reference Guide:
Downloadable Data Tables](#)

[Current Employment Statistics](#)

[Local Area Unemployment
Statistics \(LAUS\)](#)

[LAUS Definitions](#)

[Occupational Employment and
Wage Statistics \(OEWS\)](#)

[Quarterly Census of Employment
and Wages \(QCEW\)](#)

[Staffing Pattern Data](#)

[Employment Projections](#)

[Additional Data Sources](#)

Quick Reference Guide: Downloadable Data Tables

Resource Name	Update Cadence	Description	Link to download data
All Data from DER	Varies	View descriptions and links for all of DER's downloadable data tables.	https://www.mass.gov/lists/departments-of-economic-research-data-index
Current Employment Statistics	Monthly	Estimates payroll employment (# of jobs) for Massachusetts and Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs).	Current Employment Statistics
Local Area Unemployment Statistics	Monthly	Estimates of how many people are in the labor force, employed, and unemployed plus the unemployment rates for Massachusetts and for each city/town and county in Massachusetts. Information is also available by Workforce Development Area (WDA) and Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA).	Labor Force and Unemployment Data
Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics	Annual	Information on employment and wages by occupation for Massachusetts, counties, and Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) / Metropolitan & Micropolitan Areas (MSA).	Occupational Employment and Wages
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage Statistics	Annual	Information on employment and wages is available by industry for Massachusetts, cities/towns, counties, Workforce Development Areas (WDA), Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA) / Metropolitan & Micropolitan Areas (MSA) and state-wide.	Industry Employment and Wages
Employment Projections	Annual	Industry and occupation employment projections use current and historical data to project how employment in various industries and occupations will change over time. In 2026, WDAs in this data set will be replaced with counties.	Short Term Occupation , Long Term Occupation , Short Term Industry , and Long Term Industry
Staffing Patterns	Annual	Staffing patterns provide information about employment, wages, and education typically required for different occupations by industry. This data can be used to understand what occupations are typically employed in different industries for a specific geography. In 2025, WDAs in this data set will be replaced with counties.	Occupational Staffing Patterns and Staffing Patterns by Industry
Unemployment Claims Data	Weekly	Includes aggregated information on initial and continued unemployment insurance claims by city, town and county. Includes demographic information including race/ethnicity, sex, educational attainment, and industry/occupation prior to claim.	Unemployment Insurance Claims Data
Unemployment Insurance Claimant Profiles	Monthly	Demographic summaries on MA residents claiming unemployment insurance benefits. Includes information on age, education, industry, occupation, and wage. Available state-wide and by Workforce Development Area (WDA).	Unemployment Insurance Claimant Profiles

Current Employment Statistics (CES)

“The Current Employment Statistics (CES) program produces detailed industry estimates of nonfarm employment, hours, and earnings of workers on payrolls.” ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#))

- Also known as the “Payroll Survey,” CES surveys about 121,000 businesses and government agencies representing 631,000 workers nationally each month, excludes workers in agriculture, private households, and the self-employed
- Counts jobs not people, meaning an individual with two jobs is counted twice
- Data is published in a way that protects identifiable information of respondents
- **How is this data used?** Can be used to gauge overall health of the economy and inform public policy, economic research and planning, etc. One of the earliest indicators of economic conditions each month
- **PROS:** Recent data available; time series
- **CONS:** Smaller sample size; seasonally adjusted data is unavailable at the local level; estimates subject to revision

Units of Analysis & Source



- Estimates employment (# of jobs) by industry
- Wages (state level)
- Modeled based on sample of payroll data

Available Geographies



- State-wide
- Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Timing of Data



- Monthly, typically 3rd Friday of following month
- Subject to annual benchmarking process

Links for data & more
information:

[CES Data on DER Site](#)

[CES Data on BLS Site](#)

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

“The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program Produces monthly and annual employment, unemployment, and labor force data...” ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#))

