

2026 U.S. Occupational Licensing by State

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Share of the state workforce that must hold an occupational license and typical licensing fee ranges, by state. National baseline: roughly 1 in 4 U.S. workers (about 25%) is licensed; the share varies widely by state (Nevada ~31% highest, South Carolina ~12% lowest, per the 2015 White House report). Fee ranges are estimated from Institute for Justice state average licensure fees (2022).

by-state

State	% of workforce licensed	Typical license fee low (\$)	Typical license fee high (\$)	Notes
Alabama	20.9	225	525	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Alaska	25.5	265	615	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Arizona	22.3	290	675	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Arkansas	20.2	160	375	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
California	20.7	310	725	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Colorado	17.2	215	495	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Connecticut	24.7	175	405	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Delaware	15.3	140	320	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
District of Columbia	19.7	260	610	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Florida	28.7	180	420	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Georgia	15.7	120	275	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Hawaii	26.6	305	710	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Idaho	22.8	110	260	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Illinois	24.7	170	395	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Indiana	14.9	95	225	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Iowa	33.3	90	215	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Kansas	14.9	95	225	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Kentucky	27.8	170	395	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Louisiana	22.3	200	465	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Maine	20.7	135	315	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Maryland	17.2	175	415	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Massachusetts	21.3	200	465	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Michigan	20.6	170	395	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Minnesota	15	145	340	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Mississippi	23.1	205	480	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Missouri	21.3	115	270	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Montana	21.3	190	445	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Nebraska	24.6	55	130	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Nevada	30.7	435	1020	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
New Hampshire	14.7	125	295	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
New Jersey	20.7	165	390	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
New Mexico	25.9	165	380	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
New York	20.7	165	385	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
North Carolina	22	140	325	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
North Dakota	26.6	90	210	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Ohio	18.1	85	205	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Oklahoma	25	185	430	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Oregon	26.1	185	435	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Pennsylvania	20.2	70	160	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Rhode Island	14.5	140	330	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
South Carolina	12.4	145	340	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
South Dakota	21.8	145	340	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Tennessee	23.1	205	475	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Texas	24.1	160	370	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Utah	23.8	195	450	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Vermont	16.8	115	270	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Virginia	17.2	190	445	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Washington	30.5	140	320	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
West Virginia	25.8	120	280	Pct licensed: WH 2015...

State	% of workforce licensed	Typical license fee low (\$)	Typical license fee high (\$)	Notes
Wisconsin	18.4	155	360	Pct licensed: WH 2015...
Wyoming	21.2	225	520	Pct licensed: WH 2015...

Sources

- The White House (Council of Economic Advisers) — Occupational Licensing: A Framework for Policymakers (July 2015) (<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/79th2017/ExhibitDocument/OpenExhibitDocument?exhibitId=26810&fileDownloadName=SB69%20Presentation%202015%20WH%20Report.pdf>)
- Institute for Justice — License to Work: A National Study of Burdens from Occupational Licensing (3rd ed., 2022) (<https://ij.org/report/license-to-work-3/report/results/ranking-burdens-by-state/>)
- National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) — National Occupational Licensing Database (<https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/occupational-licensing-statute-database.aspx>)
- Center for Growth and Opportunity (Utah State University) — Occupational Licensing: A Barrier to Opportunity and Prosperity (summary of IJ 2017 fee data) (<https://www.thecgo.org/books/regulation-and-economic-opportunity-blueprints-for-reform/occupational-licensing-a-barrier-to-opportunity-and-prosperity/>)

Disclaimer

This dataset is an informational reference only and is not legal, financial, or professional advice. Occupational licensing requirements, covered occupations, and fees change frequently and vary by profession within each state. Always verify current licensing requirements, fees, and renewal terms directly with the relevant state licensing board or authority before making any decision.