

TECHNICIAN WAGE ATLAS

PAY FOR FLORIDA ROUTE WORK ROSE 28% IN FIVE YEARS: ABOUT $13 A MONTH PER WEEKLY ACCOUNT.

Government wage data for the jobs a pool company hires against, in 393 metro areas and the 10 Sunbelt pool states, adjusted for local prices, May 2020 to May 2025.

THE FINDING

PAY FOR THE CLOSEST FEDERAL MATCH TO A FLORIDA ROUTE TECH ROSE 28% FROM 2020 TO 2025: ABOUT $13 A MONTH MORE LABOR PER WEEKLY ACCOUNT.

BLS OEWS Florida median for landscaping and groundskeeping workers, May 2020 and May 2025, at 41 paid minutes per account and a 1.135× employer cost factor (a model; section 02). Consumer prices rose 24.4%.

CONTENTS

01 Key findings 3

02 Method: no government code says "pool tech", so we measure the jobs you hire against 3

03 Sample and coverage 4

04 Florida pays the least of the pool states once you count what a paycheck buys 5

05 Florida metro by metro: same paycheck, very different prices 7

06 Five years of raises: most of the Sunbelt kept pace with prices, not much more 8

07 Each $1 an hour adds $3.36 a month to a weekly account 9

08 Limitations 10

09 What an owner can do with this 11

10 Sources 11

11 About this research 12

01 KEY FINDINGS

1 **Route pay in Florida rose 28.2% from 2020 to 2025, slightly ahead of 24.4% inflation.**
The state median for landscaping and groundskeeping workers, the closest government series to an entry route tech, went from $13.92 to $17.84 an hour. General maintenance and repair workers, the closer match for a tech who also fixes pumps and heaters, rose 27.8% to $22.15.

2 **In national dollars, Florida pays the least of the 10 Sunbelt pool states.**
Adjusted for local prices with the BEA Regional Price Parities, Florida's entry route median is $17.25, against $19.78 in California. 7 of the 10 lowest of 60 large Sunbelt metros are in Florida; Miami–Fort Lauderdale–West Palm Beach is last at $15.76.

3 **Inside Florida the paycheck barely changes from metro to metro; the cost of living does.**
Metro medians run from $16.72 to $18.56, while local prices run from 85.4 to 114.2 on the BEA index (U.S. = 100). The same wage buys a tech far less in Miami than in Ocala.

4 **Delivery driving pays more than route labor in 53 of 60 large Sunbelt metros.**
Florida's median for light truck drivers is $20.10, $2.26 an hour above entry route labor. Both jobs need someone who drives and works alone; the driver job pays more for it.

5 **Each $1 an hour adds about $3.36 a month to a weekly account.**
At 41 paid minutes per stop and a 1.135× employer cost factor, a raise moves your cost per pool in a straight line. The worksheet in the owners section lets you use your own minutes and pay.

02 METHOD: NO GOVERNMENT CODE SAYS "POOL TECH", SO WE MEASURE THE JOBS YOU HIRE AGAINST

The federal Standard Occupational Classification has no title for a pool service technician. We checked the 2018 SOC direct-match title file: the only pool titles are lifeguards, plasterers, concrete pool installers and aluminum pool installers. The O*NET occupation search for "pool service technician" returns no direct match either. So this atlas does not pretend to report "pool tech pay". It reports the wage of the people a pool company competes with when it hires: similar applicants and similar outdoor work, often with a vehicle.

We use two main series and four context series from the BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS), cross-industry, for every metropolitan statistical area, every state and the nation, May 2025 and May 2020:

SOC	OCCUPATION	ROLE IN THIS ATLAS	U.S. JOBS 2025	MEDIAN 2025	MEDIAN 2020	CHANGE
37-3011	Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	Entry route tech (main series)	952,640	$18.82	$15.26	+23.3%
49-9071	Maintenance and repair workers, general	Service and repair tech (main series)	1,529,700	$23.84	$19.64	+21.4%
37-2011	Janitors and cleaners	Cleaning floor	2,209,760	$17.71	$13.98	+26.7%
49-9098	Helpers, installation, maintenance and repair	Trainee floor	95,580	$19.05	$15.27	+24.8%
53-3033	Light truck drivers	Competing route job	983,300	$21.57	$17.81	+21.1%
47-2152	Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters	Licensed repair ceiling	465,840	$30.67	$27.08	+13.3%

Purchasing power. We divide each median by the BEA Regional Price Parity (all items, 2024, the latest year published; U.S. = 100). A wage of $18.00 in a metro with an RPP of 110 is worth $16.36 in national dollars.

