



December 2021

KENTUCKY LABOR FORCE UPDATE

Looking Toward the Future: Occupational Outlook to 2029

Which occupations will be in demand in 2029? Which occupations will have the most job openings in the next 10 years? Which occupations are growing? Which are projected to decline? Find answers to all of these questions with the 2019 to 2029 Occupational Outlook prepared by KYSTATS' Labor Market Information (LMI) Branch. The Outlook includes employment projections for hundreds of occupations in the state of Kentucky and its ten Local Workforce Areas (LWAs) and will be available for download on the KYSTATS LMI [website](#).

Kentucky's total employment is projected to grow by 86,311 jobs, a 4.3 percent increase, between 2019 and 2029. The most jobs are expected to be added in Transportation and Material Moving occupations (16,339 jobs), Healthcare Support occupations (15,698 jobs), and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations (14,846 jobs). Combined, these three groups are projected to add more than half (54.3 percent) of the new jobs during this ten-year span.

This growth does not present the full array of opportunities available to job seekers in the coming years. In addition to economic change, future job openings are expected to result from individuals transferring among occupations (e.g. a career change) as well as individuals exiting the workforce (e.g. retirement). Total projected job

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openings, the sum of change, transfers, and exits, provides an estimate of the number of opportunities for workers to enter an occupation. Total job openings does not include workers who change jobs but remain in the same occupation.

Projected Job Openings by Origin, 2019 to 2029

Change - 86,311

Exits - 879,994

Transfers - 1,221,940

Between 2019 and 2029, there are an estimated 2.2 million job openings throughout Kentucky, the majority of which are projected to result from people leaving an occupation for employment in a different occupation, i.e. a transfer (1.2 million job openings). Exits represent those who leave the labor force, some for retirement. People may also leave the labor force temporarily to pursue additional education or care for family members and later return to work. Between 2019 and 2029, nearly 880,000 Kentucky workers are projected to exit.

The occupational group with the most projected job openings is Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations with 306,058 total openings followed by Transportation and Material Moving occupations (268,545 job openings), and Office and Administrative Support occupations (267,759 job openings).

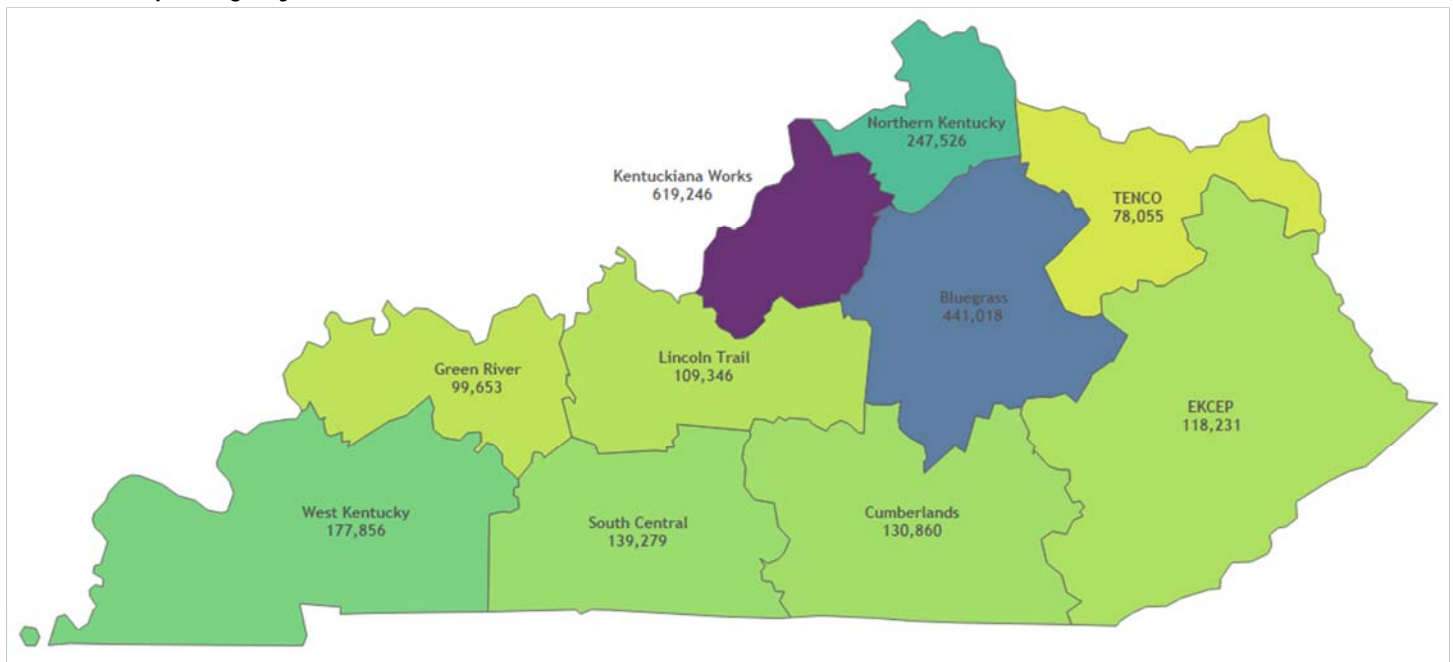
Users should note that the 2019 to 2029 projections were developed utilizing inputs from historical data through 2019, which preceded the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, these projections do not reflect the impacts of COVID. Projections are released annually and subsequent projections will incorporate information on any economic structural changes resulting from the pandemic.



