

## Middle Region's Economy, 2022-2023

Total employment in the Middle Region, increased from 1,325,718 to 1,369,675, an increase of 3.3 percent or 43,957 jobs . This increase in employment is congruent with the trend of the state of Tennessee. Last year the area showed an increase on employment as well. From 2022 to 2023 the Clarksville- Hopkinsville TN\_KY MSA added 2,500 jobs (2.5 percent growth) and the Nashville MSA added 32,900 jobs (2.9 percent growth) fueling economic growth in the region.

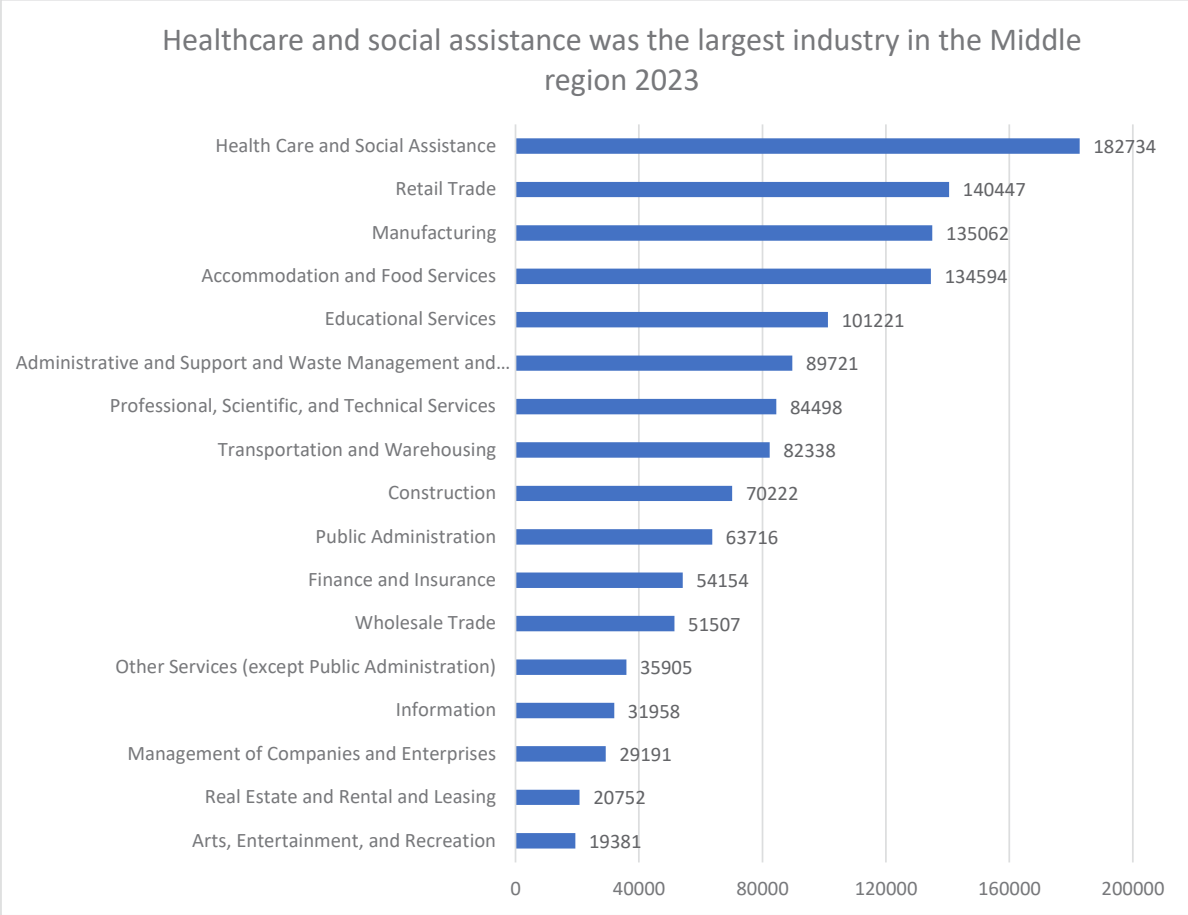
The Middle Region consists of three Local Workforce Development Areas: Northern Middle, Southern Middle, and Upper Cumberland, encompassing a total of 39 counties (see Appendix). The number of establishments showed an increase in 2023 to 102,926 from 97,982 in 2022. Total payroll in the Middle region increased to \$91.4B up from 85.9B from the previous year. This was the second consecutive year in which payroll increased at this pace in the Middle Region.

The average annual industry wage in the region, calculated by dividing the total payroll by the average number of workers, was \$66,717, which represented a 21 percent increase from the previous year. This was the second consecutive year in which the Middle region's average annual salary increased at a rate greater than 20%. In 2023, the median occupational wage for the Middle region was \$45,406 This represented an increase of 9.3 percent from last year's \$41,530. This is a continuing trend for this region, as last year it also experienced a significant increase in wages.

