

Human Resources (HR) Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Helpful Resources Tutorial Script 2024-25 Data Collection Cycle

On behalf of the Institute for Education Sciences', IES, National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, and the Association for Institutional Research, AIR, welcome to this tutorial on the IPEDS Human Resources survey component, also called the HR Survey.

This tutorial discusses helpful resources for categorizing employees according to the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification, or SOC, System. You will learn:

- Where to find two resources to help data reporters identify and submit the correct SOC categories and codes to IPEDS on the HR Survey;
- When to apply SOC Classification Principles and Coding Guidelines; and
- How to use the SOC Data Match Title File.

Several resources, or job aids, are available to help data reporters identify and submit the correct SOC occupational categories and codes to IPEDS on the HR Survey. Two of these resources include the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics':

[SOC Classification Principles and Coding Guidelines](#), and
[SOC Direct Match Title File](#).

The classification principles form the basis on which the SOC system is structured, while the coding guidelines help users consistently assign SOC codes and titles to occupations for IPEDS reporting purposes. The Direct Match Title File allows users to match SOC codes and titles to industry occupations and job titles used by federal agencies.

It is important to review these resources before submitting HR Survey data to IPEDS to make sure data reported are accurate and consistent with the SOC system. Next, we will discuss select items from these two resources.

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Principles

There are ten SOC Classification Principles. According to these principles, the SOC covers all occupations in which work is performed for pay or profit, including work performed in family-operated enterprises by family members who are not directly compensated. It excludes occupations unique to volunteers. Each occupation is assigned to only one occupational category at the lowest level of the classification. Occupations are classified based on work performed and, in some cases, on the skills, education, and/or

training needed to perform the work. Apprentices and trainees are classified with the occupations for which they are being trained, while helpers and aides are classified separately because they are not in training for the occupation they are helping

The SOC Principles also have specific statements regarding supervisors. Workers primarily engaged in planning and directing of resources are classified in management occupations in SOC Major Group 11. Duties of these workers may include supervision.

Supervisors of workers in SOC Major Groups 13-29 usually have work experience and perform activities like those of the workers they supervise. Therefore, they are classified with the workers they supervise.

Workers in SOC Major Group 31 (Healthcare Support Occupations) assist and are usually supervised by workers in SOC Major Group 29 (Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations). Therefore, there are no first-line supervisor occupations in SOC Major Group 31.

Also, workers in SOC Major Groups 33 through 53 whose primary duty is supervising are classified in the appropriate first-line supervisor category, because their work activities are distinct from those of the workers they supervise.

Finally, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau are charged with collecting and reporting data on total U.S. employment across the full spectrum of SOC Major Groups. Thus, for a detailed occupation to be included in the SOC, either the Bureau of Labor Statistics or the Census Bureau must be able to collect and report data on that occupation.

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Coding Guidelines

The six SOC Coding Guidelines are intended to help users consistently assign SOC codes and titles to survey responses, and help with other coding activities. A worker should be assigned to a SOC occupation code based on work performed. If a worker in a single job can be coded in more than one occupation, they should be coded in the occupation requiring the highest level of skill. If there is no measurable difference in skill requirements, workers should be coded in the occupation in which they spend the most time.

Workers in Major Groups 33 through 53 who spend 80 percent or more of their time performing supervisory activities are coded in the appropriate first-line SOC supervisor category. In these same Major Groups, workers with supervisory duties who spend less than 80 percent of their time supervising are coded with the workers they supervise.

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Direct Match File

The 2018 SOC Direct Match Title File (DMTF) allows users to compare SOC codes and titles to industry occupations and job titles across federal agencies. It includes titles coded to ONE, and only ONE, detailed SOC occupation. Therefore, each of the direct match titles is a direct match to a single detailed SOC occupation. For example, "criminal law professor" and "constitutional law professor" are direct matches to the SOC detailed occupation called "Law Teachers, Postsecondary" because they cannot be coded elsewhere. The DMTF includes all "illustrative examples" from the SOC Manual, over 6,000 direct-match titles, and is updated periodically.

This concludes our discussion of helpful resources for categorizing employees according to the 2018 Standard

Occupational Classification (SOC) System. You should be able to:

- List two resources to help data reporters identify and submit the correct SOC categories and codes to IPEDS on the HR Survey;
- Apply SOC Classification Principles and Coding Guidelines for IPEDS HR Survey reporting purposes; and
- Explain how to use the SOC Data Match Title File.

If you have questions about reporting data to IPEDS or the IPEDS Data Collection System, contact the IPEDS Data Collection Help Desk at (877) 225-2568 or send an email to Help Desk staff at ipedshelp@rti.org. For assistance using IPEDS data tools, contact the IPEDS Data Use Help Desk at (866) 558-0658 or ipedstools@rti.org. The knowledgeable Help Desk staff is eager to help with data reporting and data use. Response times may be longer near the end of the collection cycle.