

Appendix A: OES Prevailing Wage Guidance

It is important to remember that wage levels are determined only after selecting the most relevant O*NET-SOC occupational code classification. The selection of the O*NET-SOC code should not be based solely on the title of the employer's job offer. The SWA should consider the particulars of the employer's job offer and compare the full description to the tasks, knowledge, and work activities generally associated with an O*NET-SOC occupation to insure that the most relevant occupational code has been selected.

A step-by-step process for arriving at the appropriate wage level is described below. Points are awarded based on the comparison of an employer's job offer requirements to the general requirements for similar occupations. The points are entered on a worksheet then added to arrive at the wage level. SWAs should follow the step-by-step process while completing the worksheet.

All prevailing wage determinations start with a Level I determination. For that reason the Check Sheet has a 1 entered in the Wage Level Column.

Step 1 – Enter the O*NET Requirements on the Worksheet

- Use the O*NET OnLine Find Occupations feature (<http://online.onetcenter.org>) to determine the appropriate O*NET-SOC code based on the job title provided on the prevailing wage determination request form.
- Enter the job title from the employer's job offer into the Quick Search box and click on Go.
- Select the O*NET occupation that most closely matches the employer's request from the resulting list of occupations.
- Review the Tasks, Knowledge, Work Activities, and Job Zone information contained in the O*NET summary report to gain an understanding of what is generally required for vocational preparation and performance in that occupation.

Enter the O*NET education and experience requirements on the Worksheet.

Step 2 – Complete the Experience Section of the Worksheet

Compare the overall experience described in the O*NET Job Zone to the years of experience on the prevailing wage determination request form.

For occupations contained in Job Zone 1, if the employer's experience requirement is equivalent to that described in an:

- SVP of 1 (experience requirement of a short demonstration), enter a 0 in the Wage Level Column
- SVP of 2 (experience requirement of anything beyond short demonstration and up to 1 month), enter a 1 in the Wage Level Column

- SVP of 3 (experience requirement of over 1 month up to and including 3 months), enter a 2 in the Wage Level Column
- SVP of 4 (experience requirement of over 3 months up to and including 6 months), enter a 3 in the Wage Level Column

Refer to Appendix E: Specific Vocational Preparation (SVP) for an explanation of the experience requirements related to an SVP level.

For occupations in Job Zones 2 through 5, if the employer's experience requirement is:

- In the low end of the experience and SVP range, enter a 1 in the Wage Level Column.
- In the high end of the experience and SVP range, enter a 2 in the Wage Level Column.
- Greater than the experience and SVP range, enter a 3 in the Wage Level Column

Step 3 – Complete the Education Section of the Worksheet

Compare the education requirement generally required for an occupation to the education requirement in employer's job offer.

Determine if the level required by the employer's job offer is greater than what is generally required.

Professional Occupations by O*NET-SOC category and the related education and training category code are listed in Appendix A to the Preamble of the regulations. The education and training categories assigned to those occupations shall be considered the usual education and training required when considering the education level for prevailing wage determinations. A listing of occupations designated as professional occupations and the related education and training category can be found in Appendix D of this document.

For professional occupations:

- If the education required on the prevailing wage determination request form is more than the usual education contained in Appendix D by one category, enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.
- If the education required is more than the usual education contained in Appendix D by more than one category, enter a 2 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.

Example: If the occupation generally requires a Bachelor's degree and the employer's job offer requires a Master's degree, enter a 1; if the job offer requires a Ph.D., enter a 2.

For all other occupations use the education level for what ‘most of these occupations’ require or ‘these occupations usually require’ described in the O*NET Job Zone for that occupation.

- If the education or training is more than what ‘most occupations require’ or the level that these occupations ‘usually’ require, enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.
- If the education or training required on the prevailing wage determination request form is more than the level described by what ‘some may require,’ enter a 2 on the worksheet in the Wage Column.

Step 4 – Complete the Special Skills, Knowledge, Work Activity or Tasks Section of the Worksheet

- Review the job title, job description (duties), and special requirements on the prevailing wage determination request form to identify the tasks, work activities, knowledge, and skills required. Make note of machines, equipment, tools, or computer software used. Match those identified to the O*NET Tasks, Work Activities, Knowledge, and Job Zone Examples.
- If the employer’s requirements are not listed in those O*NET sections, then the requirements shall be determined to be special skills. Enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.

Note: A language requirement other than English in an employer’s job offer shall be considered a special skill for all occupations with the exception of Foreign Language Teachers and Instructors, Interpreters, and Caption Writers.

Step 5 – Complete the Certification and/or Licensure Section of the Worksheet

National or state licensure can be referred to as right-to-practice. Under licensure laws, it is illegal for a person to practice a profession without first meeting the national or state standards. Where national or state licensure is required for an individual to independently perform all of the duties encompassed by the occupation, such workers shall be considered to be performing work requiring skills at a level II, unless there are other requirements contained in the job offer or components thereof which require skills that are at a higher education or experience level than those required by the license warranting a determination of a higher wage level, or the employer provides documentation that the offer of employment is for a research fellow, a worker in training, or an internship.

- Review the job description and special requirements for certification or license requirements. In the unusual circumstance where an employer is requiring an occupational license not required by national or state licensing laws and regulation, enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.
- If an employer’s job offer requires an occupational certification, enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column. If more than one certification is required, enter a 2 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.

Step 6 – Complete the Supervisory Duties Section of the Worksheet

- Review the prevailing wage determination request form to determine the number or range of people to be supervised to determine if there is a supervisory requirement.
- If the number is greater than 0, then enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column.

Exception: If supervision is a customary duty for the O*NET occupation (e.g., First-line Supervisors/Managers occupations), do not enter a 1 on the worksheet in the Wage Level Column. Previous guidance suggested that an employer's job offer that included supervisory duties should be assigned the higher of the two previous wage levels. In this new guidance an employer's job requirement for supervisory duties will not automatically warrant a determination of the highest wage level. The guidance contained above for evaluating education, experience, and skills required in an employer's job offer should be used to determine the appropriate wage level for supervisory occupations.

Determine the wage level by summing the numbers in the Wage Level Column of the worksheet. The sum total shall equal the wage for the prevailing wage determination. If the sum total is greater than 4, then the wage level shall be Level 4.

Use the On-line Wage Library (OWL) found on the Foreign Labor Certification Data Center website (<http://www.flcdatcenter.com/>) to select the prevailing wage for the occupation.

Use the OES Search Wizard to:

- Select the state and geographic area from the drop-down lists
- Select the occupation using the first 6 digits of the O*NET-SOC code, OR
- Select the occupation from the drop-down list or enter the title in the key word search box
- Select a data year
- Select a data source
- Click on search