



Analyst Resource Center
Serving the workforce data community

Obsolete and Emerging Occupations

Research and analysis conducted by Jered Piepenbrink from the Illinois Department of Employment Security and Donna Burkett from Iowa Workforce Development

January 2026

Introduction

- Occupational Employment and Wage Survey (OEWS) provides widely used occupational employment and wage data.
- Classifies workers into 800+ Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC).
- SOC revisions reflect changes in job functions and economy.

Goals

- Last major SOC revision: 2010 → 2018; next in 2028.
- Goal: Identify obsolete and emerging occupations for 2028 update.
- Develop replicable methodology for other states.

Data Sources

- Proprietary OEWS survey data from Illinois and Iowa (2019–2025).
 - Employers report job titles and wages; personal identifiers not collected.
 - Data is extracted using SQL queries of OWDN Metabase
- Focus is on occupational titles and employment counts.
- 2024 national/state OEWS estimates from BLS.
- Job openings data from CareerOneStop and National Labor Exchange.

Methodology: Obsolete Occupations

- National employment $<0.002\%$ of total (~3,000).
- State employment (IL/IA) $<0.002\%$ of total reported in Metabase results (~80 IL / ~50 IA).
- Occupations published in 2024 state estimates removed.

Methodology: Obsolete Occupations

- Residual SOC codes excluded.
- Reviewed job openings, number of states published, and location quotients.
 - Occupations with location quotients showing high concentration outside IL and IA removed from candidacy.
- Suggested merge or removal of SOC depending on similarity and prevalence.

Obsolete Occupations (Examples)

SOC Code	SOC Title	Action	Notes
19-3032	Industrial-Org Psychologists	Merge	Published in only 2 states; similar to other psychologist roles.
51-7032	Patternmakers, Wood	Merge	Merge with 51-6092 or move to residual.
39-3021	Motion Picture Projectionists	Remove	Very low employment; declining trend.

Methodology: Emerging Occupations

- Analyzed all residual SOC codes (ending in '9').
- Identified 62,985 job title/SOC combinations across IL & IA.
- Used VBA macro to compute frequent 1-, 2-, and 3-word phrases.

Methodology: Emerging Occupations

- Flagged meaningful terms linked to emerging roles.
- Assigned common job titles to group similar terms.
- Verified national demand using CareerOneStop job openings.

Emerging Occupations (Examples)

Common Job Title	Current SOC	IL Reported Employment	# of IL Establishment	IA Reported Emp	# of IA Est
Compliance Manager	11-9199	832	412	352	177
Hospitalist	29-1229	571	53	310	24
Online Personal Shopper	41-9099	324	25	267	21
Volunteer Coordinator	43-9199	170	110	161	123

Emerging Jobs: National Openings

Job Title	SOC	National Labor Exchange Hits
Compliance Manager	11-9199	406,327
Hospitalist	29-1229	3,676
Online Personal Shopper	41-9099	5,937
Volunteer Coordinator	43-9199	36,880

Compliance Manager Potential SOC Definition

- Plan, direct, or coordinate activities of an organization to ensure compliance with ethical and regulatory standards. Develop and implement internal policies and procedures to ensure adherence to laws, regulations, and contractual obligations. Monitor operational practices, conduct internal audits, and collaborate with regulatory agencies as needed. May oversee compliance training programs and manage compliance reporting systems.

Compliance Manager SOC Illustrative Examples

- Environmental Compliance Manager
- Regulatory Affairs Manager
- Ethics and Compliance Director
- **Excludes:**
 - “Occupational Health and Safety Specialists” (29-9011)
 - “Lawyers” (23-1011)
 - “Financial Examiners” (13-2061)
 - “Compliance Officers” (13-1041), who primarily enforce rules and monitor for violations rather than manage compliance programs.

Further Research

- Finding occupations that are diminishing in employment.
 - OEWS estimation methodology changes allow improved historical comparisons.
 - Employment estimation uses industry, geography, ownership, size, and survey data.
 - The addition of panel code to the Obsolete Occupation Metabase query can also track employment over time to identify trends.
 - Combining analyses reveals occupational growth/decline trends.

Further Research

- Additional research into diminishing occupational employment can support research on automation, AI, and labor market shifts.
- Location quotient analysis helps identify geographic demand patterns, which would be useful to students and other job seekers.
 - Future political scientists should expect to relocate to the Washington DC metro area.
 - Hawaii has the highest concentration of Astronomers.