

Labor Resources for Charleston, South Carolina

Executive Summary

This profile contains information about the labor force within a 30 minute and 45 minute commuting distance from the center of Charleston, South Carolina. Charleston is located in Charleston County, South Carolina.

The profile examines three issues: labor force characteristics, the availability of labor, and the average wages and salaries in the community of Charleston.

Labor Situation at a Glance in Charleston, South Carolina

Labor Force Characteristics	within 30 min.	within 45 min.	South Carolina
Population, 2004	146,732	298,244	4,198,068
Labor Force, 2004	67,417	135,989	2,046,179
Availability of Labor	within 30 min.	within 45 min.	South Carolina
Unemployed Workers, 2004	3,989	7,982	139,607
Unemployment Rate, 2004	5.9%	5.4%	6.8%
Workers Affected by Layoffs (Past 2 Years)	193	385	22,196
Average Wages	Charleston County	South Carolina	United States
2003 Avg. Weekly Wage	\$572	\$581	\$658

Labor Force Characteristics for Charleston, South Carolina

The composition and size of a community's labor force is linked very closely with demographic and economic conditions and trends in the region. The following labor force profile provides basic information on the population base and labor force characteristics so that the reader can better assess labor force conditions in the community.

Labor Force			
	30 min. Drive time	45 min. Drive time	South Carolina
Labor Force 2004	67,417	135,989	2,046,179
Change since 2000	-7,329	-11,173	49,079
Population			
Population 2004	146,732	298,244	4,198,068
Change since 2000	7,813	17,340	186,056
Projected 2010	149,795	309,478	4,446,704
Gender Distribution			
Male	71,295	145,686	2,040,261
Female	75,436	152,558	2,132,454
Age Distribution			
Ages 20-34	33,349	66,197	875,330
Ages 35-49	32,029	65,898	925,330
Ages 50-64	24,405	49,451	739,980
20-54 *Prime Working Age	75,121	151,834	2,084,880
Highest Level of Educational Attainment			
High School	35,821	77,652	778,054
Some College	31,823	65,938	500,194
Associate Degree	9,890	20,718	173,428
Bachelors Degree	27,046	50,936	351,526
Post Bachelor	14,857	27,448	178,529

**Prime working age group:* People between the ages of 18-54 are often referred to as the prime working age group. In staffing a new facility, prudent managers often prefer to staff its production work force with workers whose ages form a normal distribution curve. This provides for stability, flexibility and continuity of knowledge.

Source: 2004 Estimates Based on 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Woods and Poole, 2003 Edition

Employment Characteristics for Charleston, South Carolina

Total Employment			
Year	30 min. Drive time	45 min. Drive time	South Carolina
2004	63,428	128,007	1,906,571

Total Employment data include all full and part-time wage and salaried workers in the area. These people may or may not reside in the area.

Monthly Employment by Sector In Charleston County			
Sector	30 min. Drive time	45 min. Drive time	South Carolina
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	152	348	12,379
Mining	15	66	1,603
Utilities	250	482	11,891
Construction	4,950	9,240	111,730
Manufacturing	4,211	9,785	275,573
Wood product manufacturing	47	142	8,371
Nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing	207	546	9,155
Primary metal manufacturing	219	785	6,317
Fabricated metal product manufacturing	315	639	27,357
Machinery manufacturing	263	430	21,278
Computer and electronic product manufacturing	53	85	7,666
Electrical equipment and appliance mfg.			10,748
Transportation equipment manufacturing	696	1,313	30,932
Furniture and related product manufacturing	193	311	4,225
Miscellaneous manufacturing	241	406	7,846
Food manufacturing	160	260	17,832
Beverage and tobacco product manufacturing			1,445
Textile mills	111	176	40,207
Textile product mills	27	85	9,724
Apparel manufacturing	15	24	5,321
Paper manufacturing			14,710
Printing and related support activities	125	207	7,327
Petroleum and coal products manufacturing			288
Chemical manufacturing	451	1,006	21,659
Plastics and rubber products manufacturing	54	105	23,054
Wholesale Trade	1,911	3,462	62,523
Retail Trade	10,068	18,274	224,031
Transportation and Warehousing	3,128	5,602	46,941
Education and Health Services	13,448	22,525	156,232
Leisure and Hospitality	10,570	18,280	192,748
Professional and Business Services	9,936	16,942	186,481

