

New Hampshire Economic Conditions

April 2011

Employment Outlook: Middle-Skill Jobs in New Hampshire

Some occupations require extensive training — *Pharmacists*, *Veterinarians*, and *Lawyers*, for example, require advanced degrees. Other occupations require little training beyond that which is provided on the job. Regardless of the required amount of education and training, opportunities for employment are expected in the next year.

For those with at least a high school diploma, but who are not interested in spending four or more years in college, there is a wide variety of occupations to explore. Occupations requiring an educational background in between a high school diploma and a bachelor's degree may be classified as middle-skill jobs. These middle-skill jobs are expected to be the source of many opportunities for employment according to short-term projections through mid-2012.

Overall, employment in New Hampshire is projected to increase about 10,500 jobs between second quarter 2010 and second quarter 2012, increasing from 669,178 to 679,672. These two-year, short-term projections clearly show an improving trend, compared to the last two rounds, when projected employment growth was essentially flat from 2009 third quarter to 2011 third quarter.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has estimated the typical amount of training required to become fully qualified in an occupation. There are 11 different training classifications, ranging from first professional degree, such as *Medical Doctor (MD)* or *Doctor of Veteri-*

nary Medicine (DVM), to short-term on-the-job training, a job requiring just a short demonstration. Middle-skill jobs are defined as occupations requiring long-term on-the-job training (including apprenticeships), work experience in a related occupation, postsecondary vocational education such as a massage therapy or cosmetology program, or an associate's degree.

Excluded from middle-skill jobs are some of the largest occupations by number in New Hampshire, such as *Cashiers* and *Retail salespersons*. These occupations, though estimated at nearly 45,000 workers in 2010 second quarter, usually can be learned in

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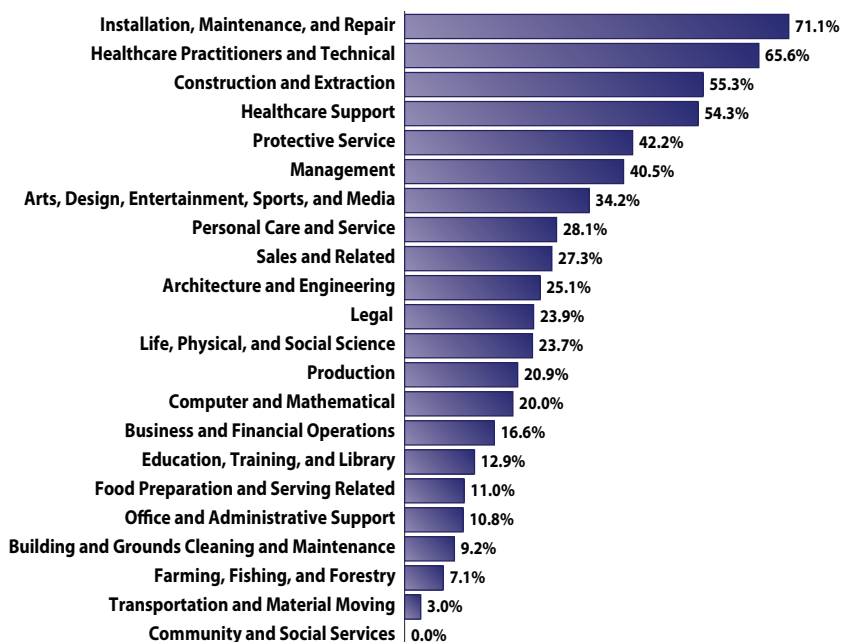
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Percent of Projected Annual Openings with Mid-Skill Requirements by Job Family



less than 12 months. Lower-skill jobs, those requiring short-term or moderate-term (1-12 months) on-the-job training, accounted for nearly half of total employment in the state in 2010 second quarter. High-skill jobs, those requiring a bachelor's degree or higher, accounted for about 21 percent, while middle-skill jobs had a 29 percent share.

Middle-skill jobs appear in all but one of the 22 different job families, with many of these families having a large percentage of occupations and a significant percentage of openings for jobs in these skill levels.