- LAUS estimates for various geographies take different inputs into account including the Current Population Survey (CPS), Current Employment Statistics (CES), local unemployment insurance systems, and the American Community Survey (ACS)
- **How is this data used?** Estimates are considered key indicators of local economic conditions, used by federal program eligibility determinations and resource allocations; planning and budget in local/state government; and assessing and comparing labor market development and status by private industry/ researchers/ media /etc
- **PROS:** Recent data available; time series
- **CONS:** Smaller sample size; seasonally adjusted data is unavailable at the local level; estimates subject to revision

Units of Analysis & Source



- Estimates number of people employed, unemployed, and in the labor force
- Models use data from CPS, CES, UI Systems, and ACS depending on geography

Available Geographies



- State-wide
- Workforce Development Area (WDA)
- City/Town
- County
- Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Micropolitan Statistical area

Timing of Data



- Monthly, typically 3rd Friday of the following month for state data and the following Tuesday for substate data
- Annual benchmarking process

Links for data & more
information:

[LAUS Data on DER Site](#)

[LAUS Data on BLS Site](#)

LAUS Definitions

Note: The labor force only includes those seeking and available for work. It does not include retired people, family caregivers, and others who are not seeking and/or are unavailable for work.

$$\text{Labor Force} = \text{Employed} + \text{Unemployed*}$$

$$\text{Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)} = \frac{\text{Labor Force}}{\text{Working Age Population**}}$$

$$\text{Unemployment Rate} = \frac{\text{Unemployed*}}{\text{Labor Force}}$$

*Unemployment includes anyone not currently employed but actively seeking and available for work, regardless of whether they are receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Includes people entering/re-entering the labor force

**Civilian, non-institutionalized population 16+ (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS)

“The Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program produces employment and wage estimates annually for nearly 830 occupations.” ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#))

- Occupational and wage data is requested for approximately 21,000 Massachusetts establishments over a three-year period. Sampling is based on the employer's state unemployment insurance tax account including local governments and non-profit organizations. Does NOT include gig workers, military, private households, religious establishments, and most employees that are full time students
- Participation is not currently mandatory in Massachusetts
- Data is published in a way that protects identifiable information of respondents
- **How is this data used?** OEWS data can be used to compare employment and wages across geographic areas, for different occupations, and for occupations across industries. It can be used to determine which jobs pay a living wage in a specific area
- **PROS:** Important source of wage data; large sample size; lower error ranges
- **CONS:** Publication lag; not a time series

Units of Analysis & Source



- Estimates employment (number of jobs) and wages for occupations
- Source is survey collection of UI covered establishments over several survey panels

Available Geographies



- State-wide
- County
- Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Micropolitan Statistical Area

Timing of Data



- Annual publication (usually April)
- Two semi-annual panels of survey collection (May and November)

Links for data & more information:

[OEWS Data on DER Site](#)

[OEWS Data on BLS Site](#)

[OEWS for Employer Participants](#)

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)

“The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program publishes a quarterly count of employment and wages reported by employers covering more than 95% of U.S. jobs at the county, state, and national levels by industry. ([Bureau of Labor Statistics](#))

- Excludes unincorporated self-employed, certain farm and domestic workers, proprietors, and railroad workers covered by the railroad UI program as well as members of the armed forces, federal, state, and local elected officials
- Data is published in a way that protects identifiable information of respondents
- **How is this data used?** QCEW data are widely used by federal statistical agencies, BLS surveys, and other public and private establishments as a basis for their statistics and research publications ([BLS](#)). It can help data users understand what industries are most prominent in different areas
- **PROS:** High quality and quantity of data; consistent history; used to benchmark
- **CONS:** Publication lag; not designed to be used for time series analysis

Links for data & more
information:

[QCEW Data on DER Site](#)

[QCEW Data on BLS Site](#)

Units of Analysis & Source



- Estimates employment (number of jobs), wages, and number of establishments by industry
- Census of all establishments subject to Unemployment Insurance tax in Massachusetts

Available Geographies



- State-wide
- County
- Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Micropolitan Statistical area
- Workforce Development Area (WDA)
- City/Town

Timing of Data

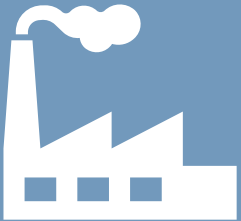


- Quarterly data published within 6 months after the end of referenced quarter
- Annual reports released about 8 months after the end of referenced year

Staffing Patterns

Industry staffing pattern data includes the distribution of occupations working within an industry. Occupation staffing pattern data includes the distribution of an occupation across industries. Both types of staffing patterns estimates employment (number of jobs) and hourly or annual wages (mean, median, experienced, and entry).

