

Emerging Occupations: New and Evolving Occupations in the U.S. Labor Market

As part of an ongoing research project examining the misalignment between the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the evolving landscape of online job postings, 24 occupations across six key focus areas have been identified as potential recommendations for new or updated classifications. These occupations reflect emerging roles that are currently in demand but may not be well-represented within the existing SOC framework.

While most of these roles already exist within the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) system and have established descriptive content, they have grown in significance to the point where they warrant greater visibility as viable career pathways. Their increasing presence in job postings suggests that they may soon be considered for inclusion in the SOC hierarchy, allowing for the collection of wage and employment data in future revisions.

The following report provides detailed information on these occupations, including their job titles and, where applicable, their corresponding ONET codes. For occupations that do not yet have a direct ONET classification, we reference the broader SOC category from which they would likely be disaggregated. Additionally, we present an estimated national employment size for each occupation, derived from its prevalence in recent job postings. *The codes, share of the current SOC classification, national size of the parent occupation, and the potential size of the new occupation are all listed in the header of each occupation section below.*

Where available, occupation descriptions are sourced from ONET. However, in cases where an occupation lacks a dedicated ONET profile or where further refinement is necessary, our analysts have developed descriptions to better capture the role’s distinct responsibilities and qualifications. Lastly, we include a list of common job titles found in national job postings from 2024, providing further insight into how these roles are represented in the labor market.

This research aims to bridge the gap between evolving workforce needs and formal occupational classifications, ultimately supporting job seekers, employers, and policymakers in making more informed decisions about emerging career opportunities.

Healthcare

Transplant Coordinators	Extremely small, approximately 400 job openings
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While not a huge number of postings, this job seems to require medical specialization with a focus on logistics and coordination in a way that’s not quite in line with nursing or other established medical professions. It may warrant watching for future inclusion. Even using terms to narrow it down, some job postings that flagged continued to be medical assistants in a transplant setting.

Common job titles: Transplant Coordinator, Organ Donation Coordinator, Transplant Donation Specialist, Registrar Kidney Transplant, Donor Coordinator, Organ Allocation Coordinator, Operating Room Scheduler

Patient Representatives

29-2099.08

46.5% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 171,110
Potential New Occ Size: 79,491

Assist patients in obtaining services, understanding policies and making health care decisions.

Common job titles: Patient Access Specialist, Patient Service Representative, Patient Service Specialist, Patient Intake Representative, Referral Representative, Patient Access Registration Specialist, Access Coordinator, Patient Service Coordinator, Patient Access Specialists, Patient Services Associates, Patient Services Advocates

Clinical Research Coordinators

11-9121.01

58.8% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 96,520
Potential New Occ Size: 56,719

Plan, direct, or coordinate clinical research projects. Direct the activities of workers engaged in clinical research projects to ensure compliance with protocols and overall clinical objectives. May evaluate and analyze clinical data.

Common job titles: Clinical Research Project Manager, Clinical Research Associate, Clinical Research Specialist, Clinical Trial Manager, Research Support Coordinator, Principal Research Specialist, Clinical Research Coordinators, Clinical Project Managers, Clinical Research Managers, Research Nurse Coordinators

Health Informatics Specialists

15-1211.01

19.1% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 498,810
Potential New Occ Size: 95,162

Apply knowledge of nursing and informatics to assist in the design, development, and ongoing modification of computerized health care systems. May educate staff and assist in problem solving to promote the implementation of the health care system.

Common job titles: Clinical Applications Specialist, Informatics Specialist, Clinical Applications Specialist, Principal Clinical Informaticist, Informatics Analyst, Health Informatics Program Coordinator

Counseling and Special Education

Specialized Health Educator

21-1091.XX

46.7% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 57,800
Potential New Occ Size: 26,995

This category included focuses on wellness or Alzheimer's. Although these categories are somewhat broad, they could be conducted in lifestyle setting rather than medical settings, like most of the other topic-specific terms that came out of certifications for this occupation. They also made up a significant share of jobs, appearing in 46.7% of postings (with some overlap with other

terms). Like other health support occupations, setting may make a significant difference in the nature of this work and may be worth considering in future coding of this occupation.

