



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: October 16, 2020
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **Data to Support Student Academic and Career Planning**

Pursuant to Superintendent's Memo [#258-20](#), which identified 2020 General Assembly revisions to the Standards of Quality (SOQ), § [22.1-253.13:1](#) requires the Department of Education to annually compile a list of (i) the top 100 professions in the Commonwealth by median pay and the education, training, and skills required for each such profession and (ii) the top 10 degree programs at institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth by median pay of program graduates. Such lists shall be provided to each local school board.

The University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service in collaboration with the department has researched and compiled this data for the 2020-2021 school year. The information is based on occupational employment statistics and educational attainment data produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as well as longitudinal wage data produced by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The information reflects median annual wages for graduates of various educational programs within Virginia and for high-wage occupations throughout the state. It also outlines typical entry-level educational requirements, entry-level work experience, and on-the-job training for each of these occupations.

While individual situations are unique and occupational and wage patterns may vary across the Commonwealth, this information provides a context for students planning courses of study as well as for educational leaders building curricular programs and partnerships with employers. Median earnings, combined with typical educational and work experience attainment, can help students and their families map educational decisions and evaluate anticipated costs in light of potential earnings.

Please direct questions about this information to the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education at cte@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2052.

JFL/GRW/aar

Attachments

- A. [Top 100 professions in the Commonwealth by median pay and the education, training, and skills required for each such profession](#) (WORD)
- B. [Top 10 degree programs at institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth by median pay of program graduates](#) (WORD)

Top 100 Highest-Paying Jobs in Virginia

Prepared for School Year 2020-2021

Occupation	Median Annual Wage	Typical Entry-Level Degree / Education	Typical Entry-Level Work Experience	Typical On-the-Job Training
Chief Executives	\$208,000 or more	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons	\$208,000 or more	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Orthodontists	\$208,000 or more	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
General Internal Medicine Physicians	\$208,000 or more	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Obstetricians and Gynecologists	\$208,000 or more	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Surgeons, Except Ophthalmologists	\$208,000 or more	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Family Medicine Physicians	\$195,680	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Psychiatrists	\$185,360	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Nurse Anesthetists	\$182,800	Master's	None	None
Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	\$182,300	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Pediatricians, General	\$180,810	Doctoral/Professional	None	Internship/residency
Marketing Managers	\$166,530	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Sales Managers	\$165,140	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Computer and Information Systems Managers	\$163,180	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Dentists, General	\$161,200	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Financial Managers	\$149,760	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Architectural and Engineering Managers	\$148,650	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None

Attachment A
 Superintendent's Memo # 281-20
 October 16, 2020

Occupation	Median Annual Wage	Typical Entry-Level Degree / Education	Typical Entry-Level Work Experience	Typical On-the-Job Training
Public Relations and Fundraising Managers	\$147,190	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Political Scientists	\$141,600	Master's	None	None
Training and Development Managers	\$137,560	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Purchasing Managers	\$133,690	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Human Resources Managers	\$133,190	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Natural Sciences Managers	\$133,030	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Pharmacists	\$131,860	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Personal Service Managers, All Other; Entertainment and Recreation Managers, Except Gambling; and Managers, All Other	\$130,600	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Compensation and Benefits Managers	\$130,500	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Sales Engineers	\$130,030	Bachelor's	None	More than 1 month to 1 year
Lawyers	\$129,630	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Physical Scientists, All Other	\$128,950	Bachelor's	None	None
Computer and Information Research Scientists	\$128,120	Master's	None	None
Computer Network Architects	\$126,930	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Engineers, All Other	\$126,050	Bachelor's	None	None
Aerospace Engineers	\$122,940	Bachelor's	None	None
Legal Support Workers, All Other	\$122,840	Associate	None	None
General and Operations Managers	\$122,470	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Funeral Home Managers	\$122,280	Associate	Less than 5 years	None
Economists	\$122,230	Master's	None	None
Optometrists	\$121,990	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Mathematicians	\$121,830	Master's	None	None
Advertising and Promotions Managers	\$119,730	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Computer Hardware Engineers	\$118,870	Bachelor's	None	None
Chemical Engineers	\$114,690	Bachelor's	None	None

