

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
OFFICE OF FOREIGN LABOR CERTIFICATION
Prevailing Wages for Standard Occupations: July 2020 Wage Year
Frequently Asked Questions
ROUND 2¹
June 23, 2020

1. Will the Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) be using the most recent 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system occupations for the July 2020 through June 2021 wage year?

No. OFLC will continue using the 2010 SOC occupations for the July 2020 wage year, which runs from July 2020 through June 2021. OFLC will apply the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey (OES) 2019 Hybrid Structure wage estimates that are generated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for these 2010 SOC occupations. For the July 2020 wage year, OFLC will apply the crosswalks provided by BLS that are available in the OES table at https://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_2019_hybrid_structure.xlsx. Because the occupational codes and titles in the OES table may not always show an exact match (*i.e.*, a 2010 SOC occupational code or title may not match an OES 2019 Hybrid Structure occupational code or title), OFLC will publish release notes to address situations where there is no direct match.

For example, the 2018 SOC occupation 35-3023, Fast Food and Counter Workers, was created by merging the 2010 SOC occupation 35-3021, Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food, with the 2010 SOC occupation 35-3022, Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop. As reflected in the OES table mentioned above, the OES 2019 Hybrid Structure has wage estimates for the 2018 SOC occupation 35-3023, but does not have wage values for the 2010 SOC occupations 35-2021 and 35-3022. This scenario and other scenarios will be discussed further in technical release notes to be posted in July as part of OFLC's routine announcement implementing updated prevailing wages for the new wage year.

2. When will OFLC begin issuing prevailing wage determinations using 2018 SOC occupations?

OFLC plans to begin issuing prevailing wage determinations using the 2018 SOC occupations in July 2021 through June 2022 wage year. Currently, the Occupational Information Network (O*NET, <https://www.onetonline.org/>) does not have the necessary occupational data (*e.g.*, job zones and education) for the 2018 SOC occupations. According to O*NET, occupational data for the 2018 SOC will be released in November 2020. Once this data is available, OFLC will

¹ "NPWHC FAQs Round 1" published in March 2010 regarding the processing of prevailing wage determinations. See https://www.foreignlaborcert.doleta.gov/faqs_pdf.cfm.

integrate the data into its systems and train staff members on the use of the 2018 SOC occupations with O*NET data.

3. Will OFLC provide technical release notes showing what OES 2019 Hybrid Structure wages estimates will be used for 2010 SOC occupations?

Yes. OFLC plans to publish technical release notes related to wage data for hybrid occupations based on information from the OES program, including the OES table at https://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_2019_hybrid_structure.xlsx that contains crosswalks between SOC occupations and the OES 2019 Hybrid Structure wage estimates. These technical release notes will be posted in July 2020 as part of the OFLC announcement for the new wage year.