Unemployment in the region was 2.9 percent in 2023, a decrease from 3.0 in 2022. Youth unemployment in 2022 (the latest available) remained below the state average at 8.43 percent. The percent of those individuals who are unemployed with a disability also fell in the Middle region to 15.41 percent. This represents a slight decrease in from the year prior. The percent of individuals not in the labor force with a disability also declined to 28.1 from 32.1 in the region last year. This percent is also slightly lower than the state of Tennessee's.

**To summarize:** In 2023 compared to 2022, the Middle Region saw an increase in employment.

Payroll increased, at a similar pace than it did in the region in the previous year. This was also the case for the median wage in the region, which saw a more significant increase than in the previous year. In 2023, unemployment rates overall and for youth and those in poverty remained lower than state rates.



Source: TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development, WIRED Division, QCEW July 2024

Figure 19

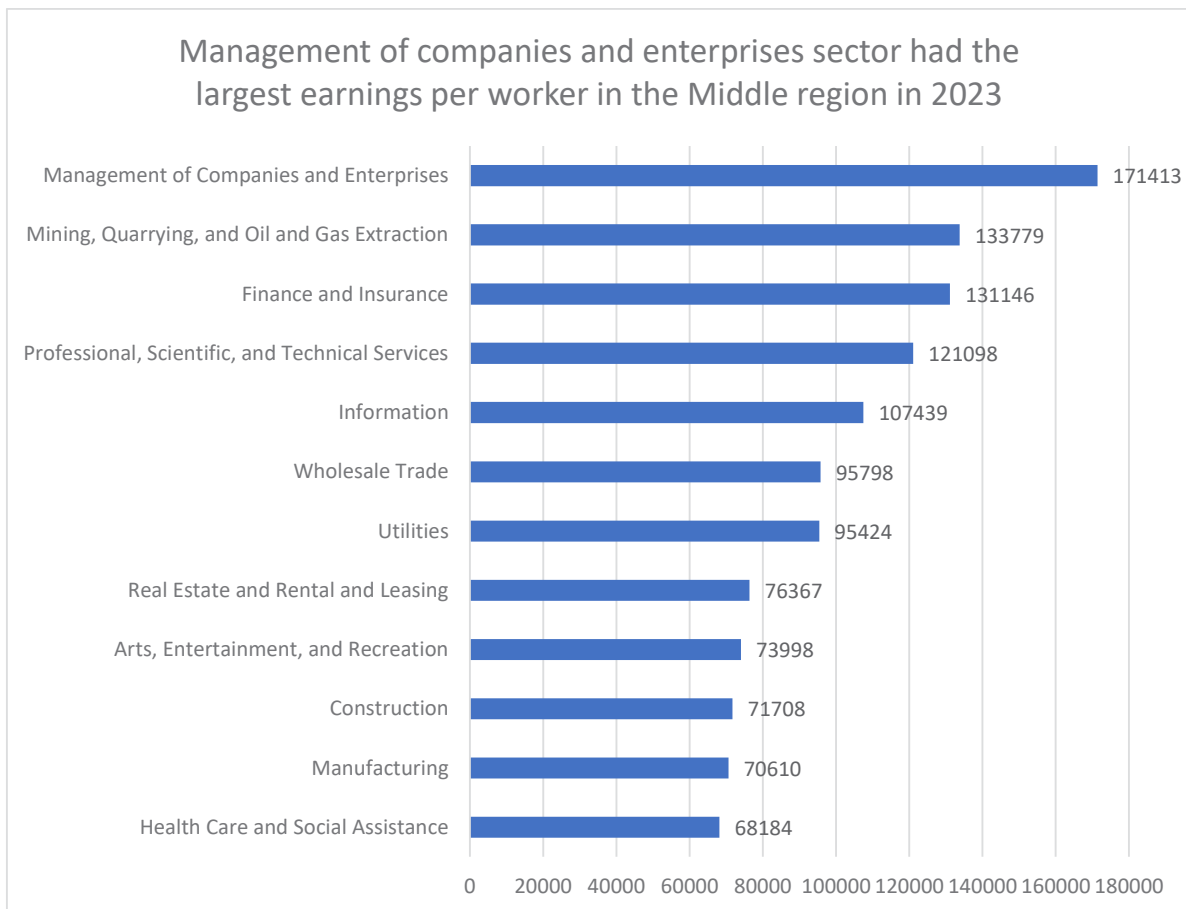
### Middle TN Industry Employment and Wages (2018-2023)

Total employment in the Middle Region in 2023 was 1,369,675. The five largest industry sectors in 2023 were:

- Health care and social assistance (182,734 jobs)
- Retail trade (140,447)
- Manufacturing (135,062)
- Accommodation and Food Services (134,594)