Trend. We compare May 2025 with May 2020 for the same area and occupation code, and set it against the CPI-U (U.S. city average, annual average 2020 to 2025: 24.4%).

Cost per account (a model). Monthly labor cost of one weekly account = hourly wage × employer cost factor × paid minutes ÷ 60 × 52 ÷ 12.

Assumptions: **41 paid minutes per weekly account** (on site, driving and the daily commute: the report No. 05 base case, a paid 8-hour day divided by the pools it holds) and an **employer cost factor of 1.135×** (FICA, FUTA, Florida reemployment tax and workers' compensation, also from report No. 05).

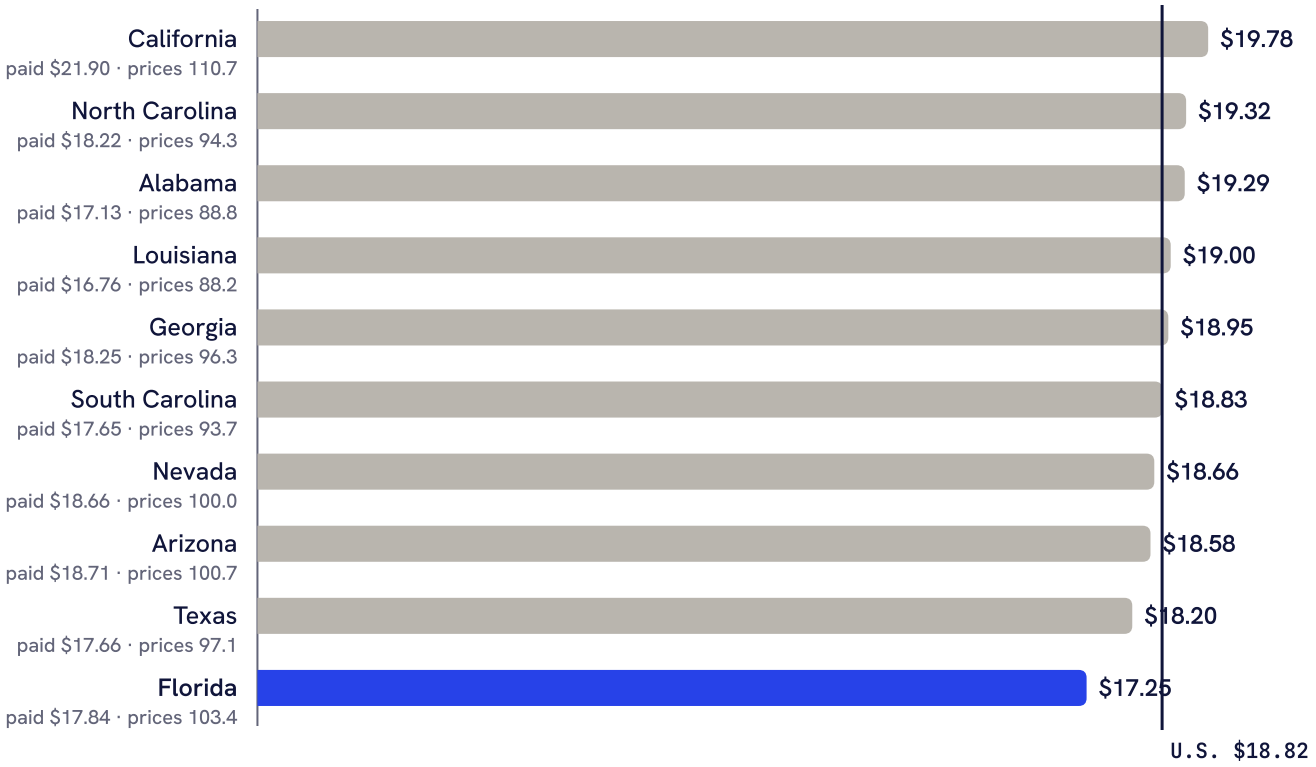
03 SAMPLE AND COVERAGE

The metro file covers 60 large Sunbelt metros in the charts (those with at least 1,000 landscaping jobs, so the estimate is stable) and all 393 U.S. metros in the data file that comes with this report. The 10 states are warm-climate Sunbelt states where pool service is a year-round trade: AL, AZ, CA, FL, GA, LA, NC, NV, SC, TX.

