

**PREVAILING TIME-RATES
OF WAGES AND
HOURS OF LABOR ON
OCTOBER 1, 1910; PP. 3-76**

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VARIOUS

**PREVAILING TIME-RATES
OF WAGES AND
HOURS OF LABOR ON
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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PREVAILING TIME-RATES OF WAGES
AND HOURS OF LABOR

ON OCTOBER 1

1910

BY THE

DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF STATISTICS



BOSTON
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1910

PREVAILING TIME-RATES OF WAGES AND HOURS OF LABOR IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONS.

October 1, 1910.

The material presented in this report is the result of a special inquiry made into the prevailing time-rates of wages and hours of labor of the organized workingmen of Massachusetts, and was obtained almost entirely by correspondence. This inquiry was instituted chiefly on account of the general demand for information relative to rates of wages paid and hours of labor prevailing in this Commonwealth.

received by mail

On September 29, 1910, schedules of inquiry¹ were sent out to every local labor organization in Massachusetts and replies were received from 1,030 organizations, or 82.8 per cent of the total number in the State, and of this number 843 reported the prevailing time-rates and hours of labor, 92 reported that there was no standard time-rate in their trade, and 95 reported that their members worked on a piece-rate basis. In those instances where replies were not received from the local labor organizations concerned the information presented was taken from the latest data available.

The authority for the prevailing time-rates embodied in this report is thus in most cases derived from statements furnished by organizations of employees. Exceptions appear in the case of municipal laborers and steam and street railroad employees, the rates for the municipal laborers being obtained as the result of a special inquiry conducted during the Summer of 1910 by correspondence with the auditors of the cities and the clerks, boards of selectmen, or highway surveyors of the towns, and the rates for the railroad employees being obtained from the railroad companies.

With regard to the prevailing time-rates here published, it must be clearly understood that while the Bureau presents them as being of

¹ For specimen forms of inquiry, see pages 78 and 79.

considerable public interest they are only put forward as embodying the rates officially recognized by the organizations of employees and not as having been ascertained, by independent inquiry, to be actually operative. The task of determining by special inquiry how far the time-rates reported were really operative in each locality would be equivalent to a census of wages. However, it by no means follows that an *ex parte* list is less operative than one mutually agreed upon. There are many cases, especially among strongly organized industries, in which rates of wages and hours never formally agreed to nevertheless dominate a trade; and there are cases in which rates embodied in formal agreements are by no means universally paid, even within the circle of the organizations which were parties to the agreements.

There are many trades or occupations in which are carried on the time-work system without any generally recognized standard time-rates. In many cases the differences in degrees of skill among workmen following the same occupation are so great that any recognized rates, if really operative, have a considerable range. In trades not governed by mutual agreements the existence or non-existence of a standard rate is a matter of controversy. In a few cases a standard rate is put forward by a labor organization rather as an ideal at which their members may aim than as the actually operative rate.

There are certain trades in which wages are directly measured by a time standard, but which, in fact, are carried on under a system of piece-work. In such trades a certain period of time is specified for a certain output, so that wages are in reality directly proportionate to output and not to the time actually occupied. Again there are trades which are mainly carried on by the piece, but in which the labor organizations publish time-rates for various localities, which in a certain sense are real prevailing time-rates. In cases where piece-lists include time-rates for such kinds of work (repairing or otherwise) as are not conveniently provided for under the list, the time-rate has been included in this report.

Time-rates of wages are variously calculated by the hour, the day, the week, the month, or the year. Thus in the building trades wages are generally calculated by the hour. As regards the actual money received during a period of full employment the unit is a matter of indifference, provided that the weekly hours of labor are also fixed. But differences in the unit of time on which the wages are calculated often correspond to real differences in the condition and organization

of the trades concerned. Hourly rates prevail throughout the building trades, which are peculiarly liable to seasonal fluctuations and stoppage on account of weather. Since the weekly hours of labor in the building trades in certain localities vary from Summer to Winter, the maintenance of a uniform hourly rate of wages implies seasonal changes in a full week's wages. In such cases the published weekly rate is the rate which prevails during the greater part of the year.

The detailed tables contained in the following pages afford a good insight into the variations in the prevailing rates of wages and hours of labor in different localities. The tables for the building trades may be especially referred to in this connection. Thus, to take a few examples, we find that the prevailing hourly rates of wages for house carpenters vary from 33½ cents in Amherst to 50 cents in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Malden, Medford, Milton, Revere, Somerville, and Winthrop. It should be borne in mind, however, that the character of the work in many occupations may vary in different localities, so that the rates quoted, even though nominally for the same classes of wage-earners, may not always be for quite the same class of work. The rates received in the iron and steel industry furnish several examples.