- The Local Employment and Wage Information System (LEWIS) is used to provide the staffing patterns for sub-state projections
- **How is this data used?** Staffing pattern data can be used to link occupations and industries together, helping to identify how occupations are distributed across and within industries



Industry
(NAICS)



Occupation
(SOC)

Links for data & more information:

[Industry Staffing Patterns and Technical Notes](#)

[Occupational Staffing Patterns and Technical Notes](#)

Units of Analysis & Source



- Estimates employment (number of jobs) and hourly or annual wages (mean, median, experienced, and entry)
- Uses OEWS Data

Available Geographies



- State-wide
- In 2025, WDAs in this data set will be replaced with counties

Timing of Data



- Released annually in spring

Employment Projections

- "Projections are used to identify in-demand industries and occupations for career guidance; to plan employment, education and training, and economic development programs; as supporting documentation to apply for Federal grants; and for many other purposes..." (Employment and Training Administration)
- Although produced using BLS projections methodology, these are not official BLS estimates
- **How is this data used?** Employment projections provide an estimate of how different occupations and industries are projected to change in the future and can be used to guide decision making

Links for data & more information:

[Short-Term
Occupational Projections](#)

[Short-Term
Industry Projections](#)

[Long-Term
Occupational Projections](#)

[Long-Term
Industry Projections](#)

[Projections Methodology Information from BLS](#)

Units of Analysis & Source



- Estimates employment (number of jobs)
- Identifies fastest growing occupations and industries
- Uses OEWS Data/Staffing Patterns

Available Geographies



- State-wide
- Workforce Development Areas (WDAs) (transitioning to counties in 2026)

Timing of Data



- Semi-annual releases, typically in spring/summer
- Short-term projections cover 2 years
- Long-term projections cover 10 years

Unemployment Claims Data

**DER publishes two main types of unemployment insurance data:
Unemployment Claims Data and Unemployment Claimants Profile Data.**

- **Unemployment Claims Data** includes information on initial and continued unemployment insurance claims
- Includes aggregate demographic information like sex, race, ethnicity, and educational attainment and information about the occupation, industry, and wage of the worker prior to making the claim
- Data is published in a way that protects identifiable information of respondents
- **How is this data used?** The number of unemployment claims can be used to help gauge the overall competitiveness of a labor market
- **PROS:** Provides information on unemployment insurance claims
- **CONS:** Only available back to 2020

Links for data & more
information:

[Download Weekly Claims Data](#)

Units of Analysis & Source



- Anonymized data from the Department of Unemployment Assistance
- Demographics, NAICS Industry, SOC Occupation, and Wage prior to claim

Available Geographies



- Statewide
- City/Town
- County

Timing of Data



- Weekly data with one week delay

Unemployment Claimants Profile Data

DER publishes two main types of unemployment insurance data: Unemployment Claims Data and Unemployment Claimants Profile Data.

- Unemployment Claimant Profiles Data are demographic summaries of individuals receiving unemployment benefits during a survey week each month
- Includes occupation, industry, and wages prior to UI claim, as well as demographic breakdowns including age and educational attainment
- Data is published in a way that protects identifiable information of respondents
- **How is this data used?** Claimant profiles provide context about individuals claiming UI benefits in MA and can be used to inform targeted re-employment efforts
- **PROS:** Includes helpful indicators, graphs and charts to help users better understand over-the-year and over-the-month trends in the data; data spreadsheet available going back to January 2015
- **CONS:** each PDF only covers one month

Links for data & more information:

[Download Unemployment Insurance Claimant Profiles](#)

Units of Analysis & Source



- Anonymized data collected by DUA during a survey week each month
- Demographics (age and educational attainment), NAICS Industry, SOC Occupation, and Wage prior to claim

Available Geographies



- Statewide
- Workforce Development Areas (cities/towns included by WDA)

Timing of Data



- Issued on the third Friday of the month

Additional Data Sources

Below are some additional labor market information data sources that are published by other organizations.