- Educational Services (101,221)

Compared to 2018, the industries adding the most workers include transportation and warehousing (over 20,000 new jobs). Professional, scientific, and technical services and construction have both added over 15,000 jobs each since 2018, with health care and social assistance adding nearly 14,000. Although it is the region’s fourth largest industry by employment, manufacturing is the only industry sector that lost employment in the Middle Region since 2018. However, a year-by-year analysis indicates a slow recovery as projects expand. All industry sectors saw a nominal increase from their pre-pandemic earnings per worker, except for arts, entertainment, and recreation. The largest increases in earnings per worker were in the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas expansion, management of companies and enterprises and information industry sectors. These three industries have seen their earnings per worker increase more than 45 percent from the pre-pandemic earnings. The industries with the highest earnings per worker were management of companies and enterprises, mining, and finance and insurance.



Source: TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development, WIRED Division, QCEW, July 2024

Figure 20

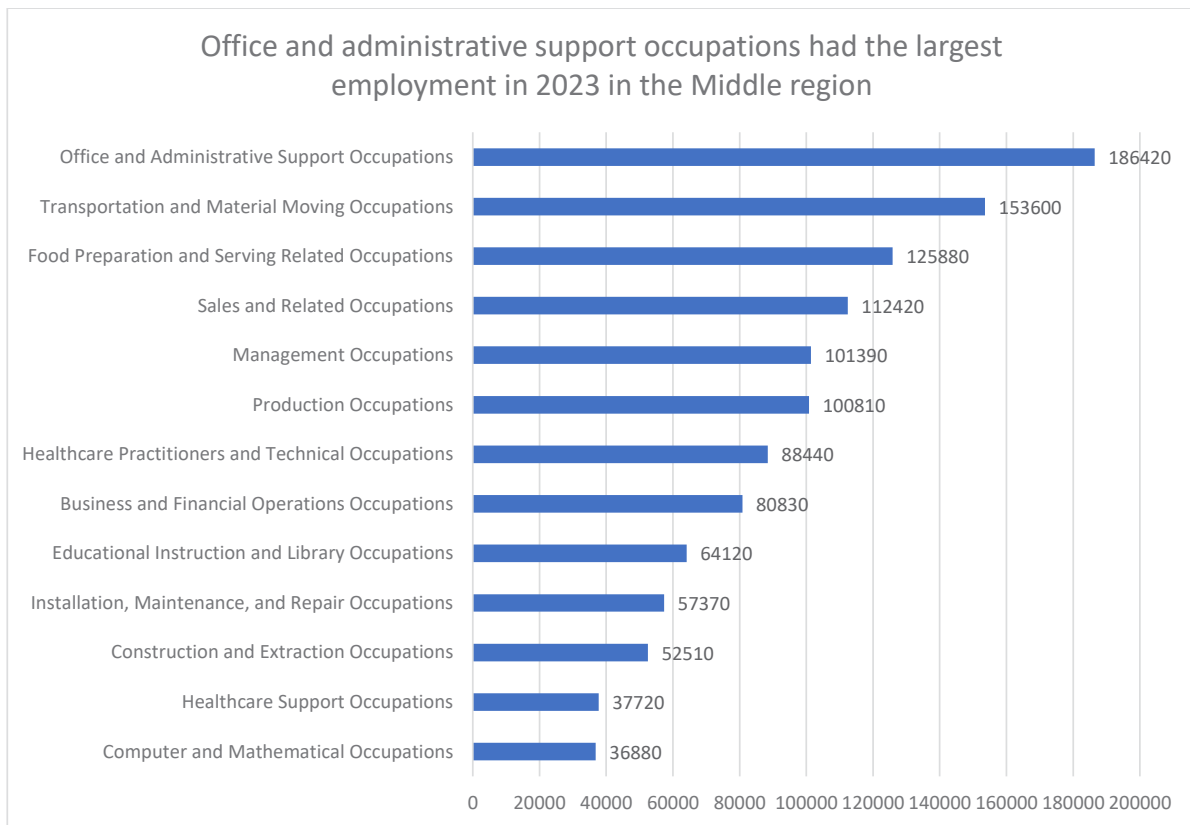
**Table 18: Fastest Growing Industries in the Middle Region are Transportation and Warehousing and Information**

