

SALARY GUIDE

2026 LED & Solar Salary Guide

National wage benchmarks for the 10 most-recruited LED retrofit and solar roles, sourced from BLS/O*NET wage data — with every role lacking a distinct BLS classification labeled, not hidden.

How to read this guide.

Every wage figure below is sourced from the most recent BLS-backed wage data available via O*NET OnLine and the Bureau of Labor Statistics' standing 2024–34 occupational growth projections. These are **national figures for the closest matching BLS occupational classification**, not internal placement data, and not a substitute for a live local wage check.

Several LED retrofit and solar roles don't map to a single, distinct BLS occupation. Where that's the case, we've used the closest reasonable classification and said so explicitly — we don't fabricate a number where the data doesn't exist.

NATIONAL WAGE BENCHMARKS

The two verified figures this guide is built on.

OCCUPATION	MEDIAN ANNUAL	MEDIAN HOURLY	GROWTH, 2024–34
Solar Photovoltaic Installers (SOC 47-2231)	\$53,140	\$25.55	+7% or higher — "much faster than average"
Electricians (SOC 47-2111)	\$63,190	\$30.38	Same "much faster than average" rate; ~81,000 annual openings nationally

Wage figures reflect the latest BLS-sourced wage data available via O*NET OnLine. Growth figures reflect the standing 2024–34 BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook projections cycle. We do not have a verified state-by-state wage breakdown for this trade — see the note below rather than an invented state table.

STATE & REGIONAL VARIATION

We don't have a verified state-level breakdown for this trade yet — so we're not going to invent one.

For some trades we cover, BLS publishes a clean state-by-state wage table we can pass along directly. For Solar Photovoltaic Installers and Electricians specifically, we don't currently have a state-level breakdown we can independently verify against a second source, and we'd rather say that plainly than publish numbers we can't stand behind.

What we can say directionally: solar and LED retrofit demand concentrates in states with aggressive renewable-energy adoption, strong commercial construction activity, and utility rebate programs for LED retrofits — but until we have a verified figure to cite, treat any state-specific claim you see elsewhere as unconfirmed.

Electricians are the labor pool underneath most of this work.

Because most LED retrofit wiring and a large share of solar interconnection work is performed by licensed electricians rather than solar-specific installers, the Electricians classification (SOC 47-2111) is the most relevant related-trade benchmark for this guide — not a separate, unrelated occupation, but the parent labor pool several of the ten roles in this guide draw from directly.

Electricians: **\$63,190** median annual (\$30.38/hour) — about 19% above the Solar Photovoltaic Installer median, with the same "much faster than average" growth outlook and roughly **81,000 annual openings** nationally.

Roles without a distinct BLS classification

Commercial LED Retrofit Electrician — no dedicated BLS code exists for retrofit work specifically; wages track with the general Electricians classification above.

Solar O&M Technician — BLS/O*NET tracks routine PV system maintenance, testing, and troubleshooting under the same Solar Photovoltaic Installers code (47-2231); no separate operations-and-maintenance classification exists.

Solar Project Manager — O*NET 47-1011.03 (Solar Energy Installation Managers) is a named Bright Outlook occupation, but its wage and employment data roll up to the parent 47-1011 group since BLS does not survey wages at this level of detail.

Low-Voltage/Controls Technician — BLS 49-2094 (Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment) is the closest real match for testing, programming, and adjusting lighting-control systems; no dedicated code exists for "lighting controls technician" specifically.

Solar Estimator/Designer and **Energy Auditor/Efficiency Consultant** — BLS 13-1051 (Cost Estimators) and O*NET 47-4011.01 (Energy Auditors) are the identified classifications for these roles; we do not have a verified national median wage figure for either sourced from the hub data behind this guide, so we're naming that gap rather than estimating a number.

What candidates are actually searching for tells you as much as the wage table does.

Search-volume data (SEMrush Keyword Magic Tool) shows candidates and researchers are far more engaged with pay and certification topics than with job-hunting terms specifically: combined solar salary/pay-rate search volume runs to roughly **1,680 searches a month**, and combined certification/licensing search volume runs to roughly **900 searches a month**. Combined hiring-intent search terms — "hire solar installer workers," "solar installers staffing," and similar — sum to only around **90 searches a month**.

The practical read for a hiring manager: candidates in this trade are actively researching what the job pays and how to get certified, but they aren't finding your open seat through a job-board search the way candidates in more commoditized trades might. That's a sourcing-channel signal, not a demand signal — the demand for this labor is real and growing; it just doesn't route through search.

METRO CONTEXT

National medians are a floor, not a forecast, for any specific market.

Every figure in this guide is a national median. Local wages move with cost of living, how tight the local NABCEP-certified and licensed-electrician supply is, and how aggressively a given metro's utilities and municipalities are pushing solar adoption and LED retrofit incentives. We don't have a verified metro-by-metro wage breakdown to cite here — see the note under State & Regional Variation — but the same logic that makes national figures a starting point rather than an ending point in every other trade we cover applies here too.

See our metro service-area pages at mytradetalent.com/service-areas for market-specific context in the regions we actively recruit.

TOTAL COMPENSATION

Base wage is the start of the conversation, not the end of it.

Especially for candidates weighing a switch from residential to commercial solar or retrofit work, total compensation typically includes more than the base hourly or annual figure captured in BLS wage data:

- **Certification and training reimbursement** — NABCEP training hours and exam fees, sometimes shop-provided as a retention lever.
- **Per diem or travel pay** for multi-site commercial work, structured separately from base pay.
- **Overtime structure** — commercial installation and retrofit schedules can run substantial overtime depending on project timelines.
- **Tool and PPE/fall-protection allowances** — vary widely by employer and worth confirming explicitly rather than assuming.

When benchmarking an offer against this guide's medians, weigh the full package, not just the base figure.

Benchmark honestly — including against yourself.

If you're consistently losing candidates at the offer stage, compare your actual offer — base plus the total-compensation factors above — against the national median for the specific role, not the trade in general. A generalist "installer" offer benchmarked against the Solar Photovoltaic Installer median will look competitive right up until the candidate you want turns out to be a licensed electrician doing interconnection work, who's worth closer to the Electricians figure.

If you're not sure where a specific role or region should land, that's exactly the kind of question a specialized recruiting partner should be able to answer with market data, not a guess.

TIME TO FILL

A growth market takes longer to fill from a standing start than a replacement market does.

We don't have a single published BLS time-to-fill figure for solar or LED retrofit specifically — that data isn't part of the standard BLS wage or projections release. But the underlying dynamic is straightforward: in a genuinely growing occupation, the qualified candidate pool has to expand fast enough to keep pace with new demand, on top of normal turnover — which is a structurally harder fill than a flat or shrinking trade where every opening is a one-for-one replacement.

The practical implication: the faster this trade grows, the more a standing, pre-verified pipeline outperforms a reactive, post-and-wait hiring process — because reactive hiring is built for replacement demand, not growth demand.



Every hire from zero is a *tax* on your team.

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