

## Nonmetro Multiple Jobholding Rate Higher than Metro

*Multiple jobholding was higher in nonmetro areas than in metro areas in 1996. Low earnings forced many nonmetro workers to take more than one job to meet basic living expenses. However, nonmetro workers with high educational levels and well-paid jobs also had high rates of multiple jobholding.*

In nonmetro areas 1.7 million workers held two or more jobs at the same time in 1996, a rate of 7.1 percent, according to data from the Current Population Survey (CPS). This compares with 6.3 million workers in metro areas (6.2 percent) for the same period. This is the first time metro and nonmetro multiple jobholding data have been available since 1991. Although CPS metro and nonmetro estimates prior to 1996 are not strictly comparable (see the article in the appendix on the redesign of the CPS), the nonmetro multiple job rate was 7.7 percent in 1989 and then fell to 7.4 percent in 1991. The metro rate was 6.0 percent in both 1989 and 1991.

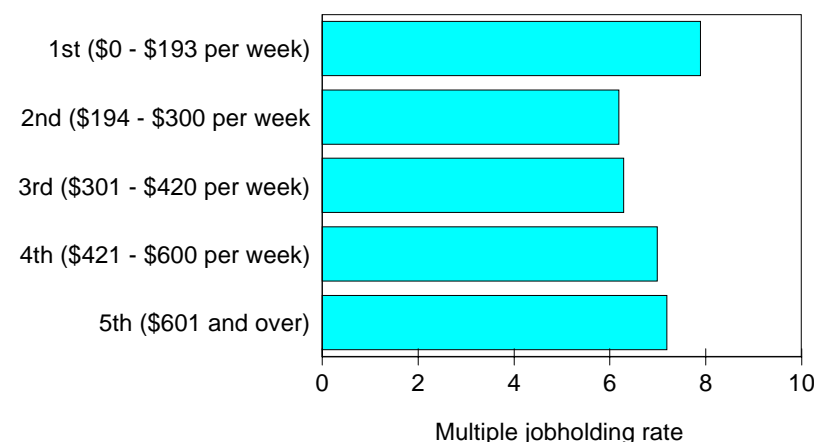
During the 1980's, the multiple jobholding rate for the Nation increased significantly as an increased demand for labor and the need to make up for falling earnings pushed up the rate from 4.9 percent in 1980 to 6.2 percent in 1989. Most of this increase in multiple jobholding was among women. The number of women multiple jobholders doubled from 1.5 to 3.1 million between 1980 and 1989. Since 1989, the overall multiple jobholding rate has held steady around 6.2 percent.

CPS data from 1989 and 1991 show that the main reason given by nonmetro persons for working two or more jobs was financial. About 42 percent of nonmetro workers had two or more jobs in 1991 to meet household expenses or to pay off debts. This is little changed from 1989 when the share was 44 percent. Although the reason for working more than one job was not asked in 1996, data is available on multiple jobholding by earnings level. Nonmetro workers whose median weekly earnings were in the lowest quintile had the highest multiple jobholding rate (7.9 percent) (fig. 1). It is likely that low earnings is the reason that many nonmetro workers took on more than one job.

### Multiple Jobholding Rate Highest Among College Graduates, Whites, and Ages 45 to 54

The percentage of nonmetro multiple jobholders increased with education (fig. 2). Only 3.8 percent of high school dropouts had multiple jobs, compared with 10.1 percent of workers with a 4-year college degree. Workers with high education levels may find it

Figure 1  
**Nonmetro multiple jobholding rate by earnings quintile**  
*The multiple jobholding rate was highest in the 1st and 5th quintile earnings groups*



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the 1996 Current Population Survey.

easier to get a second job because they have more specialized skills and knowledge that are in demand. In addition, they may have a more flexible work schedule in their primary occupation, which gives them more time to work a second job. Workers with more education may also have financial reasons for moonlighting, although nonfinancial reasons may strongly affect their decision to work a secondary job. For example, a second job may provide experience needed to enhance a worker's primary occupation.

The multiple jobholding rate for nonmetro men was about the same as for women, 7.3 percent for men compared with 7.1 percent for women. Women comprised 46 percent of all nonmetro multiple jobholders. In metro areas, men and women also had about the same multiple jobholding rate, 6.0 percent for men compared with 6.1 percent for women.

The moonlighting rate for nonmetro Whites was 7.5 percent, followed by Blacks at 5.4 percent, and Hispanics at 4.0 percent. Although Whites had the highest multiple jobholding rate, the average number of hours actually worked at all jobs among White multiple jobholders was a bit lower than for both Blacks and Hispanics: 49.6 hours per week compared with 50.9 hours for Blacks and 50.3 hours for Hispanics (appendix table 5).