Middle Region Industries	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2018 Earnings Per Worker	2023 Earnings Per Worker	% Change in Earnings Per Worker
Accommodation and Food Services	127,583	134,594	7,011	5%	20,837.80	28,121.99	35%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	89,231	89,721	490	1%	37,439.42	55,181.86	47%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3,151	3,370	219	7%	33,960.20	41,589.53	22%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	17,339	19,381	2,042	12%	76,407.32	73,997.91	-3%
Construction	55,189	70,222	15,033	27%	58,636.95	71,708.12	22%
Educational Services	93,940	101,221	7,281	8%	44,467.36	53,515.44	20%
Finance and Insurance	50,898	54,154	3,256	6%	90,548.57	131,145.73	45%
Health Care and Social Assistance	168,988	182,734	13,746	8%	56,048.13	68,183.88	22%
Information	24,247	31,958	7,711	32%	72,040.91	107,439.18	49%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	23,081	29,191	6,110	26%	114,324.21	171,412.81	50%
Manufacturing	135,930	135,062	-868	-1%	57,468.46	70,609.51	23%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,682	1,971	289	17%	83,481.72	133,778.68	60%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	34,579	35,905	1,326	4%	35,261.28	48,470.45	37%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	69,281	84,498	15,217	22%	88,958.21	121,098.31	36%
Public Administration	61,889	63,716	1,827	3%	50,057.19	63,309.68	26%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	19,490	20,752	1,262	6%	53,455.13	76,366.75	43%
Retail Trade	136,210	140,447	4,237	3%	32,758.24	41,565.28	27%
Transportation and Warehousing	62,057	82,338	20,281	33%	48,821.14	61,173.83	25%
Utilities	6,940	7,484	544	8%	75,741.87	95,423.63	26%
Wholesale Trade	45,591	51,507	5,916	13%	73,210.30	95,797.62	31%

Source: TN Dept of Labor and Workforce, QCEW

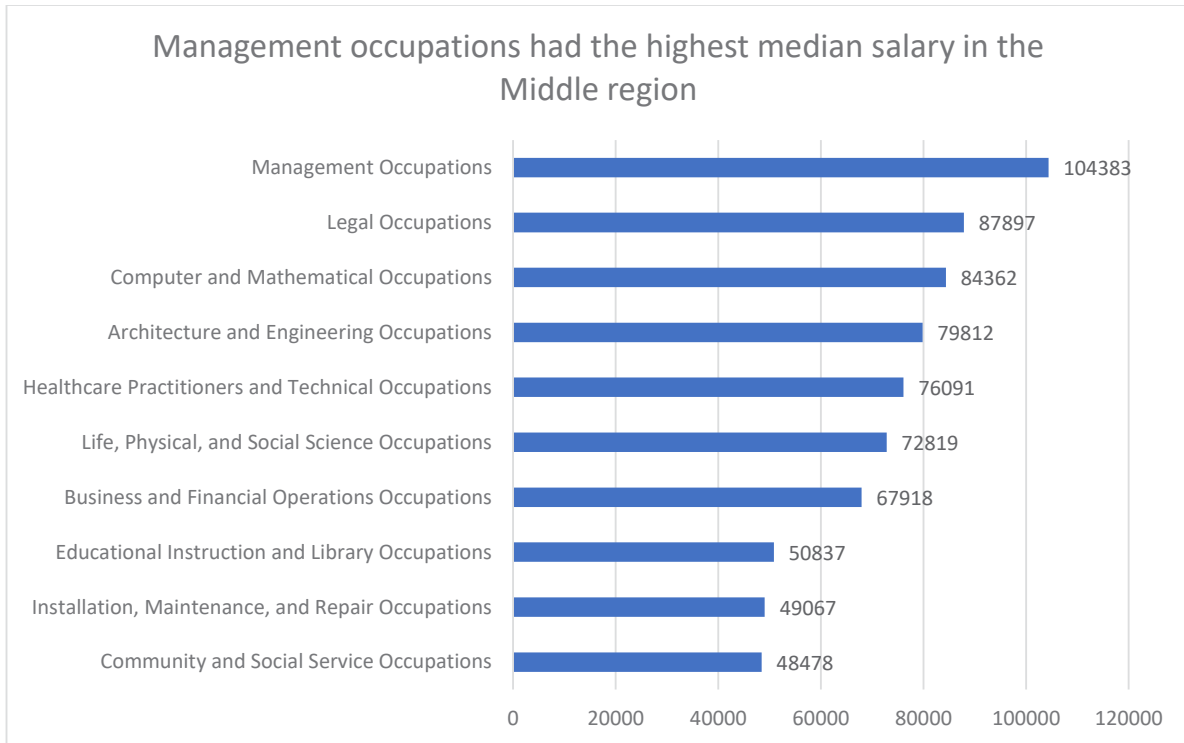
## Middle Region Occupational Employment

The office and administrative support occupational group remains the largest in the Middle Region, according to the Occupational Employment and Wages Survey for 2023, which provides data on all industries except agriculture and the self-employed. Employment in this group in May 2023 was 186,420, decreasing employment by 3,000 jobs over the 8-year period. Transportation and material moving occupations, food preparation, and sales occupations were next in total numbers of jobs. The highest percentages of job growth were in the business and financial, transportation and material moving, and computer and mathematical major job groups.



