



Arkansas has a great deal to celebrate this Labor Day. Our unemployment level now stands at 3.7%. The national level is 3.9%. The state's unemployment rate has been at or below 4% since March of this year.

Every year, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services issues the Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report. This report not only tells us what industries are growing or decreasing, it also projects what our labor market will look like in the coming years.

All major occupational groups are estimated to see net gains in employment. Food preparation and serving workers, including fast food, is predicted to lead the state in net growth with new jobs. Other top growing industries include forging and stamping, education, and health services. Service unit operators, oil, gas, and mining are occupations projected to see a decrease.

When it comes to the highest paid professions in our state, internal medical physicians topped the list with an annual average salary of \$266,980. Surgeons ranked second on the list. The top 5 highest paying occupations also include orthodontists, gynecologists, and anesthesiologists.

Retail salespersons is the category estimated to have the most employees across the state with more than 37,000. Cashiers is the second largest occupation with more than 34,000 Arkansans.

The average wages of the top 5 largest occupations in Arkansas are as follows:

Retail salesperson	\$24,640
Cashiers	\$19,540
Truck Drivers	\$39,430
Food Prep/Serving Workers	\$18,820
Office Clerks	\$26,380

The report also indicates that occupations for every level of education is projected to see growth. Educational attainment of the state's population aged 25 years and over shows that 84.7 percent have earned at least a high school diploma or equivalent.

There are more than 1.3 million Arkansans who make up our workforce. Working Arkansans are the foundation of our state's success. We thank you for your hard work and hope you enjoy a well-deserved holiday.