The highest multiple jobholding rate was 8.1 percent for nonmetro workers ages 45 to 54. The multiple jobholding rate increased with each age group up to those workers 45 to 54 and then declined. The multiple jobholding rate for teenagers was 5.9 percent, followed by workers ages 20 to 24 at 7.1 percent, ages 25 to 34 at 7.2 percent, and those ages 35 to 44 at 7.7 percent. Metro areas, in contrast, showed workers ages 20 to 24 years with the highest multiple jobholding rate (6.8 percent), while those ages 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 were the same (6.5 percent). The lowest multiple jobholding rate among primary age workers was the 45- to 54-age group (6.3 percent) in metro areas.

Figure 2

**Multiple jobholder rates by selected characteristics, 1996**

*Nonmetro multiple jobholding was slightly higher than metro*



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Current Population Survey.

### Professional Specialty Occupations Have Highest Multiple Jobholding Rate

Nonmetro workers whose primary occupations—the primary occupation is the one that the worker worked the most hours—are in professional specialty fields were the most likely to hold more than one job. Many of these occupations have flexible work schedules, or time off, which allows workers to take on other jobs. Nonmetro elementary and secondary school teachers were the most likely to hold a second job, with a rate of 12.1 percent. Teachers also accounted for the largest number of nonmetro multiple jobholders. Other professional specialty occupations such as health assessment and treatment (9.4 percent), technicians (11.2 percent), and college and university teachers (10.2 percent), had high multiple jobholding rates. Nonmetro workers in administrative support (7.7 percent), and police and firefighters (10.3 percent) also had high rates of multiple jobholding.

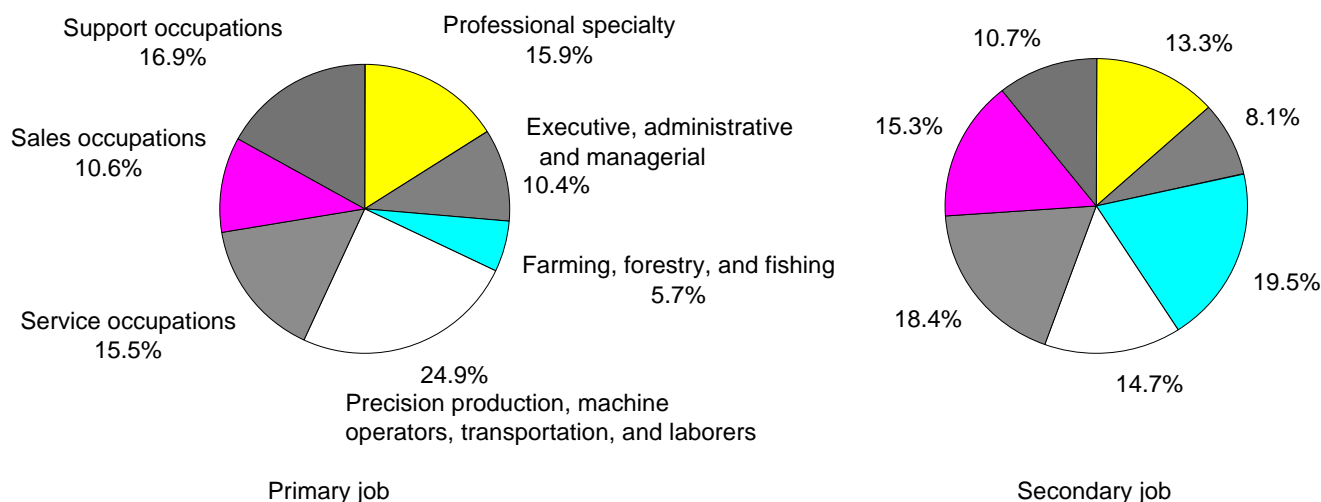
Most nonmetro workers took a secondary job in the same occupation, or in a field related to their primary job (fig. 3). The primary occupation with the highest percentage of multiple jobholders was precision production, machine operators, transportation, and laborers (24.9 percent). This group was followed by support occupations (16.9 percent), and professional specialty workers (15.9 percent). However, the largest percentage of secondary jobs was in farming (19.5 percent), services (18.4 percent), and sales (15.3 percent). Many of these secondary occupations are seasonal or low-paying jobs that supplement earnings to meet basic living expenses. Professional specialty occupations accounted for 13.3 percent of secondary jobs.

A large proportion of nonmetro workers, especially in blue collar occupations, were employed in farming, forestry, and fishing as their second job. Farming was the most common second job for multiple jobholders in protective service (20.0 percent); precision production and craft (41.7 percent); machine operators and assemblers (22.8 percent); transportation (36.7 percent); and handlers, cleaners, helpers, and laborers (32.7 percent).

Figure 3

#### Primary and secondary occupations for nonmetro multiple jobholders, 1996

*The highest percentage of secondary jobs were in farming, forestry, and fishing occupations*



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Current Population Survey.