Source: TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development, WIRED Division, OEWS, May 2023, top occupational groups by employment

Figure 21



Source: TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development, WIRED, OEWS, May 2023, top occupational groups by salary

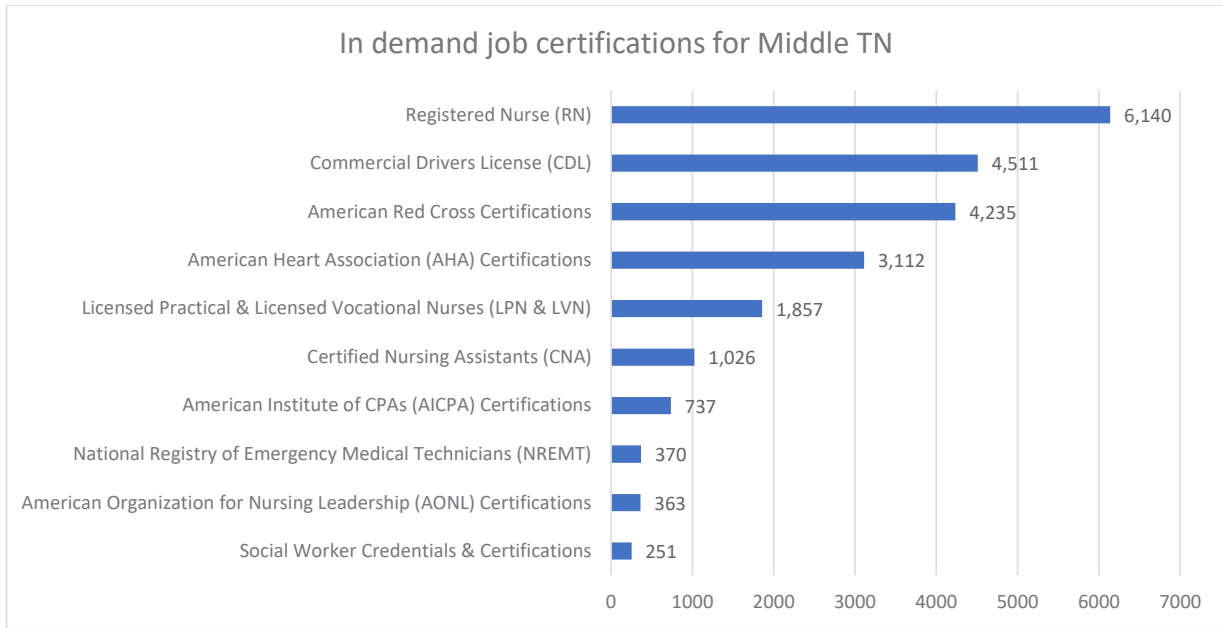
Figure 22

The TDLWD jobs4tn.gov web site tracks the top in-demand job certifications and tools and technologies from its advertised jobs database, updated every day. The table below shows the most requested certifications, including CPR, nursing credentials, and commercial driver license certifications. For July 2024, most requested technologies in the Middle Region include facility with Microsoft Office and Power Point, Word, and SQL query language, operation of cash registers and forklifts, and use of personal protective equipment. Of the top 10 employers posting jobs in the Middle Region in July 2024, 8 included hospitals and other healthcare institutions. Reflecting the top occupational groups and those adding the newest jobs, top job postings in the region included healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, management, transportation, and material moving, sales, office, and food preparation.