Common job titles: Health Educator, Health Program Representative, consistent with other categories in the occupation

Behavioral and Human Services Assistants 21-1093.XX	24.1% of parent SOC postings OEWS Natl Employment: 409,310 Potential New Occ Size: 98,638
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This category uses the search terms human services and neurofeedback. Neurofeedback appeared very infrequently. It made up the largest single category of the occupation, which covers a very diverse array of work, but still only appeared in 24.1% of openings. Job titles were more varied for the categories than in most occupations, as well.

Common job titles: Supports Broker, Community Liaison, Case Manager, Eligibility Coordinator, Direct Support Professional, Client Access Representative, Support Coordinator, Wellness Advocate

Manufacturing

Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators 51-8031		
	Water Distribution	42.7% of parent SOC postings OEWS Natl Employment: 120,710 Potential New Occ Size: 51,518
	Wastewater Treatment	66.7% of parent SOC postings OEWS Natl Employment: 120,710 Potential New Occ Size: 80,549

In Occupational Licenses, there is also often a distinction with states offering separate “Distribution system” licenses and “Water Treatment” licenses. Of the 40 states that offer some kind of license that gets assigned to the code, 37 offer a license that is specific to wastewater treatment, 23 offer a license that is specific to water distribution, and only two offer only a combined license that cover both areas of specialization. In skills, education, and preparation for the two areas, there is a lot of overlap and early in the career path there are opportunities to switch between them. However, the settings and equipment are ultimately different. ONET does not attempt to split the two. With 120,710 nationwide positions and a split in job openings based on terms of potentially 60-40, it may make sense to begin investigating if it’s possible to collect data about the differences in these two areas of specialization.

Common job titles: Water Treatment Operator or Wastewater Operator, Water Resource Recovery Operator

Quality Control Systems Managers

11-3051.01

56.1% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 222,890
Potential New Occ Size: 125,110

Plan, direct, or coordinate quality assurance programs. Formulate quality control policies and control quality of laboratory and production efforts.

Common job titles: Quality Manager, Quality Assurance Manager, Continuous Improvement Manager, Quality Systems Manager, Quality Improvement Manager, Quality Control Manager (QCM), Quality Assurance Supervisors, Quality Assurance Leads, Directors of Quality Assurance, Quality Control Supervisors, Directors of Quality, Quality Supervisors

Supply Chain Managers

11-3071.04

36.5% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 222,890
Potential New Occ Size: 72,638

Direct or coordinate production, purchasing, warehousing, distribution, or financial forecasting services or activities to limit costs and improve accuracy, customer service, or safety. Examine existing procedures or opportunities for streamlining activities to meet product distribution needs. Direct the movement, storage, or processing of inventory.

Common job titles: Planning Inventory Manager, Supply Chain Architect, Supply Chain Director, Inventory Control Manager, Supply Operations Program Manager, Director Supply Chain Planning, Supply Chain Solutions Director, Replenishment Managers, Logistics Managers, Parts Managers, Materials Managers, Directors of Supply Chain, Inventory Managers, Logistics Supervisors, Automotive Parts Managers, Demand Planning Managers

Manufacturing Engineers

17-2112.03

33.4% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 332,870
Potential New Occ Size: 111,142

Design, integrate, or improve manufacturing systems or related processes. May work with commercial or industrial designers to refine product designs to increase producibility and decrease costs.

Common job titles: Process Engineer, Lead Product Engineer, Operations Improvement Engineer, Product Delivery Engineer, Product Design Lead, Design Engineers, Manufacturing Process Engineers, Process Engineers, Manufacturing Automation Engineers, Manufacturing Controls Engineers, Controls Engineers

Regulatory Affairs Specialists

13-1041.07

19.9% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 383,620
Potential New Occ Size: 76,292

Coordinate and document internal regulatory processes, such as internal audits, inspections, license renewals, or registrations. May compile and prepare materials for submission to regulatory agencies.

