This guide provides steps to access County Business Patterns (CBP) data in Comma Separated files (CSV) or the American FactFinder (AFF). You may also contact the U.S. Census Bureau’s CBP staff at 301-763-2580 or ewd.county.business.patterns@census.gov for assistance.

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Frequently Asked Questions

• **What is the source of CBP data?**
  CBP data are extracted from the Business Register, the Census Bureau's file of all known single and multi-establishment companies. Data comes from a variety of sources, including the Economic Census, the Annual Survey of Manufactures, and Current Business Surveys, as well as from administrative records of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the Social Security Administration (SSA), and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

• **Are sales and receipts data provided in CBP?**
  No. Sales and receipts data are available from other Census Bureau programs. For more information, please see the Census Bureau's economic data.

• **Can I find data on a specific company or get a list of companies in an area?**
  The Census Bureau is forbidden by Federal Law, Title 13 of the U.S. Code, from providing data that can be linked to specific establishments, which includes any lists of companies in a designated area. Even revealing that an entity is in the data is prohibited under this law.

• **Can CBP be used as a time series?**
  We don't recommend using CBP data as a time series. While CBP publishes annually, the data is meant to be more of a snap shot in time. Further, CBP does not revise data for prior years. CBP relies on administrative data that is subject to non sampling error.
Definitions

• **Legal Form of Organization (LFO)** – An LFO is the organizational structure a firm chooses to adopt.

• **North America Industry Classification System (NAICS)** – The standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments. For more information, visit the [NAICS website](http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/definitions.htm).

• **Noise Infusion** – A method of disclosure avoidance in which values for each firm are perturbed prior to the data being released. Read more on our [How the Data Are Collected](http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/definitions.htm) page.

• **NOISE Flags** –
  - G - Low Noise Infusion
  - H - Medium Noise Infusion
  - J - High Noise Infusion
  - D - Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual companies; data are included in higher level totals
  - S – Withheld because estimate did not meet publication standards

• **Statewide** – Classification for employees in a state without a fixed location.
County Business Patterns (CBP)

CBP is an annual series that provides subnational economic data by industry. This series includes the number of establishments, employment during the week of March 12, first quarter payroll, and annual payroll.

What is CBP?

Where can I find CBP data?

Visualizations

Latest

2016 County Business Patterns Shows Overall Growth in Employment

April 19, 2016

Construction led all sectors in the largest rate of employment growth in 2016, increasing by 5.0 percent from 2015 to 2016, according to new estimates from the County Business Patterns (CBP) program.

Data is available:

- through AFF
- downloadable (in CSV)
- by the Congressional District tool
- API
Using the Data Page

County Business Patterns (CBP)

Data

County Business Patterns has been produced as a consistent, annual series since 1964 and ZIP Code Business Patterns since 1994. Printed reports were published annually through 2004 and at irregular intervals dating back to 1946. Printed volumes in major depository libraries are the only forms in which data are available prior to 1986.

Visit The National Archives to find files for years prior to 1986.

CBP Tables
CBP data tables are available in American Factfinder from 2004-present

CBP Datasets
CBP data are available in downloadable CSV format, along with record layouts and reference guides, from 1986-present.

CBP by Congressional District
My Congressional District tool allows data users to view the most recent CBP data and American Community Survey data by congressional district.

API
The Census Bureau’s Application Programming Interface (API) allows users to create custom queries. Users can embed these statistics into web or mobile apps.
To access data using AFF, simply click on any of the tables on the CBP Tables page. You will then be prompted to select year, which will then take you to AFF.
Accessing Data using American FactFinder (AFF)

Customize your search in Advanced Search...

1. Filter data by **Geographies** (U.S., state, county, ZIP, metropolitan and micropolitan areas, or congressional district).
2. Filter by **Industry Codes** (NAICS)
3. Once you have applied any specific, click directly on the Table, File, or Document Title you wish to view

The default is U.S. totals at the industry (2-digit NAICS) level
AFF Features

- Open by simply clicking on table title (1)
- OR check off the boxes of multiple tables (2) and ...
- ...click View (3)
AFF Features

Modify Table allows data users to Show Hidden Rows/Columns, such as noise flags.
Searching for Statewide in AFF

1. Make sure Business Patterns is selected (under Program).
2. Select Geographies
3. Under the ‘Name’ tab and under ‘Enter a geography name or use the Geography Filter Options below’, type ‘statewide’ and hit enter
4. Be sure to select the ‘Show Geographic Components (e.g., urban, rural)’ box under Geography Filter Options.
To download the desired table, select your preferred options, click OK, and then click Download.
Data users can download CBP datasets in CSV format by clicking on **CBP Datasets** and selecting the desired year.

Data files are available from 1986 to 2016.
Downloading Data in Comma-Separated Value (CSV)

Datasets are available as .ZIP files which may contain multiple files.

Once selecting a year, you will have access to all available datasets for that year. Record layouts are also available for reference.
Additional Links

Further help

Help with County Business Patterns Data
• Phone: (301)763-2580
• E-mail: ewd.county.business.patterns@census.gov

Help with American FactFinder (economic data only)
• Phone: (301)763-5185
• E-mail: econ.dissemination@census.gov

Help with American FactFinder (demographic and other data)
• Phone: (301)763-INFO(4636)
• Website: https://ask.census.gov/newrequest.php

Related links:
• 2017 Economic Census: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census.html
• American FactFinder: http://factfinder.census.gov/
• Business Dynamics Statistics: https://www.census.gov/ces/dataproducts/bds/
• Census Bureau Other Economic Programs: http://www.census.gov/econ/other_econ.html
• Nonemployer Statistics: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/nonemployer-statistics/data.html
• North American Industry Classification System: http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/
• Statistics on U.S. Businesses: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/susb.html