**Table 19: Middle Region Occupational Job Growth 2015-2023**

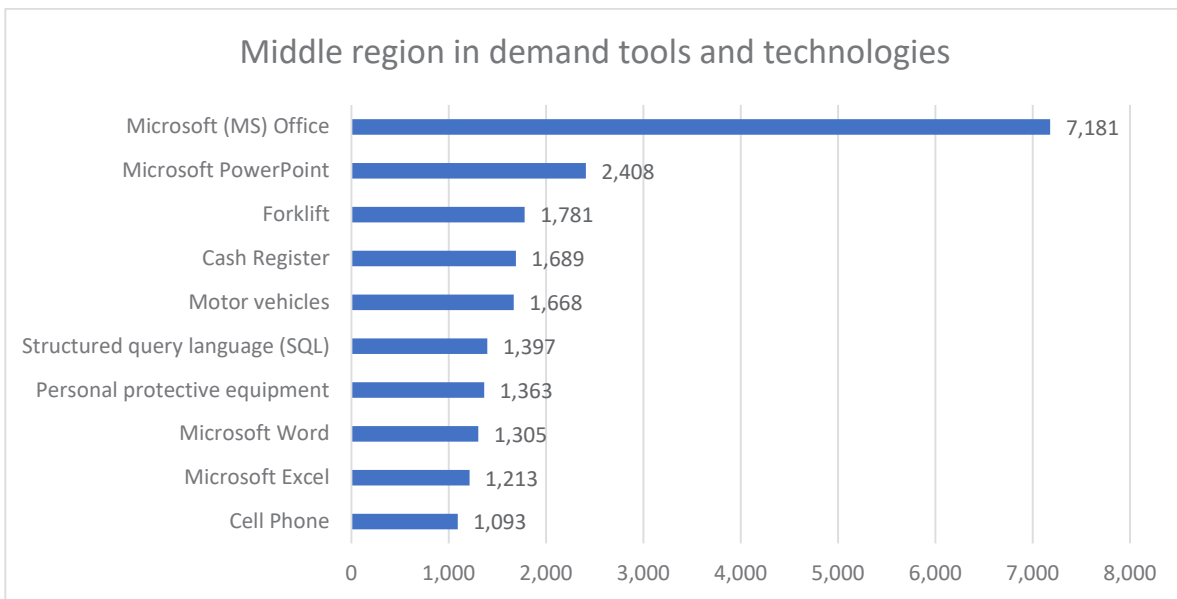
Middle TN Region Occupational Group	May 2015 Jobs	May 2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2023 Median Hourly Earnings
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	16,690	15,040	-1,650	-10%	38.37
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	15,140	19,350	4,210	28%	22.59
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	29,020	32,700	3,680	13%	16.41
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	48,390	80,830	32,440	67%	32.65
Community and Social Service Occupations	12,130	16,950	4,820	40%	23.31
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	23,120	36,880	13,760	60%	40.56
Construction and Extraction Occupations	34,270	52,510	18,240	53%	23.23
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	59,690	64,120	4,430	7%	24.44
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	1,330	1,720	390	29%	17.38
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	103,380	125,880	22,500	22%	14.32
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	70,080	88,440	18,360	26%	36.58
Healthcare Support Occupations	31,460	37,720	6,260	20%	17.29
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	48,500	57,370	8,870	18%	23.59
Legal Occupations	6,830	8,960	2,130	31%	42.26
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	5,640	8,350	2,710	48%	35.01
Management Occupations	72,020	101,390	29,370	41%	50.18
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	189,450	186,420	-3,030	-2%	20.48
Personal Care and Service Occupations	25,270	24,920	-350	-1%	14.40
Production Occupations	104,070	100,810	-3,260	-3%	19.97
Protective Service Occupations	23,890	30,030	6,140	26%	20.89
Sales and Related Occupations	111,400	112,420	1,020	1%	16.74
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	92,170	153,600	61,430	67%	18.28