- **Wages:** OEWS May 2025 (published in 2026) and May 2020. OEWS estimates combine six survey panels collected over three years, so a "2025" figure leans partly on earlier pay, aged forward by BLS.
- **Prices:** BEA Regional Price Parities for 2024, the most recent year available in October 2026. Puerto Rico has no RPP and is left unadjusted in the data file.
- **Trend coverage:** 60 of the 60 large Sunbelt metros have a matching 2020 estimate. Metro boundaries changed between the two releases for some areas; those show no 2020 value instead of a wrong one.
- **Hourly figures** are medians unless the column says mean. BLS does not release a figure where the sample is too thin; those cells are blank, not zero.

04 FLORIDA PAYS THE LEAST OF THE POOL STATES ONCE YOU COUNT WHAT A PAYCHECK BUYS

Entry route wage in national dollars, by state, May 2025



Median hourly wage of landscaping and groundskeeping workers (SOC 37-3011) divided by the state Regional Price Parity (U.S. = 100). The small line under each state shows the wage as paid and the price index.

Source: BLS OEWS May 2025 state file; BEA Regional Price Parities 2024.

Florida's paid median of $17.84 sits in the middle of the pack. What drops it to the bottom is the price level: Florida's RPP is 103.4, above every other state on this list except California. A Florida worker on this median earns a wage that buys 13% less than the same occupation in California.

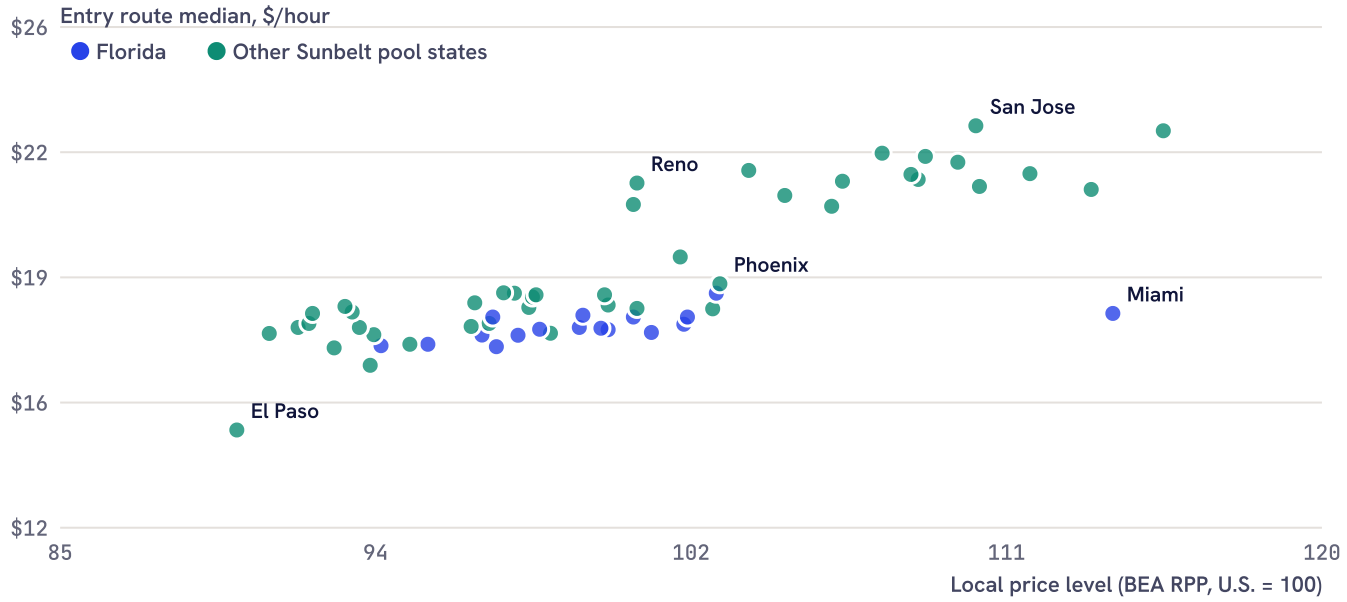
For an owner this cuts both ways. Your wage bill is not unusually high by national standards. But against local prices, Florida pays this occupation less than any other pool state. This atlas does not measure turnover; it shows where the paycheck is weakest.

THE SECOND RUNG

Florida, service and repair techs (SOC 49-9071): paid $22.15, worth $21.42 in national dollars. That is $4.31 an hour above entry route labor, roughly the step from "cleans pools" to "fixes equipment".

