Information Technology Occupations in New Mexico

About About 1.9 percent of all jobs in New Mexico are classified as information technology (IT) occupations by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system (as of 2012). Workers in this occupation group are classified within 14 detailed occupations: computer and information systems managers; computer and information research scientists; computer systems analysts; information security analysts; computer programmers; software developers, applications; software developers, systems software; web developers; database administrators; network and computer systems administrators; computer network architects; computer user support specialists; computer network support specialists; and all other computer occupations. The majority of IT occupations are found in the professional, scientific, and technical industry and government. In addition, IT occupations are projected to grow quickly, typically pay more than the average occupation, require at least some college, but not typically more than a bachelor's degree, and do not typically require significant previous work experience. This can mean that a job in an IT occupation can be a good option, especially for younger workers looking at their career options.

Employment in this occupation group is fairly small in New Mexico and most other states. Seven of the 14 detailed IT occupations have employment of over 1,000 workers in New Mexico, but none have employment over 3,300. IT occupations are projected to have just over 500 job openings each year between 2010 and 2020, although employment is projected to grow faster than employment across all occupations. Just over one-half of all openings are projected to be created due to growth versus replacement needs.

As Exhibit 1 shows, New Mexico's concentration of IT workers, of 1.9 percent, is less than the concentration of workers in all its neighboring states, except Oklahoma. It is also less than the concentration of workers in the U.S as a whole. About 2.9 percent of all workers in the U.S. are employed in an IT occupation. Arizona, Utah, and Texas have similar concentrations as the U.S., while Colorado's concentration of IT workers (4.2 percent) far exceeds that of all of New Mexico's neighboring states.

The concentration of IT workers is highest in New Mexico's metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). (See Exhibit 2.) Approximately 2.2 percent of New Mexicans in the four MSAs—Albuquerque, Farmington, Las Cruces, and Santa Fe—are...
employed in an IT occupation, as compared to just 0.6 percent in New Mexico's non-MSA areas.

The annual median wage in the IT occupation group in New Mexico ($70,650) is below that of the U.S. ($80,236) and all other neighboring states, except Oklahoma. The annual median wages for IT workers is highest in Colorado, which also boasts the highest concentration of such workers. In all of the states analyzed, except Oklahoma, the annual median wage for IT occupations was at least 100 percent higher than the annual median wage across all occupations. In Texas, the IT annual median wage was nearly 140 percent higher than the all-occupation median wage.

Detailed Occupation Data

As shown in Exhibit 3, the most common IT occupation in New Mexico is computer user support specialists; about 21.9 percent of IT workers are employed as computer user support specialists. These workers typically provide technical assistance to computer users and answer questions or resolve computer problems for clients in person, or via telephone or electronically. Workers may provide assistance concerning the use of computer hardware and software, including printing, installation, word processing, electronic mail, and operating systems. (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.) This is the most common occupation, but also the lowest paying ($42,530 annual median wage). Systems software developers and network and computer systems administrators follow as the second and third most common occupations, with 14.7 and 9.5 percent of all IT workers, respectively, employed in these occupations. Systems software developers have the second highest median annual wage of the 14 detailed IT occupations. Nine of the 14 detailed occupations contribute over 5 percent or more of total IT employment. Exhibit 4 provides employment estimates and the median annual wage for the 14 detailed IT occupations.
Annual median wages of IT occupations are typically higher than the average annual wage across all occupations; the annual median wage was $70,650, as compared to $31,430 for all occupations. As shown in Exhibits 4 and 5, computer and information systems managers had the highest median annual wage of all IT occupations as of 2012 ($97,410). Computer and information research scientists and systems software developers had the second and third highest median annual wage. While the U.S. median annual wage for IT occupations was nearly $10,000 higher than New Mexico’s wage, the median annual wages of four of the 14 detailed IT occupations were higher in New Mexico than the U.S., including computer systems analysts, computer programmers, computer user support specialists, and computer network support specialists. (See Exhibit 5.) Occupations for which the disparity between U.S. and New Mexico median annual wages was largest included computer and information systems managers, applications software developers, computer and information research scientists, and web developers.

IT Occupations in New Mexico’s Industries

IT occupations can be found in all 20 major industry sectors, with the professional, scientific, and technical industry having the largest concentration of IT workers, at 37 percent of total industry employment (as of 2010, the most recent data available). Keep in mind that industries are defined by their business activities, while occupations are based on work tasks. As shown in Exhibit 6, IT workers in government and the administrative, support, waste management, and remediation services industry comprised over 13 percent of total sector employment, each. All other major industry sectors had a concentration of IT workers of 9.0 percent of total employment or less.

Future IT Jobs

The 2010-2020 employment projections indicate that employment in IT occupations is projected to grow by about 20.7 percent, or approximately 2,730. This rate of growth is faster than the rate of growth for all occupations, combined, of 15.9 percent. Exhibit 8 shows the projected job openings for IT occupations. The exhibit also shows the number of openings that are projected to result from job growth versus openings from replacement needs (turnover and retirements). Exhibit 8 provides additional data on projected employment growth for IT occupations. Computer support specialists (or
computer user support specialists) are projected to see the largest number of annual openings over the period (140), followed by systems software developers (80). Eight of the 11 IT occupations shown are expected to see at least half of their projected job openings come from employment growth as opposed to replacement needs over the 10-year period. All other computer occupations, computer programmers, and computer support specialists are all projected to see more job openings come from the need to replace existing workers. Employment in two of these occupations—all other computer occupations and computer programmers—is also projected to grow more slowly than employment across all occupations. All other IT occupations are projected to see fast and healthy employment growth.

### Education, Job Experience, and Training Requirements

Education, job experience, and job training requirements are identified for all occupations through the employment projections process. The number of jobs requiring specific types of education, job experience, and training are broadly estimated using this data and employment projections. This information is a broad assessment of job requirements and will vary from position to position. In general, however, IT jobs typically require at least a bachelor's degree to enter into the occupation. In 2010, over three-quarters of IT jobs, or nine of the 11 occupations shown in Exhibit 9, typically required a bachelor's degree for entry into the position. (See Exhibit 9). This is in stark contrast to the other occupations, where over 70 percent of all jobs required a high school degree or less. About 22.3 percent of IT jobs, or those as computer support specialists, required some college, but no degree to enter into the field. Computer and information research scientists was the only occupation of the 11 shown that required more than a bachelor's degree for entry into the field. Of the 11 occupations, only database administrators, and information security analysts, web developers, and computer network architects required any type of job experience in a related field to enter into the occupation as of 2010. Only computer support specialists typically required any on-the-job training to gain proficiency in the occupation.

The **Occupational Bulletin** is a monthly publication from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Economic Research & Analysis Bureau. This month's contributor is Ashley Leach, Economist.

Download a QR code reader app on your smart phone to scan the code below to view all Economic Research publications or visit [www.dws.state.nm.us](http://www.dws.state.nm.us) and look under the Labor Market Information tab at the top of the page.

For further information, contact:
New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions
Economic Research & Analysis Bureau
PO Box 1928
Albuquerque, NM 87103
(505) 383-2737