Common job titles: Regulatory Compliance Oversight Analyst, Regulatory Affairs Associate, Regulatory Analyst, Regulatory Coordinator, Regulatory Associates, Regulatory Reporting Analysts, Regulatory Scientists, Regulatory Reporting Specialists, Global Regulatory Leads

Quality Control Analysts

19-4099.01

72.4% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 72,230
Potential New Occ Size: 52,266

Conduct tests to determine quality of raw materials, bulk intermediate and finished products. May conduct stability sample tests.

Common job titles: Quality Assurance Analyst, Quality Control Associate, Quality Control Admin, Quality Assurance Associate, Quality Assurance Specialist, QA/QC Tech, Quality Lab Tech, Lab/Quality Control, Quality Control Specialists, Quality Control Laboratory Analysts, Test Analysts, IT Quality Control Analysts, Quality Control Chemists, Quality Assurance Testing Analysts

Regulatory Affairs Managers

11-9199.01

5.8% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 589,750
Potential New Occ Size: 34,362

Plan, direct, or coordinate production activities of an organization to ensure compliance with regulations and standard operating procedures.

Common job titles: Regulatory Affairs Director, Regulatory Compliance Expert, Regulatory Strategic Planning, Regulatory Product Manager, Product Stewardship Manager, Regulatory Strategist, Regulatory Reporting Managers, Associate Directors of Regulatory Affairs, Regulatory Managers, Regulatory Oversight Managers, Regulatory Directors

Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators

51-9161.00

OEWS Natl Employment: 187,670

This is not a new code, however, findings from this research indicate that a large majority of metal- and plastic-working occupations (51-402X.00) reference multiple tool types and the use of CNC machines specifically and could be coded in either 51-9161 or a 51-402X code. Although there remains a lot of detail in the hierarchy, the distinction between the codes is becoming less and job seekers may consider widening their searches to include related occupations or to focus on Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators. 51-4041.00 Machinists and 51-9162.00 CNC Programmers remain distinct but may offer opportunities for advancement for workers in related occupations.

Common job titles: machine, lathe, cnc

Information Technology

Information Technology Project Managers

15-1299.09

41.3% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 437,170
Potential New Occ Size: 180,551

Plan, initiate, and manage information technology (IT) projects. Lead and guide the work of technical staff. Serve as liaison between business and technical aspects of projects. Plan project

stages and assess business implications for each stage. Monitor progress to assure deadlines, standards, and cost targets are met.

Common job titles: Program Manager, Scrum Master, Agile Project Lead, Senior Data and Quality Coordinator, Applications Team Lead, Project Coordinator, Product Owners, Agile Coaches, IT Managers, Technical Leads

Business Intelligence Analysts

15-2051.01

75.1% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 192,710
Potential New Occ Size: 144,766

Produce financial and market intelligence by querying data repositories and generating periodic reports. Devise methods for identifying data patterns and trends in available information sources.

Common job titles: Business Intelligence Developer, Data Wrangler, Data Visualization Analyst, Data Analytics Manager, Analytics Analyst, Data Steward, Analytics Developer, PowerBI Developer, Enterprise Data and Analytics, Data Management Analysts, Data Modelers, Data Quality Analysts, Solutions Architects

Geographic Information Systems Technologists & Technicians

15-1299.02

2.2% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 437,170
Potential New Occ Size: 9,536

Assist scientists or related professionals in building, maintaining, modifying, or using geographic information systems (GIS) databases. May also perform some custom application development or provide user support.

Common job titles: GIS Analyst, GIS Specialist, Cartographic Technician, Digital Engineering Analyst, Geospatial Data Engineer, GIS Professional, Mapping Coordinator, GIS/Database Technician, Geospatial Analyst, GIS Editor, GIS Strategist, GIS Technicians, GIS Administrators, GIS Developers, GIS/CAD Technicians, GIS Engineers

Artificial Intelligence Engineer

Identified in ESCO

2.3% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 192,710
Potential New Occ Size: 4,366

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Engineers design, develop, and implement machine learning models, algorithms, and AI-driven systems to solve complex problems across industries. They work with large datasets, optimize AI models for accuracy and efficiency, and integrate AI solutions into software applications. AI Engineers collaborate with data scientists, software developers, and domain experts to create intelligent systems that can process and analyze data, make predictions, and automate tasks.

