

ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) defines the “Health Care and Social Assistance” super-sector as consisting of four sub-sectors:

- Ambulatory health care services
- Hospitals
- Nursing and residential care facilities
- Social assistance

Additionally, BLS reports employment and wages for each sector according to each individual firm’s ownership. These include:

- Private employers
- Local government
- State government
- Federal government

Employment and wage figures reported in the *Competitive Realities* report presented to the Steering Committee on March 19th reflected only a portion of Lenoir-Caldwell County’s health care employment: private sector data for “Ambulatory health care services” and “Nursing and residential care facilities.” Government employment for these sectors, in addition to the “Social assistance” sub-sector was suppressed due to privacy issues. This data is based on business sector, not occupational data. BLS also suppressed all employment in the “Hospitals” sub-sector. The following chart outlines the available local employment and wage data for the “Health Care and Social Assistance” sub-sectors.

**Lenoir-Caldwell County
Employment and Wages by Health Care and Social Assistance Sub-Sectors, Q1 2007**

Business Sector	Ownership	Q1 2007 Employment			Average Annual Wage			
		Number	Change since Q1 2005	Establishments	Q1 2005 Wage	Q1 2007 Wage	Change Since Q1 2005	US Q1 2007 Wage
Total, all industries	Total	27,241	(2,467)	1,465	\$26,962	\$29,679	\$2,717	\$46,022
NAICS 621 Ambulatory health care services	Local Government	ND	ND	4	\$24,621	ND	ND	\$37,117
NAICS 621 Ambulatory health care services	Private	1260	473	63	\$30,430	\$27,663	-\$2,766	\$46,155
NAICS 622 Hospitals	Private	ND	ND	3	ND	ND	ND	\$47,038
NAICS 623 Nursing and residential care facilities	Private	768	ND	17	ND	\$18,453	ND	\$25,192
NAICS 624 Social assistance	Private	ND	ND	35	\$15,113	ND	ND	\$21,081
NAICS 624 Social assistance	State Government	ND	ND	1	ND	ND	ND	\$37,698

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
ND=Not disclosed due to privacy issues

The Employment Security Commission of North Carolina’s Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OES) program collects information on employment and wages by occupation through a semi-annual survey of North Carolina industries. This data is based on occupational classification only, not by business sector. The annually published data includes estimates of the number of workers and entry, average, and experienced wages by occupation for North Carolina, Statewide by Industry, the 14 Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), 24 Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), seven Economic Development Regions (EDRs), and counties. Confidentiality requirements must be met before data is published in the smaller geographical areas.

Caldwell County, Annual Health Occupational Release Wages, 2006 Rates

SOC	Description	Estimated Employment	Estimated Entry Wage	Estimated Avenue Wage	Estimated Experienced Wage
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	610	\$ 24,977	\$ 41,272	\$ 49,419
29-1051	Pharmacists	**	\$ 54,760	\$ 83,128	\$ 97,312
29-1111	Registered Nurses	**	\$ 38,850	\$ 45,328	\$ 48,567
29-1123	Physical Therapists	**	\$ 37,125	\$ 53,025	\$ 60,974
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	**	\$ 18,279	\$ 22,113	\$ 24,030
29-2071	Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	30	\$ 19,606	\$ 25,757	\$ 28,832
Healthcare Support Occupations					
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations		\$ 15,042	\$ 19,148	\$ 21,202
31-1011	Home Health Aides	560	\$ 14,404	\$ 16,603	\$ 17,702
31-1012	Nursing Aides, orderlies, and Attendants	**	\$ 18,217	\$ 21,478	\$ 23,109
31-9092	Medical Assistants	**	\$ 19,950	\$ 23,617	\$ 25,451

Average Annual Wage	\$ 23,623	\$ 35,147	\$ 34,718
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Source: Employment Security Commission of North Carolina, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
 ** Indicates data items are either not available or not releasable

The table below includes Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA healthcare occupations and annual wage data that were not available for the County. It identifies additional healthcare occupations that have strong growth potential. This table provides a more comprehensive representation of the diversity in healthcare occupations and wages.

Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA, Annual Health Occupational Release Wages, 2006 Rates

SOC	Description	Estimated Employment	Estimated Entry Wage	Estimated Avenue Wage	Estimated Experienced Wage
<i>Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations</i>					
29-0000	Dentists, General	**	\$ 74,501	\$ 118,645	\$ 140,718
29-1051	Family & General Practitioners	150	\$ 118,864	\$ 151,145	\$ 167,286
29-1111	Internists, General	**	\$ 131,029	\$ 148,210	\$ 156,801
29-1123	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	80	\$ 83,825	\$ 132,334	\$ 156,589
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	50	\$ 41,936	\$ 54,729	\$ 61,126
29-2011	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	90	\$ 35,318	\$ 45,040	\$ 49,900
29-2012	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	120	\$ 22,539	\$ 30,698	\$ 34,777
29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	240	\$ 17,537	\$ 27,138	\$ 31,938
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	580	\$ 29,915	\$ 35,501	\$ 38,293
29-2081	Opticians, Dispensing	50	\$ 24,640	\$ 33,815	\$ 38,403
<i>Healthcare Support Occupations</i>					
31-2011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	40	\$ 28,548	\$ 37,123	\$ 41,411
31-2021	Physical therapist Assistants	70	\$ 29,917	\$ 36,027	\$ 39,082
31-2022	Physical Therapist Aides	20	\$ 20,104	\$ 23,073	\$ 24,557
31-9091	Dental Assistants	250	\$ 24,959	\$ 30,361	\$ 33,062

Source: Employment Security Commission of North Carolina, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
 ** Indicates data items are either not available or not releasable

COST OF LIVING

C₂ER (formerly ACCRA), a national community and economic development research organization, publishes quarterly cost of living indices for metropolitan communities across the nation. While the data provide some indication about the cost of living differences between regions, they do not provide direct comparison of actual costs in metro areas.

The health care component of the composite index consists of five elements.

- Three are routine office visits involving an optometrist, doctor, and dentist. In all three cases, visits are for an established patient, not a new patient.
 - For the optometrist C₂ER asks for a full eye exam including a glaucoma test and dilation test.
 - The doctor visit is for a routine office visit for an adult patient C₂ER specifies AMA procedure number 99213.
 - The dentist visit is for a routine dental checkup for an adult patient. C₂ER specifies ADA procedure number 01110. X-rays are not included.
- The remaining items are a non-prescription medication, 200 mg. 50 tablet jar of Advil, and a prescription medication, Lipitor, 20 mg. 30 tablets.

Cost of Living Comparison, Total and Components, 3rd Quarter 2007*

Metro Area	Composite Index	Grocery	Housing	Utilities	Transportation	Health Care	Misc.
Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton, NC	95.7	102.5	91.1	94.3	90.2	98.8	98.3
Martinsville, VA	87.4	93.1	74.1	106.8	81.3	96.9	91.1
Paducah, KY-IL	92.2	95.7	81.1	107.7	91.8	88.1	95.9
Tupelo, MS	89.1	91.4	74.0	105.1	94.6	91.1	93.9

Source: C₂ER

100=National Average

*Percentage each category contributes to the overall cost of living: total (100%), grocery (13%), housing (30%), utilities (9%), transportation (9%), health care (4%), and miscellaneous goods and services (35%).