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All LWAs in Kentucky are projected to see job opportunities in the coming years resulting from change, transfers, and those leaving the labor force. The majority of projected job openings (59.8 percent) are in the LWAs with the largest concentration of jobs: Bluegrass, Kentuckiana Works, and Northern Kentucky. Of the 118,231 projected job openings to occur in EKCEP by 2029, 43.8 percent are estimated to result from exits, the highest percentage among the LWAs. This LWA is projected to also have the lowest share of job openings resulting from change, 0.3 percent of all openings. The remaining openings are projected to result from transfers, 55.9 percent.

Total Job Openings by LWA, 2019 to 2029



How are employment projections estimated?

Employment projections are developed with the goal of identifying broad occupational trends, high growth occupations, and occupations in decline. The projections are designed to help students, those interested in a job or career change, workforce development officials, and other policy makers to understand where there may be considerable job openings and which occupations will have fewer.

Using data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) programs, the occupational employment projections are produced by first looking at changes by industry employment over time. Then, the typical staffing patterns of each industry are used to draw inferences about the expected future demand for each occupation.

The 2019 projections utilize the hybrid occupational codes currently in use by BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program. The OEWS program conducts a semi-annual survey of employers to collect employment and wage rates by occupation for wage and salary workers in non-farm establishments. The resulting data are used to generate annual occupational employment and wage estimates. Data are collected during two panels each year, one in May and one in November. The resulting estimates are based on data collected in six consecutive panels over a three-year period.



Looking Toward the Future: Occupational Outlook to 2029

The OEWS survey categorizes workers into nearly 800 detailed occupations based on the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System. Beginning with data collection in the November 2018 survey panel, the OEWS program utilized the 2018 SOC system. Prior data collection coded occupations based on the 2010 SOC. Because OEWS estimates are generated using data collected from six surveys over a three-year period, the estimates released during the calendar years 2020 and 2021 rely on data collected and coded under both classification systems. As a result, the OEWS estimates for these two years were published using a hybrid of the two classification systems. Details on hybrid occupations used in the OEWS estimates and the implementation of the 2018 SOC system in the OEWS program is available [here](#).

All KYSTATS reports that include the most recent round of 2019 to 2029 (or mid-term 2020 to 2025) employment projections have had both projections and wage data mapped to the 2018 SOC system. A crosswalk between the various occupational classifications systems can be found [here](#).

Implications for the 2019 to 2029 projections

In cases where an occupation code and/or title under the hybrid OEWS system was replaced by a new 2018 SOC, the corresponding data for that occupation has been mapped to the updated 2018 SOC code and title (1:1 matches).

In cases where a single occupation has been split into two or more occupations in the 2018 SOC system, the new 2018 SOC occupational codes and titles will be displayed; and the data for the former single occupation will be applied to each of the new codes along with the education and training requirements (1:2 or more matches).

In cases where two or more occupational codes have been consolidated into a single occupation in the new 2018 SOC system, the projected openings will be summed and the highest typical education requirement displayed. This summation will occur even if one of the collapsed codes had suppressed projections employment and openings with the suppressed value treated as zero (2 or more:1 matches).

Therefore, care needs to be taken when manually aggregating values of individual SOC codes.

Other considerations for using the occupation projections

Change in employment is the difference in the number of projected jobs between 2019 and 2029. A positive number means employment is growing due to the creation of new jobs. A negative number indicates employment is declining in the occupation. The percent change is also presented. An occupation with a large numeric change may have a small percent change due to the large number of people employed in that occupation. Conversely, occupations with less employment may be creating a small number of new jobs yet have large percent changes.

Included in the projections estimates is information on the typical level of educational attainment necessary for entry into each specific occupation as assigned by [BLS](#). This allows users to analyze changing occupational employment trends as they relate to overall demand for workers with various levels of education. BLS also assigns each occupation with the typical work experience required and the typical on-the-job training needed to achieve competency in the occupation.



Looking Toward the Future: Occupational Outlook to 2029

A limited number of detailed occupations are suppressed. This can occur when the number of individuals working in a specific occupation is sometimes too low to publish reliable estimates. In other cases, specific businesses are such prominent employers within a single occupation that the occupation's data must be suppressed to protect that employer's privacy. Occupations for which projections are not available are indicated with a (NA).

Finally, users should be aware that projections provide an overview of expected changes in the economy based on available data. They are not intended for use as exact counts of future openings nor should they be used to identify historical trends. When new projections are released, old versions become obsolete.

The projections are featured in a number of KYSTATS [reports](#) which will be updated in the coming months:

- The [Occupational Outlook](#) dashboard integrates employment forecasts found in the projections release with occupational wage and educational requirement data.
- In an effort to highlight the supply and demand trends within Kentucky's workforce, the [Kentucky Future Skills Report](#) offers an analysis of recent educational credentials earned in Kentucky, alongside five-year projections derived from the long-term projections summarized here.
- The [Kentucky Students' Right to Know](#) dashboard was designed to help prospective students make more informed decisions about their futures and ensure that they are adequately aware of career paths, employment outcomes, and the cost of college.
- Finally, the [Career Explorer](#) is an interactive tool for Kentucky students and job-seekers that provides relevant occupational profiles (including employment projections and wage estimates) to users based on their self-identified content knowledge, skills, and abilities.



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Kentucky Labor Force Update

A monthly publication of the
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This workforce product was funded by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. The product was created by the recipient and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the U.S. Department of Labor. The U.S. Department of Labor makes no guarantees, warranties, or assurances of any kind, express or implied, with respect to such information, including any information on linked sites and including, but not limited to, accuracy of the information or its completeness, timeliness, usefulness, adequacy, continued availability, or ownership. This product is copyrighted by the institution that created it. Internal use by an organization and/or personal use by an individual for non-commercial purposes is permissible. ALL other uses require prior authorization by the copyright owner.

Published 12/22/2021