

Data Note

Data Source:
American Community
Survey, 2018

Disability and Occupation

By John Shepard

People with disabilities¹ experience a significantly lower rate of employment (37%) than people without disabilities (76%) according to the 2018 American Community Survey (ACS). Less is known about the types of work people with disabilities do. Using the occupational classification system within the ACS, researchers explored the prevalence of people with disabilities within occupational groupings.

People with disabilities constitute 6.8% of all working-age individuals (21-64 years) who are employed in the United States. Figure 1 shows the prevalence of people with disabilities across occupational groupings. The group “management, business, science, and arts” has the lowest percentage of people with disabilities (4.8%). The category “production, transportation, and material moving” has the highest percentage of people with disabilities. The US Department of Labor projects that over the next ten years the number of jobs available in this category will decline by 4.5% (BLS, 2019). However, occupations such as healthcare support and personal care and service are projected to increase by 17.4% and 12.7%, respectively.

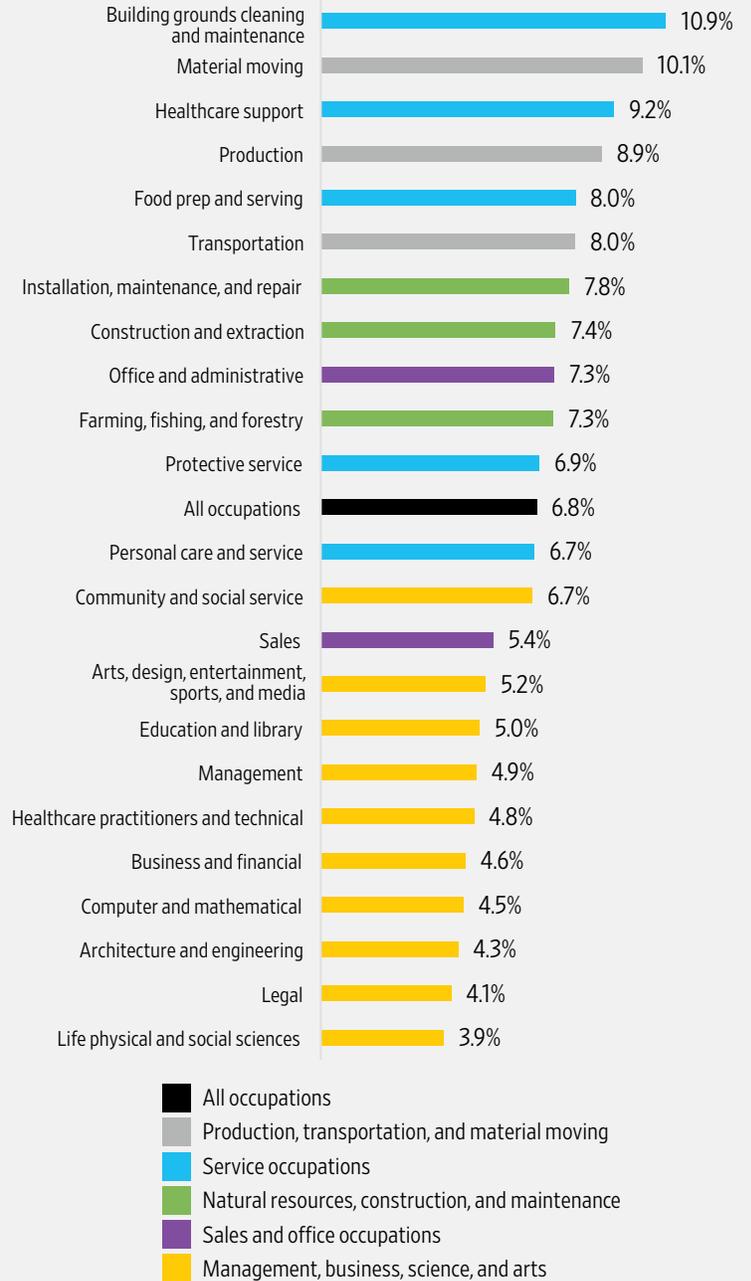
Disability employment service professionals should consider these data when supporting individuals with disabilities to pursue employment, post-secondary education, and occupational certification programs.

¹People included in the disability category are those who report at least one of the following six disabilities listed on the ACS: self-care difficulty, hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, independent living difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, or cognitive difficulty.

Suggested Citation

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Figure 1. Percentage of People with Disabilities Across Occupational Categories



Source: American Community Survey (ACS), 2018.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019, September 4). Employment Projections – 2018-2028. News Release. U.S. Department of Labor. <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecopro.pdf>
<https://www.census.gov/topics/health/disability.html>

