

# DC Will See Strong Growth in 19 “Gateway Jobs” Over the Next Five Years

**Gateway jobs, which provide access to economic mobility based on skills, account for 63,620 current positions in DC and are expected to see 7,710 openings per year.**

The Department of Employment Services (DOES) releases an annual analysis of [Washington DC’s Hot Jobs](#) based on demand, projected job growth, wage, and qualifications. To understand how occupations support residents on a clear path to upward mobility, this Edsight builds on the DOES Hot Jobs analysis by applying the [Markle Foundation’s experience-based job progression framework](#) to identify a set of Hot Gateway jobs.

Markle’s partnership studied the job histories of 29 million people across 800 occupations to identify occupation pathways that workers from low-wage roles without a college degree can access to advance economically. Markle categorizes the occupation landscape by:

- **Origins:** Low-wage jobs, with high unemployment among workers without a Bachelor’s degree (e.g., waiters).
- **Gateways:** Good jobs proven to be accessible and best positioned for workers to build skills and achieve economic advancement (e.g., paralegals). For consideration as a Gateway, at least 25% of employees nationally must be without a Bachelor’s degree. Additionally, at least 33% of workers entering Gateways are from Origins and 33% of those leaving Gateways are transitioning to Targets.
- **Targets:** Middle- to higher-wage occupations that are good quality because they are resilient to automation and accessible based on job experience (e.g., general and operations managers).

In Washington, DC, more than 158,000 working-age residents do not have a Bachelor’s degree, including 27,800 without a high school diploma (CPS 2022, see [Appendix](#)). These populations experience a lower labor force participation rate and higher unemployment, compounded by racial disparities. Residents can advance from Origins to Gateways and Targets by building and transferring skills as their qualifications, as shown by real workers making the same transitions.

## Focusing on DC’s Gateway Jobs

The District’s 19 Gateway jobs span sectors, are in demand, pay a living wage, and can lead to employment in Target occupations.

Based on their career interests, residents can pursue Gateway occupations across a variety of sectors including business and administration (e.g., sales representatives), management (e.g., social and community service managers), healthcare (e.g., registered nurses), information technology (e.g., computer user support specialists) and arts, design, and media (e.g., editors).

In 2021, Gateways accounted for 63,620 of the District’s total employment and are forecasted to see substantial growth in the short- and long-term. Currently, there are 7,710 annual Gateway job openings; by 2028, Gateways may grow by an additional 7,335 positions. Each occupation boasts hundreds of annual job openings, with human resource specialists expecting a high of 970 openings each year (see Figure 1).

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These Gateway jobs have a median annual wage of \$85,660. This is above a living wage for a family of four with both adults working, which is estimated to be \$61,880 in DC, according to [MIT's Living Wage Calculator](#). Human resources managers are the highest paid Gateway with an annual median wage of \$163,090.

While 58% of the Gateways are classified as having a typical education requirement of a Bachelor's degree according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Markle's research has demonstrated that workers without Bachelor's degrees nationally have been able to achieve upward job transitions based on skills developed through experience rather than degrees.

### DC's Occupation Landscape

Across DC's Hot Jobs, there are 73 Origins, 19 Gateways, and 34 Targets. Examining the demand and wage of these groups reveals clear differences by job progression category.

Origin jobs were lowest in demand with an average numeric job growth metric of 203, projecting up to 14,810 new positions by 2028.

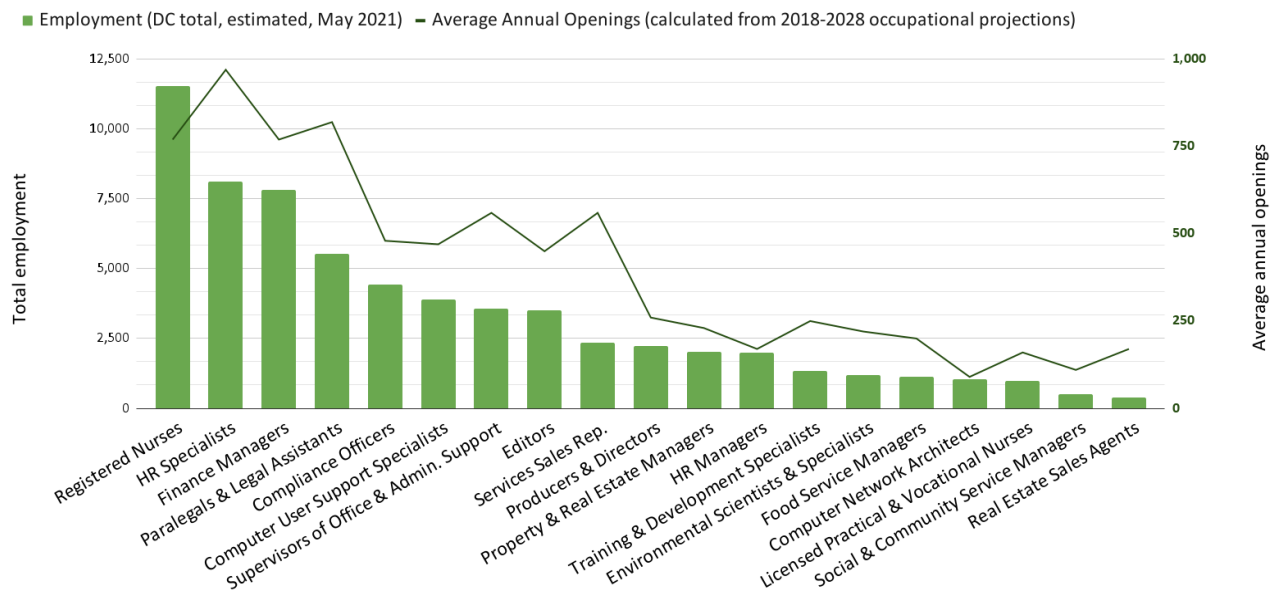
The average annual wage for Origins is \$45,757. These positions are most accessible as 64% do not list formal education requirements, meaning residents without a high school diploma or equivalent can apply.

Target occupations in DC are high demand and high wage. Targets may account for 24,092 new jobs by 2028 with an average growth of 709 jobs. They are the highest paying, averaging an annual salary of \$117,271. The majority, 85%, have a typical education requirement of a Bachelor's degree or higher.

### Expanding Availability of and Access to Gateways for District Job Seekers

Focusing on Gateway jobs and career pathways through workforce training and career navigation could advance resident upward mobility. Residents can view these jobs as key opportunities to leverage their skills and see increased wages and career options. Employers may consider expanding their hiring pool for these Gateways by adopting skills-based hiring practices to access untapped talent.

**Figure 1. Total employment and average annual job openings for DC's Gateway occupations**



Source: Original analysis of DOES Hot Jobs (2022).

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See [appendix](#) for the analysis and detailed data sources.