

New Hampshire Economic Conditions

April 2015

Top Occupations for High School Graduates

With high school graduations in June, many students will enter the workforce — some just for the summer, while others will look for more permanent employment. Recently released employment projections for second quarter 2014 to second quarter 2016 indicate an employment increase of 2.0 percent, or 13,600 new jobs. These jobs include many occupations covering a wide range of interests that provide a quick entry into the workforce.

Employment opportunities reflect a growing and diverse labor market in New Hampshire. Projections show there are opportunities in occupations in which a student can enter the workforce right away and not be limited to retail sales or entry-level food preparation jobs, which generally do not require a high school diploma.

Although none of the featured occupations require any prior work experience, most do require on-the-job training of some kind. A few occupations require some postsecondary training, generally lasting less than one year. Many high school graduates have the chance to complete some of this training at Career and Technical Education Centers while still in school.

Among occupations requiring a high school diploma or equivalent, 23 need no previous work experience, and have at least 100 projected annual job openings through second quarter 2016. Annual job openings are a combination of employment growth due to demand plus the need to replace workers that retire or leave the occupation for other reasons, such as an office assistant being

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promoted to a position with more responsibilities. These occupations can be the first step on a career ladder where, after gaining some experience, a worker can move on to a supervisory position or shift to a job with more responsibilities and a corresponding increase in pay.

Occupations with the most openings for High School graduates based on 2016Q2 projections



Eight occupations with good opportunities are in the *Office and administrative support* group. As the economy continues to improve, these occupations are expected to have employment growth and generate job openings. Overall employment growth for *General office clerks* is expected to be less than the average increase of 2.0 percent, but the need to replace workers will create nearly 390 openings each year. A related occupation, *Secretaries and administrative assistants, except medical, legal, and executive* is expected to generate 250 openings per year.¹ Both occupations have better employment prospects for job seekers with computer skills and experience learned in high school. Another occupation in this group, *Customer service representatives*, is projected to add 343 job openings per year.

Healthcare-related occupations are among the fastest growing of all training and education levels. Two

Healthcare support occupations require postsecondary training of less than one year: *Licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses* and *Nursing assistants*. These occupations are expected to have 100 and 290 annual job openings, respectively. High school coursework related to health professions would be beneficial for students interested in these careers.

A growing economy is expected to create demand for more workers in the *Sales and related* group. *Sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, except technical and scientific products* are projected to have 176 annual openings, while 121 annual job openings are anticipated for *Sales representatives, services, all other*.

Total employment growth in *Manufacturing* is projected to be flat through the two-year projection period, yet there are several occupations with expected job

openings, mainly from replacement needs. *Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers* are projected to have more than 100 job openings per year. Other manufacturing-related occupations are projected to have 50 to 100 openings per year. These include *Team assemblers* (75), *Machinists* (72), *Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic* (61), *Assemblers and fabricators* (53) and *All other production workers* (80).

Two other occupations with over 100 job openings expected annually are *Carpenters* and *Heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers*. *Carpenters* are projected to have 111 annual openings. High school graduates may be hired as a carpenter, but most learn through an apprenticeship. *Heavy and tractor-trailed truck drivers* are projected to have 168 annual job openings. In addition to a high school diploma, most applicants must earn a Commercial Driver’s License. Some employers may have a minimum age restriction or experience requirement due to insurance considerations.

For most of these occupations, a high school diploma is enough education for entry-level employment. Many New Hampshire Career and Technical Education Centers offer programs that prepare students to start working in these fields.

New Hampshire short-term industry and occupational projections were released February 2015, for second quarter 2014 to second quarter 2016. For detailed projections, see the projections page on our web site: www.nhes.nh.gov/elmi/products/proj.htm. These data can also be found on NNetwork, New Hampshire’s online Labor Market information system at: nnetwork.nhes.state.nh.us/nnetwork/

Michael Argiopolis

¹ The exceptions are listed separately and are not part of the 23 occupations discussed in this article.

Projected Openings by Major Occupational Group, 2014Q2 to 2016Q2

	Growth	Replacement	Total
Sales and Related Occupations	526	2,905	3,431
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	809	2,456	3,265
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	776	2,392	3,168
Management Occupations	501	881	1,382
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	545	677	1,222
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	202	961	1,163
Production Occupations	276	886	1,162
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	405	741	1,146
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	469	518	987
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	400	551	951
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	347	602	949
Personal Care and Service Occupations	434	496	930
Construction and Extraction Occupations	410	387	797
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	401	262	663
Healthcare Support Occupations	321	330	651
Protective Service Occupations	92	346	438
Community and Social Services Occupations	150	232	382
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	77	268	345
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	83	206	289
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	44	117	161
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	17	53	70
Legal Occupations	6	60	66