

Q. Where can I find information on the labor supply?

by Robert Crawley, LMI Economist and Phil Arnold, LMI Information Specialist

Information regarding the local supply of labor, including specific knowledge of the characteristics of those seeking work, is an important ingredient in any plan to bring about economic prosperity. Finding detailed labor supply information can be difficult, and the data that is available is typically somewhat limited in nature. Some labor supply data is available through the Labor Market Information Department of the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The source of this data is a database that is created when a person registers for work at a local One-Stop Center of the Texas Workforce Network. Clearly, not all unemployed people utilize the services of a local One-Stop Center to seek work and not everyone who registers for work is unemployed. Some employed people want to change jobs because they consider themselves to be underemployed, or simply desire a career change. The database that is created represents the largest source of information on the supply of labor in any given area. Information about specific individuals is not released, but general information is available in a report called a "B-96" report, referring to the report's number.

B-96 reports utilize the Dictionary of Occupational Title (DOT) codes to list available workers by occupation. If a potential business is considering locating in a particular town or area, the B-96 form provides a record of job seekers going through the local One-Stop Center offices, indicating job experience in a particular occupation. The B-96 reports list two total applicant counts. One count shows total registered applicants active anytime during the program year July 1 through June 30. The other count shows total workers registered as of the report date.

The B-96 document is classified geographically for local workforce offices, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), Regions, and statewide. The report also contains other useful demographic categories which employers may be interested in such as female, veterans, age information (two groups are available: 22-29 and 45 years and older), minorities, and eligible

claimants. The B-96 information does not include those workers having only entry level skills.

Some of the uses for this kind of information include labor availability for economic development activity. Employers look at labor supply when updating an affirmative action plan or filling a job. Labor supply data aids workforce program planners in evaluating the local labor market and in determining occupational shortages. Training providers evaluate the need to offer certain occupational training programs.

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Occupation Code	Occupational Categories	Total*	Female	Veterans	Eligible Claimants	Age Groups		Minority
						22-29	45+	
	Total Applicants	423,640	195,499	43,103	304,591	98,203	114,362	243,866
0-1	Professional, technical, and managerial occupations	95,360	49,802	14,441	75,631	17,641	33,650	37,955
20-24	Clerical occupations	94,497	73,030	5,026	62,794	28,129	18,617	53,947
25-29	Sales occupations	18,629	8,888	1,946	13,992	4,249	5,526	8,706
30	Domestic service occupations	4,511	3,949	45	2,400	1,081	1,164	3,281
31-39	Food and beverage preparation and other service occupations	46,065	27,874	3,260	28,619	10,788	11,123	32,343
4	Farming, fishery, forestry, and related occupations	10,401	2,370	314	8,330	1,787	3,699	8,454
5	Processing occupations	9,908	2,815	885	6,330	2,429	2,526	6,537
6	Machine trades occupations	21,528	3,441	3,468	15,813	4,458	6,051	11,833
7	Bench work occupations	17,204	9,784	836	13,261	3,041	5,563	12,974
8	Structural work occupations	51,598	2,603	6,415	40,368	11,408	13,642	30,831
90-91	Motor freight and transportation occupations	13,329	1,595	2,494	9,558	2,299	4,402	7,987
92	Packaging and materials handling occupations	36,376	8,479	3,442	24,318	9,957	7,304	27,105
93-97	Other miscellaneous occupations	3,919	768	500	2,936	867	1,023	1,795

Recently, Labor Market Information (LMI) analysts were asked by a customer what percentage of construction workers in the Austin-San Marcos MSA were women. Using the most recent B-96 reports, LMI employees were able to isolate occupational codes related to construction, and then derive a percentage of experienced female construction workers actively on file and seeking work through local One-Stop Center offices in the Austin area.

A similar document, known as the A-96 report, provides a summary of occupations by the same geographical areas as the B-96 report (local offices, MSAs, Regions, and State). The Labor Market Information Department produces a report titled "Active File" from the A-96 data and posts this report on the TWC website at <http://www.texasworkforce.org/lmi/lfs/type/demographics/demographicshome.html>. The "Active File" data refers to active applicants registered with the Texas Workforce Network local offices. Because there is some limited race, gender and age information in the data, the Active Files are located in the Affirmative Action portion of the LMI section

of the TWC website. The Active File reports only include State and MSA information, whereas the A-96 is also available for local and regional offices.

Both the A-96 and B-96 reports have some limitations to consider when using the information. The data is available only in hard copy form. The B-96 occupational information is listed by a nine digit occupational code only. There is a time lag for the report, which is available only on a quarterly basis. Not all job seekers use the Texas Workforce One-Stop Network offices to

find a job, therefore, occupations that are listed will not represent the total available workforce in the area for that particular occupation. For additional information or to request a report, contact the Labor Market Information Department.

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