Source: 2003 Covered Wages, SC Employment Securities Commission

Largest Industries by Total Employment In Charleston County

Company Name	City	Primary Product/Service	Employment	Date Est.
MeadWestvaco	N. Charleston	Kraft board & paper	1,230	1936
Evening Post Publishing Co	Charleston	Newspapers	647	1894
Detyens Shipyards Inc	N. Charleston	Ship repairs & modifications	625	1962
American LaFrance Corp	Ladson	Fire trucks	577	2002
Scientific Research Corp	N. Charleston	Network control systems	450	1992
Behr Heat Transfer Systems	Charleston	Engine cooling systems	400	1993
North Safety Products	N. Charleston	Rubber gloves	358	1948
Hill-Rom Company	N. Charleston	Efica therapy unit	340	1976
Holset Engineering Co	N. Charleston	Turbo charging equipment	314	1989
MeadWestvaco/Chemicals Div	N. Charleston	Tall oil products	302	1938
Eagan, McAllister Associates	Charleston	Engineering services	300	1989
Goer Manufacturing Co	N. Charleston	Stone fixtures	250	1944
North Safety Products	Charleston	Chemical protective gloves	250	1981
First Contact Inc	N. Charleston	Customer call center	240	2000
Banks Construction Co	N. Charleston	Asphalt paving	210	1948
Metal Trades Inc	N. Charleston	Heavy metal fabrication	190	1962
Rhodia Inc	Charleston	Organic chemicals	189	1851
Quovadx Inc	Charleston	Software development	185	1994
Evans Rule Co	Charleston	Steel measuring tapes	175	1973
Boeing Co	Charleston	Field services for C-17	144	1996

Employer-Employee Relationship

Employer-employee relations in South Carolina are very stable and the state consistently ranks as one of the least unionized in the nation. In 2004, only 4.5 percent of the state's workers were members of a labor union. Additionally, the state has consistently had one of the lowest work stoppage rates in the United States. On average, less than .01 percent of working time was lost due to strikes in manufacturing and non-manufacturing industries combined.

Availability of Labor

Labor Force Participation & Unemployment

Labor Force Participation & Unemployment			
Year	30 min. Drive time	45 min. Drive time	South Carolina
Labor Force (2004)	67,417	135,989	2,046,179
Labor Force Change from 2000	-7,329	-11,173	49,079
Labor Force Participation Rate	46%	46%	49%
Unemployment (2004)	3,989	7,982	139,607
Unemployment Rate	5.9%	5.4%	6.8%

The *labor force participation* rate is the percentage which results from dividing the labor force count by the total population.

Unemployment reflects the total number of persons who do not have a job and are actively seeking employment.

Other Potential Sources of Labor Supply

Total Jobs Lost Due to Mass Closings and Layoffs Past Two Years			
Sector	30 min. Drive time	45 min. Drive time	South Carolina
Total	193	385	22,196
Manufacturing	173	344	19,196
Distribution	8	21	1,213
Service	12	21	1,745
Other	-	-	42

Recent closings and layoffs are a rich source of skilled and experienced labor for companies seeking to locate or expand in a given area. Industries in which layoffs and closings occur can provide some indication of the skills and knowledge-base of many unemployed and underemployed workers in a region.

Commuters to Other Areas			
	30 min. Drive time	45 min. Drive time	South Carolina
Commuters to other areas	11,204	34,249	31,833

Source: 2000 U.S. Census of Population

Workers commuting to places outside their residence are a significant source of experienced labor for new and expanding industries. These workers may be willing to consider an opportunity for employment nearer their place of residence.