Across the Sunbelt, wages follow prices, but Florida lags behind its own price level

Florida metros sit low for their price level



60 metros in the 10 pool states with at least 1,000 landscaping and groundskeeping jobs. Each dot is one metro.

Source: BLS OEWS May 2025 metro file; BEA Regional Price Parities 2024.

Outside Florida, metros with higher prices tend to pay more for the same route labor. Florida's dots cluster in a tight band of wages across a wide band of prices. The highest real wages for this work in the Sunbelt are in Reno ($21.42), Modesto ($21.12), San Jose ($21.05). The spread between the lowest and highest large Sunbelt metro is $14.73 to $23.24 as paid, and $15.76 to $21.42 in national dollars.

05 FLORIDA METRO BY METRO: SAME PAYCHECK, VERY DIFFERENT PRICES

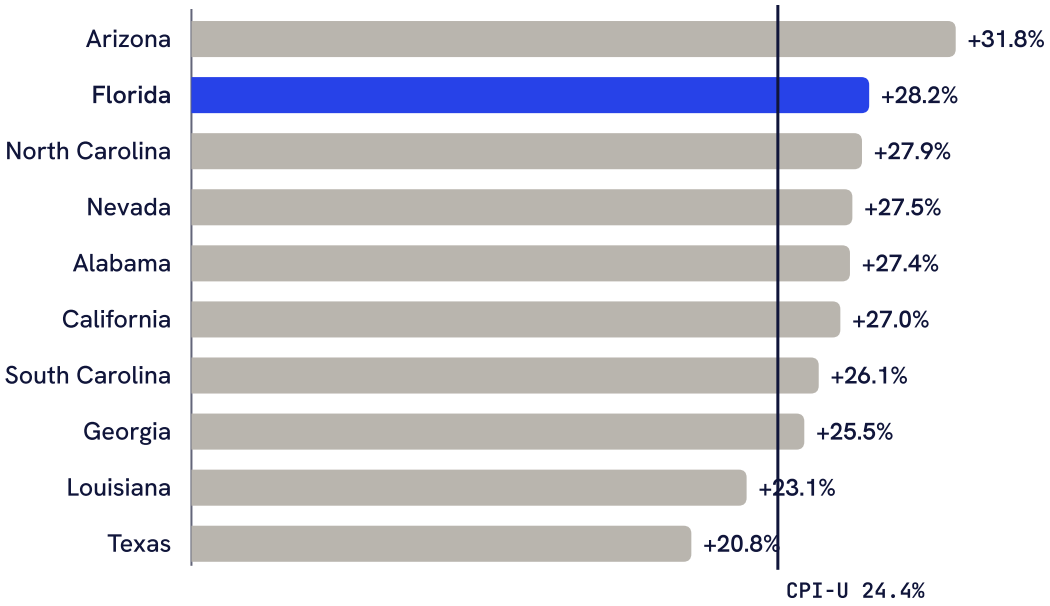
Sorted by what the entry route median buys in national dollars, lowest first.

METRO	ROUTE	RPP	IN U.S. $	2020–25	SERVICE	DRIVER	LABOR / ACCT
Miami	$17.99	114.2	$15.76	+25.5%	$22.26	$20.55	$60
Orlando	$17.46	101.4	$17.22	+29.7%	$22.15	$20.13	$59
Cape Coral	$17.69	102.3	$17.28	+23.1%	$22.25	$19.63	$59
North Port	$17.89	102.4	$17.47	+21.9%	$22.63	$20.00	$60
Port St. Lucie	$17.54	100.2	$17.50	+25.6%	$21.93	$19.50	$59
Lakeland	$17.06	97.1	$17.56	+26.9%	$22.04	$22.12	$57
Punta Gorda	$17.67	100.5	$17.58	+38.6%	$21.36	$21.91	$59
Palm Bay	$17.58	100.0	$17.58	+35.0%	$21.83	$19.48	$59
Panama City	$17.12	97.3	$17.60	+23.8%	$19.01	$18.40	$58
Deltona	$17.60	99.4	$17.71	+35.7%	$20.59	$18.58	$59
Tampa	$17.89	100.9	$17.73	+32.2%	$22.12	$19.47	$60
Pensacola	$17.38	97.7	$17.79	+33.8%	$21.72	$19.69	$58
Sebastian	$17.55	98.3	$17.85	+20.9%	$21.69	$18.76	$59
Homosassa Springs	$16.72	93.5	$17.89	+35.2%	$19.04	$16.75	$56
Naples	$18.56	103.2	$17.98	+16.5%	$22.82	$20.28	$62
Gainesville	$17.39	96.7	$17.98	+26.2%	$22.39	$18.65	$58
Ocala	$17.13	95.2	$17.99	+34.4%	$21.06	$20.15	$58
Jacksonville	$17.94	99.5	$18.03	+25.4%	$22.78	$20.11	$60
Tallahassee	$17.09	93.9	$18.20	+36.7%	$20.81	$18.15	$57
Sebring	$16.83	92.5	$18.20	+32.2%	$18.29	$17.70	$57
Crestview	$17.89	97.0	$18.44	+24.8%	$21.79	$19.99	$60
Wildwood	$17.37	85.4	$20.33	–	$21.79	$17.75	$58