Source: TN Dept of Labor and Workforce, OEWS, May 2015 and May 2023



Source: Online advertised jobs data

Figure 23



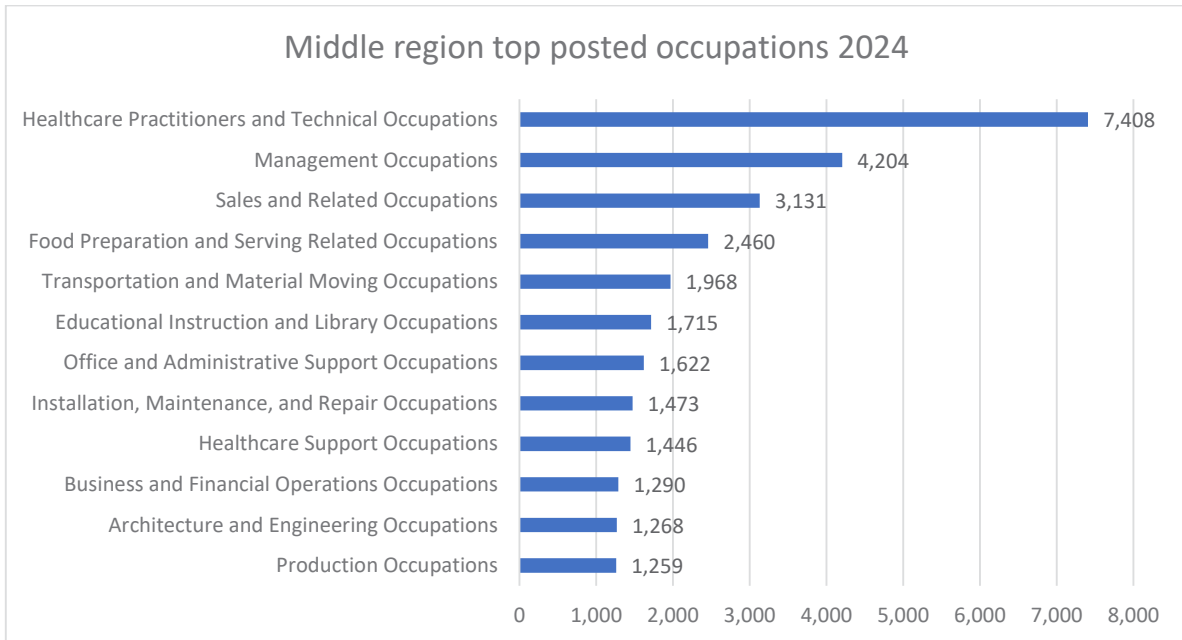
Source: Online advertised jobs data

Figure 24

**Table 20: Middle Region Top Employers by Number of Job Openings**

Rank	Employer Name	Job Openings
1	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	1,356
2	Vanderbilt University Medical Center	1,291
3	Ascension	655
4	HCA Healthcare, Inc.	577
5	CrowdStrike	572
6	The Kroger Co.	448
7	National HealthCare Corporation	380
8	McDonald's Corporation	348
9	Sonic Corp.	348
10	LHC Group, Inc.	315

Source: Online advertised jobs data  
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Source: Online advertised jobs data  
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Figure 25

**Table 21: Middle Region Labor Force**

Column 1	Upper Cumberland LWDA	Southern Middle LWDA	Northern Middle LWDA	Middle Region	State Total
Total Population 2022	372,024	481,777	2,153,724	3,007,525	7,051,339
Total Population 2023	378,274	489,664	2,185,289	3,053,227	7,126,489
Male Population 2022	181,451	239,136	1,043,727	1,464,314	3,459,277
Female Population 2022	190,573	242,641	1,109,997	1,543,211	3,667,212
Labor Force Participation Rate 2022 (5-Year Estimate)	52.10%	56.90%	67.20%	58.73%	58.60%
Labor Force Participation Rate 2023 (5-Year Estimate)	51.40%	56.30%	66.80%	58.17%	59.50%
Annual Average Unemployment Rate 2022 Percent	3.7%	3.3%	2.8%	3.0%	3.4%
Annual Average Unemployment Rate 2023 Percent	3.7%	3.2%	2.7%	2.9%	3.3%
Educational Attainment 25 Years and Over (2022) Some College Or Higher - Percent	43.70%	48.18%	66.54%	60.62%	57.79%
Poverty Estimate, All Ages, Percent (2022)	16.46%	13.49%	10.81%	11.96%	14.00%
Percentage of Unemployed with a Disability (2022)	18.57%	17.76%	14.43%	15.41%	16.10%
Percent of Those Not in the Labor Force with a Disability (2022)	36.42%	33.38%	24.75%	28.13%	32.00%

Source: TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development, WIRED Division, LAUS, and U.S. Census Bureau, ACS five-year estimates

**Table 22: Educational Attainment, 2022**

Educational Attainment	Middle Region White Only	Middle Region Black Only	Middle Region Hispanic or Latino Only	Statewide White Only	Statewide Black Only	Statewide Hispanic or Latino Only
Population 25 years and over	1,289,065	236,140	109,278	3,704,326	726,292	204,442
High school graduate only	402,779	69,735	32,371	1,170,342	246,808	57,346
Percent high school graduate only	31.25%	29.53%	29.62%	31.59%	33.98%	28.05%
High school graduate or higher	1,170,168	212,276	76,766	3,345,355	639,823	135,989
Percent high school graduate or higher	90.78%	89.89%	70.25%	90.31%	88.09%	66.52%
Bachelor's degree or higher	414,091	66,618	21,736	1,144,871	162,237	38,648
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	32.12%	28.21%	19.89%	30.91%	22.34%	18.90%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS five-year estimate 2022

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) in the Middle Region in 2023 was 58.17 percent, which represents a small decrease from 2022. For the state of Tennessee, LFPR increased to 59.50 percent. While the Middle Region's LFPR decreased, this represents a tendency that is contrary to state's LFPR. Two LWDA in the Middle region, including Northern Middle, the largest LWDA in the region decreased in LFPR. Unemployment rates remained lower than the average state rate in the Middle Region. The region's unemployment rate decreased from 3.0 in 2022 to 2.9 percent in 2023. This trend follows the state trend, as unemployment in Tennessee declined to 3.3 percent in 2023.

**Table 23: Middle Region Disability Status of Those in the Labor Force**

Area	Civilian Non-institutional Population	Total Labor Force	Total Employed	Employed W Disability	Employed W/O Disability	Total Unemployed	Unemployed W Disability	Unemployed W/O Disability
Upper Cumberland LWDA	209,943	149,311	142,579	10,886	131,693	6,732	1,250	5,482
Southern Middle LWDA	273,381	204,187	195,553	13,540	182,013	8,634	1,534	7,100
Northern Middle LWDA	1,309,005	1,052,617	1,010,041	62,321	947,720	42,576	6,147	36,429
Middle Region	1,792,329	1,406,115	1,348,173	86,747	1,261,426	57,942	8,931	49,011
Tennessee	4,170,846	3,174,114	3,016,358	200,005	2,816,353	157,756	25,408	132,348

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS five-year estimate 2022

The Upper Cumberland LWDA reported the lowest rate of educational attainment in 2023, with 43.7 percent of the population aged 25 years or more having some college or additional education. This is a decrease from 2022 as well. Overall, the Middle Region displays a higher level of educational achievement for adults with a bachelor's degree or higher aged 25 and above than the state, although just one of the areas has increased their rates of attainment since 2021. The Northern Middle LWDA's educational attainment is significantly larger than the state's. The percent of individuals who identify as Black had a similar attainment rate in 2022 as in 2021; the percent of Latinos who achieved a bachelor's degree aged 25 and above increased to 19.89%. This displays a slight increase from 2021.