Common job titles: Artificial Intelligence Engineers, Machine Learning Engineers, Machine Learning Scientist, Machine Learning Data Engineers, Machine Learning Developers, Machine

Learning Managers, Machine Learning Research Scientist, Lead Machine Learning Engineers, Deep Learning Engineers, Machine Learning Architects

Clean Energy and Transportation

Water/Wastewater Engineers

17-2051.02

11.7% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 327,950
Potential New Occ Size: 38,482

Design or oversee projects involving provision of potable water, disposal of wastewater and sewage, or prevention of flood-related damage. Prepare environmental documentation for water resources, regulatory program compliance, data management and analysis, and field work. Perform hydraulic modeling and pipeline design.

Common job titles: Industrial Water/Wastewater Project Manager, Water Resources Engineer, Water/Wastewater Civil Engineer, Drinking Water Process Engineer, Industrial Water Process Engineer, Civil Water Process Engineer, Water/Wastewater Treatment Process Engineer, Stormwater Engineers, Water/Wastewater Project Engineers, Civil Water Engineers, Stormwater Managers, Water Resources Project Engineers

Transportation Planners

19-3099.01

91.2% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 35,210
Potential New Occ Size: 32,122

Prepare studies for proposed transportation projects. Gather, compile, and analyze data. Study the use and operation of transportation systems. Develop transportation models or simulations.

Common job titles: Transportation Modeler and Forecaster, Transportation Analyst, Transportation Specialists (These are nearly universally Transportation Planners)

Solar Sales Representatives and Assessors

41-4011.07

3.7% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 311,780
Potential New Occ Size: 11,615

Contact new or existing customers to determine their solar equipment needs, suggest systems or equipment, or estimate costs.

Common job titles: Solar Sales Advisor, Energy Services Sales Representative, Solar Energy Coordinator, Virtual Solar Consultant, Solar Sales Consultant, Solar Sales Specialists, Residential Solar Consultants

Transportation Engineers

17-2051.01

7.9% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 327,950
Potential New Occ Size: 25,888

Develop plans for surface transportation projects, according to established engineering standards and state or federal construction policy. Prepare designs, specifications, or estimates for transportation facilities. Plan modifications of existing streets, highways, or freeways to improve traffic flow.

Common job titles: Traffic Engineer, Transportation Project Manager, Urban Freeway Manager, Civil Engineer, Traffic Design Engineer, Highway Engineer, Roadway Engineers, Transportation Engineering Managers, Roadway Project Engineers

All Other Occupations

Robotics Engineers

17-2199.08

23.2% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 150,990
Potential New Occ Size: 35,057

Terms related to Automation, Robotics, and System Integration found a potential occupation size that is larger than several existing engineering occupations.

Common job titles: Robotics Application Engineer, Robotics Autonomy Engineer (Nearly all called Robotics Engineers)

Security Managers

11-3013.01

30.1% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 1,103,440
Potential New Occ Size: 331,667

Security terms appear to primarily be managers or people engaged in developing security strategy rather than security guards. ONET has a code for this, 11-3013.01 Security Managers. Terms relating to security appear in 30.1% of job postings in this occupation, and if that ratio is applied to the 1.1 million OEWS jobs in the parent occupation then Security Managers would cover 331,667 jobs.

Common job titles: Director of Security, Manager of Security Operations, Manager Corporate Security, Federal Security Manager, Director of Security Compliance, Safety and Security Festival Manager, Director of Security Operations, Manager of Gaming Security, Nuclear Security Manager, Industrial Security Manager

Compliance Managers

11-9199.02

44.8% of parent SOC postings
OEWS Natl Employment: 589,750
Potential New Occ Size: 264,295

ONET breaks this out as a separate code, 11-9199.02 Compliance Managers. If the ratio found in postings is applied to the 589,750 OEWS jobs in the parent occupation 11-9199, this occupation would contain 264,295 jobs, which is a substantially sized occupation in itself.

Common job titles: Compliance Coordinator, Trade Compliance Manager, Regulatory Compliance Manager, Quality and Compliance Director, Compliance Risk Consultant