## Northern Plains Have the Highest Rates of Multiple Jobholding

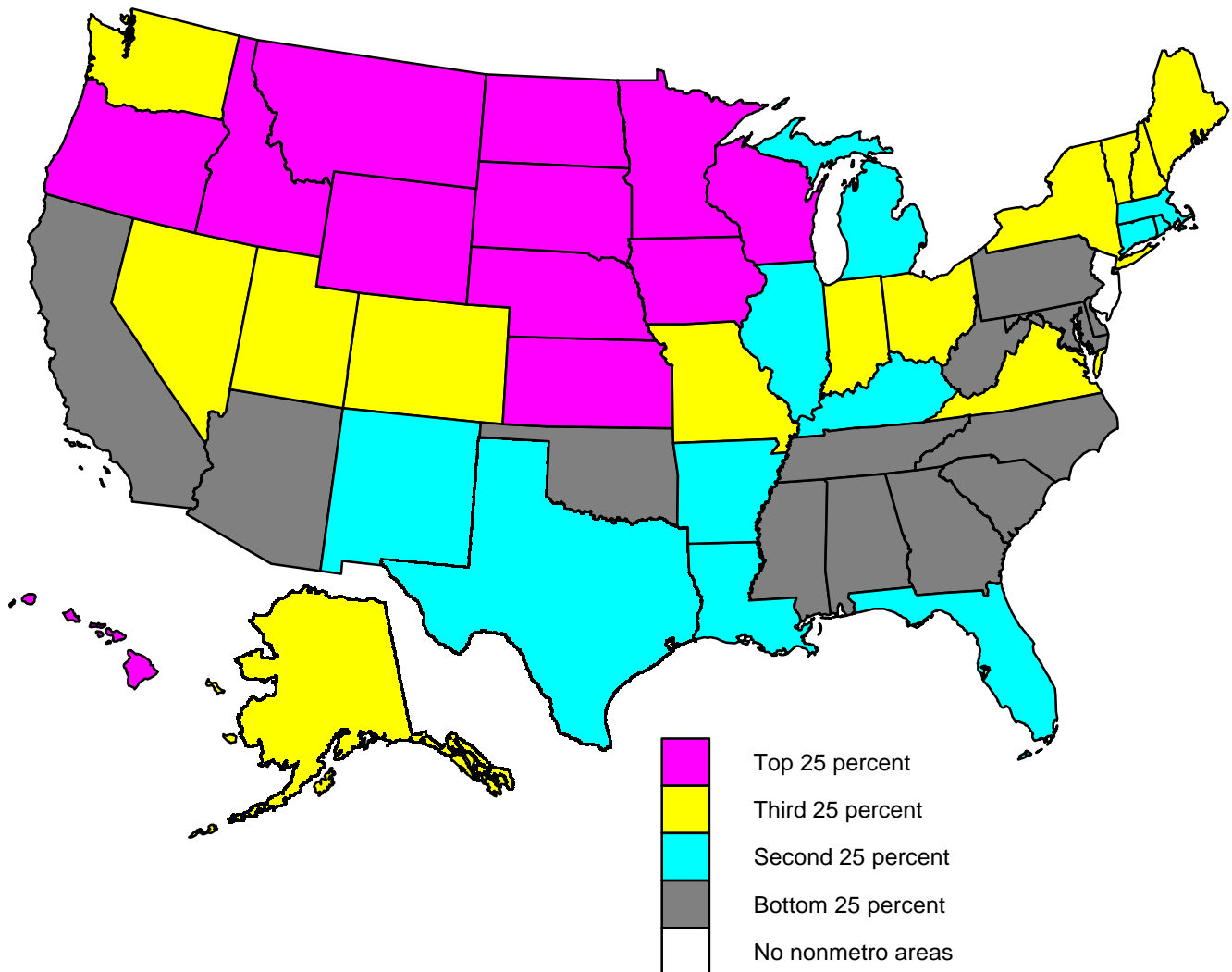
The highest nonmetro multiple jobholding rates were among the Northern Plains States (fig. 4). The multiple jobholding rate in these States was higher across all major occupational and demographic categories; a high proportion of low-paid seasonal agricultural jobs contributed to the high rate. Many of these States have high proportions of low-wage jobs, in addition they also have low rates of immigration, creating conditions that might push up the multiple jobholding rate. The highest rates were found in Minnesota (11.7 percent), Wisconsin (11.5 percent), Nebraska (10.8 percent), Montana (10.5 percent), Kansas (10.5 percent), Iowa (10.0 percent), and South Dakota (10.0 percent).

The States with the lowest nonmetro multiple job rates were concentrated in the South. South Carolina had the lowest rate at 2.9 percent, followed by Arizona (3.1 percent), Tennessee (4.3 percent), and Georgia (4.4 percent). [Timothy S. Parker, 202-219-0541 (after October 24, 202-694-5435), [tparker@econ.ag.gov](mailto:tparker@econ.ag.gov)]

### Figure 4

### Nonmetro multiple jobholder rate, 1996

### Multiple jobholding is highest in the Northern Plains



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the Current Population Survey.