South Carolina & SOC Codes

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SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
Employment and Workforce

Background

- Act 67 passed in 2023.

- Data Collection began in Q1 2024.

- The S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) took 349 phone calls to help companies report SOC Codes in Q1 and Q2 2024.

- Call volume declined significantly through the 2nd quarter before briefly spiking in the 3rd quarter due to a letter campaign to erroneous reporters.

Outcomes and Data Acquisition

- In total as of Sept. 5th, we received **1,898,749** SOC Code input attempts from **96,474** different employers in the 2024 Q2 Unemployment Insurance (UI) records. That is *76 percent* of the employers that submitted UI wage data.

- Compared to other states that are collecting SOC Codes, this response rate in our first year is outstanding!

- We are also collecting hours worked.

The Data Cleaning Process

- Currently, we are in the process of cleaning and validating the data. With a data set this immense, this has been a significant challenge.

- We validate that the SOC Codes are accurate six-digit codes.

  - We produced a four-part typology of the errors

    1) Letters: a word as a description

    2) Filler: like all 0's or all 9's

    3) Numbers, other: an employee number or other numeric code that is not six digits

    4) Attempted code: a six-digit code that does not correspond to a SOC code (includes "banner" codes that end in zero)

Calls to Those Who Failed to Submit

- **76 percent** of businesses who submitted wage data have attempted to submit SOC Codes.

- For the remainder, our UI department has been calling to remind the businesses of the new South Carolina requirement.

Sending Letters to Increase Participation

- Having identified spurious SOC Code entries, we have started the process of sending letters to those who entered incorrect SOC codes.

- Having the right tone in SOC Code messaging.

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The Process

- The second step is to match the codes to industry standards.

  - The most challenging step here is to determine how much data manipulation is appropriate.

  - We initially tried to match SOC Codes to industry standards, but this was more difficult than assumed.

  - Additionally, over-matching to industry standards can erase trends in the data specific to the South Carolina workforce, which are the very trends we are trying to capture.

Wrong SOC Code Usage

- Largely, we have moved on to examining the data in two course-grained ways.

   1. The number of unique SOC Codes submitted by a company with 30 or more employees.

   2. The frequency of use of Codes ending in 99, the "all other" category. Some companies may have seen these as a convenient catch-all, but we need these data to be as accurate as possible.

Insights and Lessons Learned

- Our first major takeaway is that people will take advantage of help entering the SOC Codes if offered.

- Second, clearly explaining the nature of the data to be entered is key.

- Industry staffing patterns do not match state-specific data as well as we hoped.

Why Are SOC Codes Important to LMI?

- It provides specific data about South Carolina's workforce, giving us a unique glimpse into the cultural, environmental, industrial, and educational traits that make up our labor market.

Questions?

Labor Market Information

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