- [The American Community Survey \(ACS\)](#): Detailed population, demographic, and housing information from the US Census Bureau.
- [Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics \(LEHD\)](#): Links data from employers and households to explore the interactions between workers and firms; from the US Census Bureau.
 - [Job-to-Job \(J2J\) Flows](#): Includes statistics on the job-to-job transition rate; hires and separations to and from employment; earnings changes due to job change; and the characteristics of origin and destination jobs for job-to-job transitions
 - [Quarterly Workforce Indicators \(QWI\)](#): Includes economic indicators like employment, job creation, earnings, and employment flows. Includes detailed firm characteristics and worker demographics information.
- [Federal Reserve Economic Data \(FRED\)](#): An online data base with hundreds of thousands of economic data points from multiple sources. Also includes tools to help understand the data.
- [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#): Publishes statistics like US Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as well as additional statistics on foreign trade and investment and industry data.

Contents:

[What is seasonal adjustment?](#)

[What is benchmarking?](#)

[What is a reference week?](#)

Technical Notes

This section covers some of the common technical and statistical concepts related to LMI.

What is seasonal adjustment?



- "Seasonal adjustment is a statistical technique that attempts to measure and remove the influences of predictable seasonal patterns to reveal how employment and unemployment change from month to month..." (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Labor force, employment, and other measures of labor market activity can be affected by changes in weather, holidays, harvests, school schedules, etc.
- Since seasonal events follow trends, they can be accounted for using seasonal adjustment, making it easier to observe cycles and underlying trends in the series
- When trying to observe cycles and underlying trends, **use seasonally adjust data**
- When trying to observe seasonal cycles and trends, use **non-seasonally adjusted data**

What is benchmarking?



- At the start of each year, Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) data series go through a benchmarking process
- Benchmarking is a standard or point of reference by which data can be compared and represents the inclusion of more accurate and timely data in program estimates (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Benchmarking takes into consideration data inputs, historical updates, late tax filings, and other figures that call for revision (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- CES publishes preliminary and revised estimates each month and revised annual estimates at the beginning of each year
- LAUS publishes annual revisions at the beginning of each year
- BLS issues benchmarking reports on their website



What is a reference week?

- The week which includes the 12th of the month during which the Current Population Survey (CPS) and Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey are administered. Information collected from this survey informs employment, unemployment, and jobs estimates.

Contents:

[Upcoming Geography Changes](#)

[Quick Reference Guide: Available Geographies](#)

Appendix

This section includes additional resources and reference materials.

Upcoming Geography Changes

Data Source	Geographies removed	Geographies added	When change takes place on DER site (estimated)
Staffing Patterns	Workforce Development Areas (WDAs)	Counties	Late 2025/Early 2026*
Employment Projections	Workforce Development Areas (WDAs)	Counties	March of 2025

*Postponed from November 2025

Quick Reference Guide – Available Geographies

Seasonally adjusted estimates not available for regional data

Program / Data Source	MA	County	MA-Based Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA)	City/Town	Workforce Development Areas (WDA)
Current Employment Statistics (CES)	✓ yes	× no	✓ yes	× no	× no
Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes
Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS)	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes	× no	× no
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes	✓ yes
Staffing Patterns*	✓ yes	✓ yes*	× no	× no	× no*
Employment Projections**	✓ yes	× no**	× no	× no	✓ yes**

*In 2025, WDAs in Staffing Pattern data will be replaced with counties.

**In 2026, WDAs will be replaced with counties for employment projections data.

[Click here to identify cities/towns in a specific area \(WDA, county, etc\)](#)