The poverty rate saw a significant decrease in 2022 for the Middle Region. In 2022, the poverty rate for the region was over 11 percent. This continues a trend set in the region in the previous years. The highest poverty rate in the region was in the Upper Cumberland LWDA at 16.46 percent. Reducing poverty and increasing educational attainment remain key targets of workforce policy in this LWDA. The remaining LWDA's in this region show poverty estimates that are below the state average.

**Table 24: Disability Status of Those Not in the Labor Force, 2022**

Area	Civilian Non-institutional Population	Total Not in Labor Force	Not in Labor Force W Disability	Not In Labor Force W/O Disability	% W Disability	% W/O Disability
Upper Cumberland LWDA	209,943	60,632	22,081	38,551	36.42%	63.58%
Southern Middle LWDA	273,381	69,194	23,097	46,097	33.38%	66.62%
Northern Middle LWDA	1,309,005	256,388	63,466	192,922	24.75%	75.25%
Middle Region	1,792,329	386,214	108,644	277,570	28.13%	71.87%
Tennessee	4,170,846	996,732	319,284	677,448	32.03%	67.97%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS five-year estimate 2022

Like the state, about a third of those not in the labor force have a disability, with Upper Cumberland LWDA having the highest rate. In 2022 youth unemployment decreased from 9.89 in 2021 percent to 8.47 . As the area continues to recover from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, youth unemployment is an area that is expected to experience improvement.

**Table 25: Youth Unemployment 2022**

Area	Labor Force	Unemployment	Rate
Upper Cumberland LWDA	25,237	2,283	9.05%
Southern Middle LWDA	30,645	2,533	8.27%
Northern Middle LWDA	165,212	13,818	8.36%
Middle Region	221,094	18,634	8.43%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS five-year estimates

**Table 26: Significant Barriers to Employment**

	Northern Middle TN LWDA	Southern Middle TN LWDA	Upper Cumberland LWDA	Middle Region	State Total
Number of American Indians or Alaskan Natives alone	5,299	1,187	862	7,348	14,118
Population Ages 15-19	136,026	30,260	22,165	188,451	443,411
Population Ages 20-24	146,983	27,187	23,594	197,764	460,990
Population Ages 55+	523,601	147,594	126,015	797,210	2,061,038
Number of Veterans 2023	115,168	30,078	23,190	168,436	414,746
Number Below Poverty	221,729	61,435	58,358	341,522	943,548
Number With Disability	241,987	73,565	66,801	382,353	1,043,327
Number of Single Parent Families	53,629	11,407	7,711	72,747	182,176
Probationers and Parolees 2024	19,844	3,784	3,190	26,818	62,544
Community Correction 2024	1,636	5	106	1,747	3,377
Mental Health Court Statistics 2024	156	10	24	190	278
Limited English Speaking	22,062	1,231	1,101	24,394	41,562
Foster Care Services - Youth Aging Out 2024	221	79	63	363	854
Clients In Recovery Courts 2024	372	82	103	557	1,502
Disadvantaged Youth and Adults 2023	157,655	45,750	40,300	243,705	693,590
TANF 24 Months from 2024	298	83	55	436	1,477
Prison Population 2024	4,261	2,439	0	6,700	19,056
Jail Population 2024	6,923	2,231	1,858	11,012	31,508

**Sources: Population:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2022 American Community Survey, 5-year Estimates.

**Probationers and Parolees:** Lisa Helton and Adam Dawson, TN Dept of Correction

**Mental Health Court and Recovery Court Statistics:** Rebekah Provost-Emmons, Recovery Court Administrator, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Substance Abuse Services.

**Limited English Speaking:** U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022

**Foster Care Services:** Dave Aguzzi, Office of Independent Living, TN Dept of Children's Services.

**TANF 24 Months from Ending Eligibility:** Lakecia Peterson and Rebecca Mungle, Division of Family Assistance and Child Support, TN Dept of Human Services

**Jail Population:** Jail Summary Report, TN Dept of Correction, Decision Support  
<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/correction/documents/JailJune2023.pdf>

**Prison Population:** Linda F. Booker, Tennessee Bed Space and Operating Capacity Report