



The mission of the California Labor Lab is to extend the pursuit of health and safety for workers in traditional employment to those in a wide range of alternative arrangements in partnership with affected communities.

Data Brief #4

Employment in Arts and Related Occupations and Industries in California

by Edward Yelin, Trisha Iley, Laura Trupin, Alicia Lafrance, Nari Rhee, Ima Varghese Mac

In the California Work and Health Survey, respondents report on the characteristics of main and secondary jobs held in the month prior to interview. For each job, they indicate the occupation and industry in a natural language description. The descriptions are then translated into Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. Both SOC and NAICS codes can be collapsed into major categories of two-digits or expanded into very specific categories of six. The overarching SOC category, code 27, incorporates arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations (hereafter “arts-related occupations”) while the overarching NAICS category, code 71, incorporates arts, entertainment, and recreation industries (hereafter “arts-related industries”).

Arts-related work extends far beyond arts-related occupations and industries.

Arts-related occupations are not limited to arts-related industries: large numbers of those occupations are in such industries beyond arts as information, professional, scientific, and technical services while a smattering occur in other industries.

Arts-related industries incorporate large numbers of workers in managerial, financial services, and personal services occupations, with a few in many others.

This enumeration of arts-related jobs is necessarily an undercount. A food truck outside of a motion picture studio may not be counted, while an electrical supply business which sells to many industries including that studio almost certainly will not be counted.

Scope of Arts-Related Employment:

- **Arts-Related Occupations.**

732,260 people (3.9% of the workforce) in California reported an arts-related occupation in main or secondary jobs in the month prior to interview.

Overall, there were 829,979 separate arts-related occupations reported in either or both main and second jobs of these individuals since some hold two or more.

- **Arts-Related Industries.**

648,963 people (3.4% of the workforce) reported working in an arts-related industry.

Overall, there were 685,206 separate jobs with an arts-related industry in either or both main or second jobs of these individuals.

- **All Arts-Related Employment.**

All told, 1,132,174 people (5.9%) held a job in either an arts-related occupation or industry, or both.

The core of the arts-related workforce, those who do arts-related occupations in arts-related industries includes 249,049 individuals (1.3% of the workforce).

Another 399,914 (2.1%) reported a job in an arts-related industry outside of an arts-related occupation.

Another 483,211 (2.5%) held a job with an arts-related occupation outside of an arts-related industry.

- **Main and Second Job Arts-Related Occupations.**

A high proportion of those in arts-related occupations (52.7%) held two or more jobs. In the California workforce as a whole (excluding arts-related occupations), only 20.3% work as independent contractors.

Among the 386,026 workers with an arts-related occupation in either or both of their main or second jobs, the largest number held one only in their second job.

- 217,210 (56.3%) held one only in their second job
- 97,719 (25.3%) held one in both their main and second jobs
- 71,097 (18.4%) held one only in their main job

- **A Majority of Arts-related of Employment is Done as Independent Contractors.**

51.4% of people in arts-related employment work as independent contractors. In the California workforce as a whole, excluding arts-related occupations, only 20.3% do.

Among those in arts-related employment in their main job, 43.2% work as independent contractors.

Among those in arts-related employment in their second job, 64.8% work as independent contractors.

- **Kind of Occupations.**

The most common arts-related occupations in main jobs are writers/authors, producers/directors, and actors, each with between 35-40,000 workers.

The most common in second jobs are writers/authors (about 43,000), photographers (about 36,000), and producers/directors (about 34,000).

- **Kinds of Industries.**

The most common arts-related industries reported in main jobs are in amusement parks (over 125,000), independent writers, artists, and performers (about 85,000), and spectator sports (about 44,000).

The most common arts-related industries reported in second jobs are independent writers, artists, and performers (over 150,000), amusement parks (about 42,000), and spectator sports (over 26,000).

- **Economic Status of Arts-Related Workers.**

A large proportion of those in arts-related occupations have personal earnings below \$40,000/year (41.9%), household income below that level (20.3%), or household income at or below 125% of the Federal poverty level (10.4%).

Over 8% of those in arts-related occupations were SNAP (formerly Food Stamp) beneficiaries and more than 6% made use of a food bank in the year prior to interview.

Rates of low earnings, household income, poverty and SNAP benefit and food bank usage among those in artsrelated occupations did not differ significantly from those in non-arts-related occupations.

About the Survey

The California Work and Health Survey (CWHHS) used a random sample of cell phones to develop its study cohort of 4,014 working age Californians. The CWHHS was administered between November 2022 and May 2023 by telephone interviewers or completed on-line at the respondents' choice. Both the telephone-administered and on-line surveys could be completed in English or Spanish. The survey covered current employment status, working conditions among the employed, health status, and economic well-being. The results were weighted to reflect known characteristics of the working age population of California.