As might be expected we find that rates of wages in different occupations are generally highest in Boston and vicinity.

The classification of occupations and industries is the same as that used in all the labor statistics of this Bureau.¹ The industries are grouped as follows:

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¹ For a more extended explanation of the classification of occupations and industries used by this Bureau the reader is referred to the Thirty-ninth Annual Report on the Statistics of Labor, 1908, pages 11 and 123-135.

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¹ Not otherwise specified.

I. BUILDING AND STONE WORKING.

A. BUILDING TRADES.

OCCUPATIONS AND LOCALITIES.	RATE OF WAGES			HOURS OF LABOR			
	Hour	Full Week	Years in which Present Rates went into Effect	Full Day	Full Week	Number of Months Saturday Half-holiday in Effect	Years in which Present Hours went into Effect
Bricklayers.							
Attleborough,	\$0.50	\$24.00	1908	8	48	-	1907
Beverly, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1907	8	48	-	1901
Boston, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1906	8	44	12	1906
Brockton, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1910	8	44	12	1910
Cambridge, . . . . .	.80	26.40	-	8	44	12	-
Clinton, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1907	8	48	-	1902
Fitchburg, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1907	8	48	-	1900
Frammingham, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1909	8	44	12	-
Gardner, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1908	8	48	-	1905
Great Barrington, . . . . .	.59½	27.00	-	8	48	-	-
Greenfield, . . . . .	.50	24.00	1909	8	48	-	1903
Haverhill, . . . . .	.80	28.80	1910	8	48	-	-
Holyoke, . . . . .	.80	28.80	1910	8	48	8	1892
Lawrence, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1910	8	44	12	1908
Lowell, . . . . .	.80	28.80	1910	8	44	12	1910
Marlborough, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1908	8	46	4	1908
New Bedford, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1910	8	44	12	1907
Newburyport, . . . . .	.60	24.00	1910	8	48	-	1901
Newton, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1907	8	44	12	1906
North Adams, . . . . .	.56½	27.00	1909	8	48	-	1902
Northampton, . . . . .	.66½	27.00	1910	8	48	-	1900
Plattsfield, . . . . .	.61½	27.00	1908	8	44	12	1907
Plymouth, . . . . .	.80	24.00	1907	8	48	-	1903
Quincy, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1910	8	44	12	1906
Salem, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1907	8	48	-	1907
Springfield, . . . . .	.80	26.40	1910	8	44	12	1910
Taunton, . . . . .	.56	24.00	1910	8	48	-	1905
Waltham, . . . . .	.60	26.40	1906	8	44	12	1904
Westfield, . . . . .	.55	26.40	1907	8	48	-	1907
Worcester, . . . . .	.80	28.80	1910	8	48	-	1890
Bridge and Structural Iron Workers.							
Boston, . . . . .	.50	24.00	1908	8	48	4	1908
Helpers.							
Boston, . . . . .	.36	18.24	1906	8	48	4	1908
Cable Splicers.							
Boston (head cablemen), . . . . .	.46½	24.00	1910	9	54	-	-
Boston (first class men), . . . . .	.44	23.76	1906	9	54	-	-
Boston (second class men), . . . . .	.38	20.52	1905	9	54	-	-
Boston (third class men), . . . . .	.30	16.20	1906	9	54	-	-
Boston (fourth class men), . . . . .	.28	15.12	1906	9	54	-	-
Carpenters.¹							
<i>House Carpenters.</i>							
Adams, . . . . .	.42	20.16	1910	8	48	-	1896
Amesbury, . . . . .	.34½	18.50	1907	8	48	-	1907
Amherst, . . . . .	.33½	18.00	-	9	54	-	-
Andover, . . . . .	.37½	18.00	1905	8	48	-	1905
Arlington, . . . . .	.47½	21.01	1910	8	44	12	1910
Attol, . . . . .	.34½	18.50	1908	8	48	-	1908
Attleborough, . . . . .	.38	18.24	1910	8	48	-	1906
Beverly, . . . . .	.47½	21.01	1910	8	44	12	1910
Boston, . . . . .	.50	22.00	1910	8	44	12	1909
Braintree, . . . . .	.46	19.80	1910	8	44	12	1910
Bridgewater, . . . . .	.41	19.80	1910	8	48	-	1905
Brockton, . . . . .	.47½	21.01	1910	8	44	12	1910
Brookline, . . . . .	.50	22.00	1910	8	44	12	1909
Cambridge, . . . . .	.50	22.00	1910	8	44	12	1909

¹ For ship carpenters, see under shipbuilding on page 31; for millmen, see under woodworking on page 70.