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Occupation	Median Annual Wage	Typical Entry-Level Degree / Education	Typical Entry-Level Work Experience	Typical On-the-Job Training
Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	\$113,430	Bachelor's	None	None
Industrial Production Managers	\$112,320	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None
Information Security Analysts	\$111,560	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	\$110,550	Bachelor's	None	None
Social Scientists and Related Workers, All Other	\$109,490	Bachelor's	None	None
Electrical Engineers	\$109,310	Bachelor's	None	None
Education Administrators, All Other	\$107,600	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Nurse Practitioners	\$107,440	Master's	None	None
Atmospheric and Space Scientists	\$106,670	Bachelor's	None	None
Computer Occupations, All Other	\$106,000	Bachelor's	None	None
Medical and Health Services Managers	\$105,450	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Psychologists, All Other	\$104,690	Master's	None	Internship/residency
Operations Research Analysts	\$103,420	Bachelor's	None	None
Physician Assistants	\$102,610	Master's	None	None
Computer Systems Analysts	\$102,050	Bachelor's	None	None
Physicists	\$101,790	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	\$101,780	High school diploma	5 years or more	None
Database Administrators and Architects	\$100,810	Bachelor's	None	None
Administrative Services and Facilities Managers	\$100,050	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Construction Managers	\$99,480	Bachelor's	None	More than 1 month to 1 year
Nurse Midwives	\$99,050	Master's	None	None
Veterinarians	\$98,050	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Management Analysts	\$97,500	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None
Microbiologists	\$96,790	Bachelor's	None	None
Education Administrators, Postsecondary	\$96,500	Master's	Less than 5 years	None

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Occupation	Median Annual Wage	Typical Entry-Level Degree / Education	Typical Entry-Level Work Experience	Typical On-the-Job Training
Computer Programmers	\$95,650	Bachelor's	None	None
Economics Teachers, Postsecondary	\$95,300	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Chemists	\$95,140	Bachelor's	None	None
Lighting Technicians and Media and Communication Equipment Workers, All Other	\$95,120	High school diploma	None	1 month or less
Mechanical Engineers	\$94,200	Bachelor's	None	None
Health and Safety Engineers, Except Mining Safety Engineers and Inspectors	\$94,160	Bachelor's	None	None
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	\$94,080	Bachelor's	None	More than 1 month to 1 year
Detectives and Criminal Investigators	\$93,910	High school diploma	Less than 5 years	More than 1 month to 1 year
Education Administrators, Kindergarten through Secondary	\$92,900	Master's	5 years or more	None
Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geographers	\$92,470	Bachelor's	None	None
Bioengineers and Biomedical Engineers	\$92,070	Bachelor's	None	None
Hydrologists	\$91,980	Bachelor's	None	None
Physical Therapists	\$91,780	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
Budget Analysts	\$91,400	Bachelor's	None	None
Personal Financial Advisors	\$91,330	Bachelor's	None	More than 1 year
Financial and Investment Analysts, Financial Risk Specialists, and Financial Specialists, All Other	\$90,560	Bachelor's	None	None
Occupational Therapists	\$90,560	Master's	None	None
Industrial Engineers	\$90,110	Bachelor's	None	None
Civil Engineers	\$89,100	Bachelor's	None	None
Marine Engineers and Naval Architects	\$88,890	Bachelor's	None	None
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	\$88,060	Bachelor's	None	None

Occupation	Median Annual Wage	Typical Entry-Level Degree / Education	Typical Entry-Level Work Experience	Typical On-the-Job Training
Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Powerhouse, Substation, and Relay	\$87,910	Postsecondary nondegree certificate/award	Less than 5 years	More than 1 month to 1 year
Nuclear Engineers	\$87,250	Bachelor's	None	None
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	\$87,080	Doctoral/Professional	None	None
First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	\$87,010	High school diploma	Less than 5 years	None
Environmental Engineers	\$86,520	Bachelor's	None	None
Speech-Language Pathologists	\$86,350	Master's	None	Internship/residency
Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	\$86,080	Bachelor's	None	Internship/residency
Acupuncturists and Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners, All Other	\$85,590	Master's	None	None
First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	\$85,090	High school diploma	Less than 5 years	More than 1 month to 1 year
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	\$84,280	Bachelor's	None	None
Biological Scientists, All Other	\$84,280	Bachelor's	None	None
Administrative Law Judges, Adjudicators, and Hearing Officers	\$84,270	Doctoral/Professional	5 years or more	1 month or less

Data sources: 1) Wage data: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Occupational Employment Statistics, Virginia, 2019. [LINK: https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_va.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_va.htm). 2) Education data: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program. Table 5.4. - Education and training assignments by detailed occupation, United States, 2019. [LINK: https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/education-and-training-by-occupation.htm](https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/education-and-training-by-occupation.htm).



