

ECONOMIST

Job Family Definition

The Economist* class series is a member of the Life, Physical and Social Science job family.

Economists apply economic principles to do research studies that aid in solving economic problems. They collect and process economic and statistical data using econometric and sampling techniques. Economists also develop theories based on research data and formulate plans to help solve economic problems in such fields as agriculture, credit and financing, taxation, industry, international and national trade and labor supply. Economists use many analytical research methods that include observation, analysis, and interpretation

The work requires knowledge of statistical and quantitative techniques to gain greater understanding of the interrelationships of economic activity. Economists devise methods and procedures for obtaining needed data. They develop economic forecasts through building simulation models. These models support policy decisions or predict the economic impact of changes in legislation. While subject matter differs among jobs, the ability to assess economic conditions in order to estimate the effects is a critical aspect of the job.

There is a high degree of technical expertise required to assist State government in the decision making process of planning and economic development. Certain techniques require intensive knowledge and training, and such additional preparation often leads to methodological specialization. Therefore these jobs require knowledge of economic theory typically gained through advanced education.

Staffing Patterns

Economists work in various areas of state government (e.g. employment, revenue, taxation, economic development, demographic research, and transportation). They use their understanding of economic relationships to advise state government on issues and trends that have an impact on policy direction. This helps guide planning and budgeting decisions made in state government.

Oregon State economists generally work alone but may participate as a member of a research project team, compiling and analyzing data. There is some coordination with other units within the same department, as well as other agencies in state service. Some Economists work within financial, economic or policy units. The work supports executive-level decisions by providing needed economic information and predictions of future circumstances.

Differences from Other Similar Kinds of Work (To help distinguish Economist work from other similar kinds of work):

In Oregon state service many classification series in part or wholly do research studies to support policy decisions. Economists do these duties using the principles and theories of economics. This is primary, and essential to do the work because position work requires a theoretical knowledge base in the occupational area of economics. Any positions allocated to this class series should require this background knowledge to do the critical job functions. Otherwise, choose a more suitable class series.

This classification series is similar to the **Research Analyst** in that Research Analysts do systematic, critical and intensive investigations and studies. To do their work, Research Analysts, like Economists use statistical theories and methods to do quantitative analysis. Economists, however do this within the context of economic principles and methodologies. The Research Analyst series is used in many program areas and does not require a specialized background

such as economics. The Research Analyst class series requires background knowledge in general statistics and quantitative analysis without any other specialized occupational knowledge.

Fiscal Analysts forecast future trends in revenues or expenditures to estimate cash flows or program budget requirements. This is similar to the work of economists who study economic conditions using analytical research methods, and forecast the effects of those conditions on state revenues and programs. The background knowledge and skills required for a Fiscal Analyst is different from the Economist. The Fiscal Analyst uses knowledge of budgeting, finance and management analysis. The purpose of work is different for an economist that is concerned with forecasting economic trends to predict its affect on budgets, rather than forecasting information to identify budgetary requirements. To do this work the Economist uses knowledge of economics and economic methodologies.

Factors affecting the distinctions between levels include:

- Statistical methods used
- Level of autonomy
- Complexity of methodology used to research the economic problem
- Depth of knowledge and expertise required
- Consultative activities
- Affect of policy recommendations on State operations

Standard Occupational Category Code Reference:

*Economist compare to the Standard Occupational Category Code 19-3011.00; Economists. The SOC define the work of Economists as doing conducting research, preparing reports or formulating plans to aid in the solution of economic problems arising from the production and distribution of goods and services. They may collect and process economic and statistical data using econometric and sampling techniques.

**The Economist class series replaced selected position classes in Executive Analyst 1 – 4, Principal Contributor 1 – 3, Employment Economist 1 – 3 and Tax Economist through the Administrative Classification Study, (Estimated implementation Oct. 2003)