Route = landscaping and groundskeeping (37-3011); service = maintenance and repair (49-9071); driver = light truck drivers (53-3033); BLS OEWS May 2025. RPP = BEA 2024. Labor / acct = route × 1.135 × 41 min ÷ 60 × 4.33 per month. – = no 2020 match.

06 FIVE YEARS OF RAISES: MOST OF THE SUNBELT KEPT PACE WITH PRICES, NOT MUCH MORE

Change in the entry route median, May 2020 to May 2025

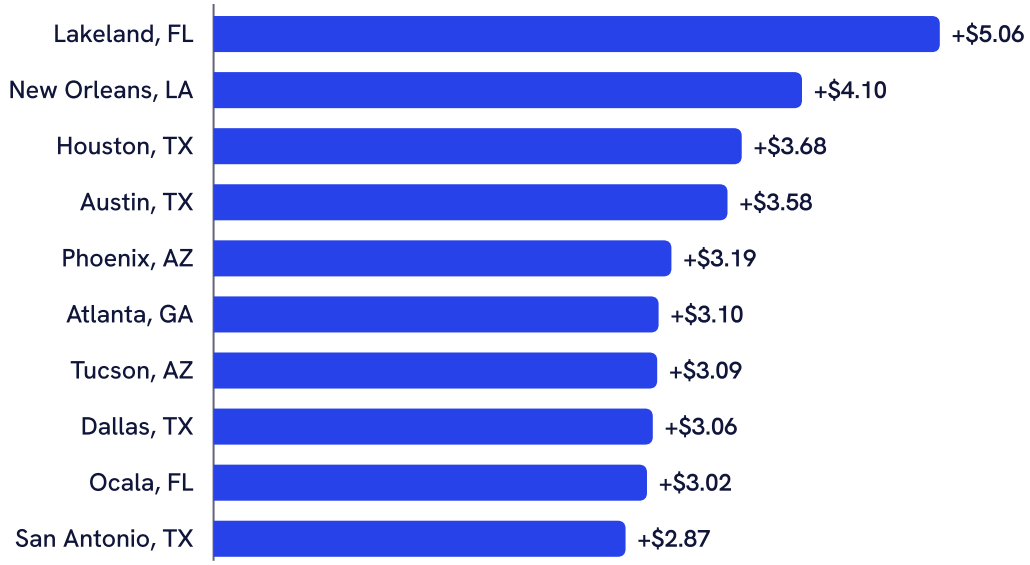


Landscaping and groundskeeping workers (37-3011), state medians. The line is consumer price inflation over the same period (CPI-U annual averages 2020 and 2025).

Source: BLS OEWS May 2020 and May 2025; BLS CPI-U series CUUR0000SA0.

58% of the large Sunbelt metros with a 2020 match saw route pay outgrow consumer prices. Nationally the median rose +23.3%, against 24.4% inflation: in real terms, flat. Two cautions. May 2020 was collected early in the pandemic, when job losses were concentrated in lower-paid work (BLS), which can lift a median; if anything that inflates the 2020 base, so the true rise may be larger. And OEWS is built for comparing places, not years. Treat the five-year change as a direction, not a decimal.

Where delivery driving pays most above route labor



Median light truck driver wage (53-3033) minus median landscaping and groundskeeping wage (37-3011), same metro, May 2025. Large Sunbelt metros only.

Source: BLS OEWS May 2025 metro file.

07 EACH $1 AN HOUR ADDS $3.36 A MONTH TO A WEEKLY ACCOUNT

Most pool companies price per account and pay per hour or per pool. The bridge between the two is the paid time each weekly stop takes, including the drive to it. The table shows the monthly labor cost of one weekly account at Florida's two main medians, for four stop lengths, and what each extra $1 an hour adds.