The highest share is in Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations where nearly two of every three occupations can be classified as a middle-skill job. Middle-skill jobs account for more than 70 percent of projected openings in this job family, led by *Automotive service technicians and mechanics* with 87 openings each year and *Heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics* with 50 openings. Both of these occupations generally require a postsecondary certificate. Their bosses, *Supervisors of mechanics, installers, and repairers* (expected to have 63 openings) usually require work experience in a related occupation.

Of the middle-skill occupations in this job family, nearly half of the occupations require postsecondary training with the other half requiring long-term on-the-job training or work experience in a related occupation. One occupation, *Medical equipment repairers*, generally requires an associate's degree to become qualified to work.

In the Protective services family, there are a total of 19 occupations, and 11 of them fall into the middle-skill edu-

Short-term projections are different from long-term projections as the latter attempt to see where industry and occupational employment will be ten years down the road and as such, are influenced by broad trends in population, demographics, and technological change. Short-term projections, on the other hand, are driven by changes in the business cycle as recessions and recoveries have a direct impact on demand for workers. The latest version of short-term projections for 2010 second quarter to 2012 second quarter can be found on the ELMI web site at: www.nh.gov/nhes/elmi/

Projections also estimate annual job openings for occupations. Job openings come from two sources: growth in the occupation itself from increased demand for workers and from the need to replace workers who retire or move on to other occupations. Generally, openings from replacement needs are greater than openings from growth. Nearly a quarter of the openings during the projection period are expected to provide opportunities in middle-skill occupations.

ational level, requiring more than short- or medium-term training and less than a four-year degree. Of those, *Police and sheriff's patrol officers* had the largest number employed in 2010 second quarter and have the largest number of projected openings through 2012 second quarter. About 80 openings are projected over the two years. In New Hampshire, long-term on-the-job training is required, including attending the New Hampshire Police Academy. *Firefighters* are also expected to have at least 50 openings each year, with full-time career firefighters requiring State certification.

Half of the occupations in the Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media family do not require a four-year degree. *Actors* and *Sports competitors* can go directly into their chosen field if they are talented enough, either by themselves or as part of a team or group, while others may require long-term on-the-job training. *Interior designers*, *Fashion designers*, and *Photographers* are some other middle-skill occupations with openings expected in the next two years. An im-

proving economy will spur employment in these occupations as people spend more for entertainment.

Just under half of Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations and a third of individual occupations in Healthcare support occupations are middle-skill. Combined, nearly two-thirds of the projected openings for health care occupations are middle-skill. Among these are a variety of technical jobs that require some level of postsecondary training. An associate's degree will prepare graduates to begin employment as *Dental hygienists* and *Registered Nurses*, where 39 and 392 annual openings, respectively, are expected through 2012 second quarter. Other occupations with fewer openings at this training level include *Veterinary technologists and technicians* (32 openings) and *Medical records and health information technicians* (29). Postsecondary certificate programs can prepare graduates to work as *Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants* (185); *Licensed practical and vocational nurses* (113); and *Massage therapists* (55).

A third of the occupations in the Construction and extraction family can be considered middle-skill, largely due to the number of jobs that can be learned through apprenticeship. Occupations such as *Electricians* and *Carpenters* (60 annual openings in each occupation), and *Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters*, with an expected 50 openings annually, are expected to have the most openings, along with *Supervisors of construction and extraction workers*.

Occupations in the Production job family are concentrated in the Manufacturing sector, an industry that is projected to decline by 1,110 jobs. Despite the losses, openings will be created to replace workers who retire or move on to different occupations. Nearly a third (30 percent) of these occupations require middle-skill training. *Machinists*, with 30 expected annual openings and *Water and liquid waste treatment plant system operators* (13 openings) learn skills through long-term training. *Welders and Welding and soldering machine operators* can require a postsecondary certificate.

Sales and related occupations generally require short- or medium-term on-the-job training. This job family accounts for 13 percent of all employment in the state, second only to Office and administrative support occupations. More than half of the workers in the sales family are employed in two occupations, *Retail salespersons* and *Cashiers*, jobs which require only a short training period, and are not considered middle-skill jobs. But with some experience in sales, these workers can move on to middle-skill occupations such as *Sales representatives*.

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