Top Postsecondary Educational Programs in Virginia by Education Level and Median Pay of Graduates

Prepared for School Year 2020-2021

Education Level: Award of less than one academic year

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)	\$51,090
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	\$50,386
Business Administration, Management and Operations, Other	\$47,323
Accounting and Related Services, Other	\$46,984
Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist	\$46,597
Electrical, Electronic and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	\$44,505
Industrial Production Technologies/Technicians, Other	\$44,253
Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician	\$42,376
Legal Assistant/Paralegal	\$42,285
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/Technician	\$41,243

Education Level: Award of at least one but less than two academic years

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Precision Metal Working, Other	\$61,253
Industrial Production Technologies/Technicians, Other	\$56,533
Electrical, Electronic and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	\$54,947
Industrial Electronics Technology/Technician	\$53,659
Electrician	\$47,614
CAD/CADD Drafting and/or Design Technology/Technician	\$43,054
Surgical Technology/Technologist	\$42,744
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	\$38,523
Allied Health Diagnostic, Intervention, and Treatment Professions, Other	\$37,314
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/Technician	\$36,783

Education Level: Associate Degree (Bachelor Credit)

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Computer Science	\$71,906
Information Technology	\$64,419
Engineering, General	\$61,330
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	\$53,142
Business Administration and Management, General	\$46,082
General Studies	\$40,338
Biological and Physical Sciences	\$36,491
Humanities/Humanistic Studies	\$35,726
Physical Sciences	\$35,681
Social Sciences, General	\$34,668

Education Level: Associate Degree (Occupational/Technical Credit)

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Mechanical Engineering Related Technologies/Technicians, Other	\$59,777
Dental Hygiene/Hygienist	\$58,759
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)	\$57,631
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	\$57,602
Industrial Electronics Technology/Technician	\$55,689
Industrial Technology/Technician	\$50,849
Engineering Technology, General	\$49,157
Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer	\$48,163
Physical Therapy Technician/Assistant	\$47,862
Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist	\$47,534

Education Level: Four-Year Bachelor's Degree

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Computer and Information Sciences, General	\$83,681
Mechanical Engineering	\$73,589
Finance, General	\$69,267
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	\$65,541
Accounting	\$64,820
Economics, General	\$61,526
Marketing/Marketing Management, General	\$56,135
Business Administration and Management, General	\$54,459
Business/Commerce, General	\$51,698
Chemistry, General	\$51,244

Education Level: Post-Baccalaureate Certificate

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Computer Systems Analysis/Analyst	\$152,246
Systems Engineering	\$126,559
Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications	\$117,818
Industrial Engineering	\$105,992
Information Technology	\$91,908
Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other	\$87,630
Business Administration and Management, General	\$81,945
Educational Leadership and Administration, General	\$75,947
Adult Development and Aging	\$71,586
Information Science/Studies	\$71,032

Education Level: Master's Degree

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Industrial Engineering	\$120,968
Information Science/Studies	\$113,908
Computer and Information Sciences, General	\$112,937
Electrical and Electronics Engineering	\$104,022
Physician Assistant	\$98,501
Business Administration and Management, General	\$95,111
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	\$88,700
Accounting	\$80,775
Civil Engineering, General	\$80,270
Public Policy Analysis, General	\$71,807

Education Level: Post-Master's Certificate

Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Educational Administration and Supervision, Other	\$77,080
Educational Leadership and Administration, General	\$65,875
Curriculum and Instruction	\$59,769
Reading Teacher Education	\$53,329
Education, Other	\$52,053

Education Level: First Professional Degree

Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Dentistry	\$151,758
Pharmacy	\$124,654
Veterinary Medicine	\$86,492
Law	\$78,373

Education Level: Doctoral Degree

Top 10 Programs Ranked by Median Pay of Graduates	Median Annual Wage (Three Years After Graduation)
Nurse Anesthetist	\$162,050
Mathematics and Computer Science	\$112,413
Nursing Science	\$105,017
Engineering, General	\$104,440
Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research and Clinical Nursing, Other	\$102,671
Community College Education	\$97,023
Educational Administration and Supervision, Other	\$95,650
Education, General	\$81,277
Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences, Other	\$80,153
Public Administration	\$79,499

Data source for all tables: State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. Data report WG01 - Wage and debt by institution and degree, three years post-completion, all reporting institutions, Virginia, 2018. [LINK: https://research.schev.edu/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=EOM.EOM_DegreeWageDebt_Inst&rdRequestForwarding=Form](https://research.schev.edu/rdPage.aspx?rdReport=EOM.EOM_DegreeWageDebt_Inst&rdRequestForwarding=Form).

Note: The wage data included in these tables represent only the following individuals:

1. Graduates successfully matched to the unemployment insurance wage records collected by the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).
2. Graduates employed in Virginia by an entity that reports to the VEC. This excludes federal employees, including those within the Department of Defense.



[LINK: http://ctetrailblazers.org/](http://ctetrailblazers.org/)