Two things follow. First, the stop length matters as much as the wage: going from 25 to 35 paid minutes costs more per account than a $3 raise at 25 minutes. Second, a 28% wage increase since 2020 is worth $13 a month per account at 41 minutes. If your monthly price has not moved by at least that much since 2020 and your pay tracks the median, labor now takes a bigger share of each account.

THE NUMBER TO CHECK AGAINST YOUR PRICE

Florida entry route labor at 41 paid minutes per stop: $46.75 per account per month in 2020, $59.94 in 2025. Before chemicals, truck, insurance and your own time.

PAID MINUTES PER STOP	PER $1/HOUR	AT FL ROUTE MEDIAN $17.84	AT FL SERVICE MEDIAN $22.15
25 min	$2.05	$36.57	$45.41
30 min	$2.46	$43.89	$54.49

PAID MINUTES PER STOP	PER $1/HOUR	AT FL ROUTE MEDIAN $17.84	AT FL SERVICE MEDIAN $22.15
41 min	$3.36	$59.94	$74.42
45 min	$3.69	$65.83	$81.73

Monthly labor cost per weekly account = wage × 1.135 × minutes ÷ 60 × 4.33. A model, not a measured cost: your own minutes and pay structure decide the real number.

08 LIMITATIONS

- **Proxy occupations.** No federal series measures pool technicians. Landscaping workers and general maintenance workers bracket the job, but a pool company that pays per pool, or pays commission on repairs, can sit well off these medians.
- **Cross-industry medians.** The figures cover every employer of these occupations, not pool companies alone. Small route businesses may pay below or above them.
- **Time comparisons.** BLS cautions that OEWS is designed for comparing areas and occupations at one point in time; changes in survey method, metro boundaries and the 2020 pandemic sample all affect the five-year change.
- **Price years differ.** Wages are May 2025; the newest price parities are for 2024. If local prices rose faster than the national average after 2024, the adjusted figures overstate what Florida pay buys. Florida would leave last place only if its price level were about 98.0 instead of 103.4.
- **The cost-per-account figures are a model** built on two assumptions (minutes per stop, employer cost factor). Change either and the dollar figures change in proportion.

09 WHAT AN OWNER CAN DO WITH THIS

- [ ] Look up your metro in the table or the data file and write down three numbers: the route median, the service median and the delivery-driver median. If you require a clean driving record, the driver median is your benchmark too.
- [ ] Divide a tech's paid minutes for one ordinary day by the pools served that day. Use that number, not a guess, in the worksheet below.
- [ ] Compare the labor cost per account with what you charge. Report No. 05 shows what is left for chemicals, the truck and your own time on a typical route.
- [ ] Check when you last raised prices. Florida route pay went up 28% from 2020 to 2025.
- [ ] If you hire in Miami–Fort Lauderdale–West Palm Beach (price level 114.2), know that the same wage buys less there than anywhere else in the large Sunbelt metros.

WORKSHEET · LABOR COST PER WEEKLY ACCOUNT

LINE	YOUR NUMBER	EXAMPLE (FLORIDA)
A. Hourly pay, before taxes	_____	$17.84
B. Employer cost factor (payroll taxes, workers' comp)	_____	1.135
C. Paid minutes per account (paid day ÷ pools per day)	_____	41
D. Labor per account per month = A × B × C ÷ 60 × 4.33	_____	$59.94
E. Your monthly price per account	_____	—
F. Labor share of price = D ÷ E	_____	—

10 SOURCES

1. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2025: metropolitan area, state and national files (oesm25ma, oesm25st, oesm25nat). bls.gov/oes/tables.htm. Retrieved Oct 30, 2026 from the Internet Archive copy of the BLS file (web.archive.org), because bls.gov blocks automated downloads.
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6. O*NET OnLine, occupation search "pool service technician". onetonline.org. Accessed Oct 30, 2026.

7. BLS, OEWS frequently asked questions on comparing estimates over time. bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Accessed Oct 30, 2026.
8. Ruberio Research No. 05, Pool Route Profitability Gap (October 2026), for the minutes per stop and the employer cost factor.

11 ABOUT THIS RESEARCH

WHO MADE THIS

Ruberio is a Dutch design studio: Ruben designs, Sven answers every email. We're focused on websites for pool service companies and fence contractors in Florida. We ran this study because the price an owner can put on a website starts with what the work costs, and labor is most of that. We don't sell routes, software, insurance or financing, and nobody named here paid for or reviewed this report. The data file (all 393 metros, six occupations) and the scripts are available on request. If you spot an error, email hello@ruberio.com and we'll correct it and note the change.