



## NORTH CAROLINA STAR JOBS METHODOLOGY – 2021

North Carolina Star Jobs are an easy way for career planners to assess and compare occupations based on wages and projected demand. Occupational ratings range between 1 and 5 stars, with 5 stars considered to be the best career prospects. In addition to an overall rating, a separate rating is derived for each occupation based on the following three criteria:

- **Wages:** derived from the 2018 Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) data released in 2019
- **Annualized Growth Rate:** projected employment relative to the number of 2018 employment
- **Openings:** number of projected openings due to growth, transfers, and exits between 2018 - 2028

### Overall Ratings:

Stars	Prospects	Characteristics
5	Best	Growing (rate and openings) jobs that have above median wages.
4	Very Good	Growing jobs that generally have at least median wages.
3	Good	Generally above average in at least 2 of the 3 criteria.
2	Fair	Generally low wage or low growth (rate and openings).
1	Poor	Generally low wage and low growth (rate and openings).

Additional consideration and adjustment may be given to a rating based on knowledge of the labor market. While the 2021 methodology remains mostly the same as 2019, more occupations were considered this round – including occupations with smaller employment, those with some level of suppressed data, and some ‘All Other’ occupations. In total, 674 occupations are rated for 2021, compared to 526 in 2019. The following occupations do not have ratings:

- Occupations with fewer than 50 total jobs projected for 2028 (was less than 500 in 2019).
- Occupations excluded from the BLS’s [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), such as “Engineers, All Other.” These are difficult to describe due to the high variation of work and responsibilities within the occupation (no “All Other” occupations were included in 2019).
- Occupations with a high percentage of non-covered employment, thus less available data – e.g. Clergy; Directors of Religious Activities and Education; and Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers (several of these were previously included).

This methodology also applies to the state’s 16 sub-regions. An occupation’s statewide growth rate value, along with regional wages and openings, contribute to each regional occupation’s star rating. Only those with at least five regional jobs in 2018 are rated – the previous threshold was about 0.01% of the region’s total employment.

Please note that while the 5-star occupation ratings are intended to help guide career planning, they do not necessarily indicate which occupation is the best fit for an individual. No rating system can address all the important career considerations, including personal interests and abilities.

For more information about 5-Star Occupation Ratings, please contact [LEAD@nccommerce.com](mailto:LEAD@nccommerce.com).