

Salary and Wage Information on the Internet

Every three years, the State Bar of Michigan publishes information on the economics of law practice in Michigan. Attorneys frequently need information on wages and salaries for other occupations in their research. Attorneys looking for this information no longer have to rely on government publications or surveys purchased from government agencies or management and employers' associations, they now can get information from the Internet.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, publishes *Employment & Earning*, a monthly publication prepared in the Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics. This publication "contains current data on employment, hours, earnings, and labor turnover for the United States as a whole, for individual states, and for more than 200 local areas." Management and employers' association groups also publish surveys that can be purchased, such as the *National Wage & Salary Survey* sponsored by the Employers Association Group and published by the Management Association, Inc., or surveys published by local employers' associations such as The Employers' Association in Grand Rapids and the American Society of Employers in Southfield. While these government publications and surveys are valuable, they are expensive, and there is a lot of information available for free on the Internet.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics has links on its website, <http://www.bls.gov>, that provide valuable wage information from the National Compensation Survey (NCS) and the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey. The NCS is an annual survey done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Office of Compensation and Working Conditions (OCWC). The NCS gathers average hourly wages for up to 480 occupations in more than 85 metropolitan and nonmetropolitan localities. The

Occupational Employment Statistics survey is a yearly survey done by the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program, a federal state cooperative program between the Bureau of Labor Statistics and State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs). OES produces employment wage estimates for more than 700 occupations. The information that is compiled in various tables on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' website is currently based on 2001 surveys.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' website link to "Wages, Earnings, & Benefits," <http://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>, provides information on national, regional, and local occupational earnings taken from these surveys. The information is categorized by geographic area, occupation, and industry. If you need to find out what a court reporter

firmative Action Information Report and Annual Planning Information for each of the *Michigan Works!* agencies in the state. If you need salary and wage information from other states, check each state's website to see what is available.

While the websites mentioned above are government websites, other websites provide wage and salary information. For example, *WageWeb.com*, at <http://wageweb.com>, is an "online salary service that provides information on over 170 benchmark positions." National data can be seen by anyone who accesses the website. To sort the data, you must pay the subscription fee. *JobStar*, at <http://www.jobstar.org/tools/salary/sal-prof.cfm>, originally was a federally funded project to serve Northern California, and has since expanded. It now has support from Career-

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makes in the state of Michigan, you can go to "State Wage Data" and select the state, then the occupation you are looking for.

The state of Michigan also has valuable "Labor Market Information" on its website from the Department of Career Development at <http://www.michlmi.org>. Their "Quicklink" to "Occupational Wages" takes you to a request form that allows you to search their "Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for 2001" by category and then by Metropolitan area. The result is a list showing occupational title, employment numbers, and average hourly and annual wage estimates. The "Quicklink" to "Publications" also provides links to the state's Af-

journal.com, the career website for the *Wall Street Journal*. It links to over 300 online salary surveys.

Websites displaying wage and salary information can be an economical and convenient resource for attorneys. However, as always when using the Internet, be aware of the source of your information. ♦

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