Recent Graduates of South Carolina's Colleges and Universities

Certificates/Degrees Conferred From Technical Colleges in Select Degrees Within 45 Minute Drive Time of Charleston County, SC	
Degree Area	Two Year Certificates Conferred 2002 - 2004
Computer and Information Sciences (Total)	273
Data Processing Technology	87
Engineering Technologies (Total)	203
Electrical ,Electronic & Communications	20
Mechanical Engineering/Tech	6
Mechanic & Repair Technologies (Total)	145
Industrial Electronics	*
HVAC	27
Precision Production (Total)	91
Machine Tool Technology/Machinist	56

Graduation From South Carolina's Four Year Colleges and Universities In Select Degrees		
	Degrees Conferred (2002-2004)	
	Bachelors	Post- Grad
Computer and Information Science (Total)	910	108
Computer Engineering	150	149
Computer Programming	12	5
Engineering & Related Technologies (Total)	1,316	786
Chemical Engineering	136	38
Electrical Engineering	257	150
Industrial Engineering	78	44
Mechanical Engineering	268	95
Business Admin & Management	4,754	1,018
International Business/Trade	178	276

Source: South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

Wages and Salaries

Average Wage and Salary Comparison			
Sector	Charleston County	South Carolina	United States
Avg. Weekly Wages*	\$572	\$581	\$658
Avg. Annual Salary*	\$29,767	\$30,240	\$37,508
Avg. Hourly Prod. Wages**	N/A	\$14.73	\$16.14

*Covered Wages and Employment, 2003, SC Employment Securities Commission

** Employment & Earnings, 2004, U.S. Department of Labor

Average Annual Salary Manufacturing Sectors, 2004		
Sector	Charleston County	South Carolina
Manufacturing Total	\$43,968	\$39,027
Wood product	\$29,516	\$30,808
Nonmetallic mineral product	\$41,591	\$39,031
Primary metal	\$23,084	\$49,695
Fabricated metal product	\$34,935	\$37,533
Machinery	\$43,311	\$39,952
Computer and electronic product	\$43,218	\$40,186
Electrical equipment and appliance	***	\$40,178
Transportation equipment	\$39,943	\$44,099
Furniture and related product	\$39,437	\$27,907
Miscellaneous	\$35,514	\$34,350
Food	\$31,329	\$26,620
Beverage and tobacco product	***	\$35,765
Textile mills	\$48,726	\$31,898
Textile product mills	\$23,193	\$25,618
Apparel	\$33,908	\$23,705
Paper	***	\$55,139
Printing and related support activities	\$24,795	\$36,634
Petroleum and coal products	***	\$49,113
Chemical	\$55,363	\$50,870
Plastics and rubber products	\$35,327	\$46,620

***Indicates data suppressed

Source: Covered Wages and Employment, SC Employment Securities Commission

Occupational Wages In Charleston and Surrounding Area

Average Hourly Wages of Employees by Selected Non-Exempt Occupations For Charleston County Area*			
Non-Exempt Occupations	Entry	Experienced	Average
Assemblers and Fabricators	*	*	*
Butchers and Meat Cutters	\$8.23	\$9.96	\$10.94
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	*	*	*
Chemical Equipment Operators	*	*	*
Chemical Plant & System Operators	*	*	*
Electrical & Electronic Equip Tenders	\$8.90	\$10.80	\$12.20
Extruding & Forming Machine Setters	*	*	*
Grinding & Lapping Machine Operators	\$8.82	\$10.54	\$11.87
Logging Equipment Operators	\$9.43	\$11.17	\$12.95
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$11.02	\$15.26	\$18.69
Machine Tool Setters & Tenders	\$9.92	\$11.79	\$13.27
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	*	*	*
Machinists	\$11.10	\$13.71	\$16.33
Packaging & Filling Machine Op	*	*	*
Molding & Casting Machine Op	\$10.17	\$11.46	\$12.96
Sewing Machine Operators	*	*	*
Textile, Cutting Machine Operators	*	*	*
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	\$12.11	\$16.03	\$19.55
Welders, Cutters & Solderers	\$11.99	\$13.79	\$15.84
Woodworking Machine Setters	*	*	*
Average Salary of Employees by Selected Exempt Occupations For Charleston County Area*			
Exempt Occupations	Entry	Experienced	Average
Chemical Engineers	\$52,640	\$66,540	\$79,900
Computer Programmers	\$31,940	\$40,440	\$47,660
Engineers, NEC	\$36,420	\$55,340	\$69,440
First Line Production Man & Sup	\$28,340	\$41,220	\$53,020
Industrial Engineers	\$52,060	\$60,400	\$68,920
Mechanical Engineers	\$36,340	\$45,420	\$55,800

Source: *Occupational Wage Survey*, SC Employment Security Commission

* Indicates Suppressed Data or Data Not Available