



Analysis & Evaluation Office, Regional Analysis & Outreach Unit

**To:** Kathy Schwantes, Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC  
**From:** Cameron Macht, DEED Regional Labor Market Analyst, Central and Southwest  
**Date:** September 22, 2006  
**Re:** Contact Center Worker Availability for Lake Lillian and Willmar area, Minnesota

In response to your request, we have compiled labor market information for Kandiyohi County and the greater Willmar lakes area, including Lake Lillian. The information is organized as follows: (I) Labor Market Area (LMA) identifies where workers employed in Kandiyohi County live and provides labor force, employment, and unemployment statistics for the Kandiyohi County LMA to inform you about worker availability, and (II) Competitive Wages provides wage information on the call center related industries and occupations in the Kandiyohi County area.

As DEED's labor market expert in this region, I am available to answer questions and provide additional information. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

**I. Labor Market Area**

Table 1 presents worker origins, showing where people that work in Kandiyohi County live. The surrounding counties are designated as part of Kandiyohi County's LMA if the residence county supplies at least 2 percent of the workforce county's workers, or if the workforce county employs at least 2 percent of the residence county's employed residents. An employer considering Lake Lillian should be interested in the labor force in the LMA counties because the LMA counties supply a significant share of the county's workers. In addition, some small counties are part of an LMA because a significant share of the county's employed residents work in the city. **The LMA is the area from which a new or expanding business can expect to draw its workers.** (See Table 1.)

Residence County	Count of Workers in Kandiyohi Co.	Total Workforce in Residence Co.	Total Employed Workforce in Residence Co.	Total Unemployed Workforce in Residence Co.	Unemp. Rate
Kandiyohi Co.	18,409	24,374	23,661	713	2.9%
Swift Co.	646	5,392	5,197	195	3.6%
Chippewa Co.	511	7,212	6,981	231	3.2%
Stearns Co.	465	80,862	78,289	2,573	3.2%
Renville Co.	422	8,801	8,451	350	4.0%
Meeker Co.	381	12,884	12,433	451	3.5%
Other Counties	595	25,696	24,901	795	3.1%
<b>Total Workforce</b>	<b>21,429</b>	<b>165,221</b>	<b>159,913</b>	<b>5,308</b>	<b>3.2%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) - Aug. 2006*

As shown above, the standard measure of available workers is the unemployment rate. But Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims data are also useful to measure worker availability because recently laid-off workers are potentially available to a new employer. UI claims are an indicator of the number of laid-off workers flowing into the job market, but does not include all of the unemployed that do not make UI claims. It is the laid-off workers in occupations needed for call centers that are of greatest interest. Table 2 displays the UI claims by Sales and Related workers

and Office and Administrative Support workers. These two occupational groups have the largest shares of call center employment: sales and related occupations make up 44.5 percent of call center jobs nationwide, and office and administrative support occupations make up 42.6 percent.<sup>1</sup> Given that the average duration of unemployment benefits is approximately 1 quarter (13 weeks), the average number of UI claims per quarter is informative about the stream of laid off job seekers potentially available to a new employer. (See Table 2.)

**Table 2: Jobseekers Filing Unemployment Claims, Calendar Year 2005 by Occupation**

	All Occupations		Sales and Related		Office & Admin. Support	
	UI Claims	Average per Quarter	UI Claims	Average per Quarter	UI Claims	Average per Quarter
Kandiyohi County	1,969	492	105	26	210	53
Swift County	444	111	19	5	39	10
Chippewa County	701	175	15	4	54	14
Stearns County	9,625	2,406	408	102	1,012	253
Renville County	875	219	16	4	70	18
Meeker County	1,492	373	27	7	118	30
Kandiyohi County LMA, Total	15,106	3,776	590	148	1,503	378

*Source: DEED UI statistics*

## II. Competitive Wages

While many unemployed workers will apply for a job with a new employer, research shows that the majority of new hires come from job switchers. Analysis of county-level employment and wage data (derived from unemployment insurance records) identifies the number employed in services jobs within the LMA and the wages these workers earn. (See Table 3.) Recall that commuting data identify the counties that supply most of the city's workers. An employer paying higher wages located in an LMA could potentially hire workers away from their current jobs. For example, a job paying \$10 per hour in Lake Lillian might be attractive to the 37,202 service workers in the Kandiyohi County LMA that earn less than that.

**Table 3: Wage Distribution of Services Jobs, 2002**

Kandiyohi County LMA	Number of Services Providing Workers Earning . . .						
	UP TO \$5.15	\$5.16 TO 9.99	\$10.00 TO 14.99	\$15.00 TO 19.99	\$20.00 TO 24.99	\$25.00 TO 29.99	\$30.00 AND UP
Kandiyohi County	280	6,611	4,342	2,028	1,052	700	1,257
Swift County	49	1,174	1,073	356	159	117	180
Chippewa County	31	2,130	1,099	422	216	144	132
Stearns County	1,307	21,873	16,081	7,675	4,523	2,825	5,324
Renville County	117	1,539	1,123	545	304	161	331
Meeker County	216	1,875	1,355	509	320	177	252
Total	2,000	35,202	25,073	11,536	6,576	4,124	7,477
Cumulative	2,000	37,202	62,275	73,812	80,387	84,511	91,988

*Source: DEED, Analysis of Unemployment Insurance Wage Detail*

Wages are a very important consideration for both employers and potential workers. All else being equal, employers would prefer to get skilled workers at less cost; while workers typically make job decisions based on compensation (wages, benefits, etc.). Minnesota Salary Survey data is available through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2006 for the Willmar area, including Kandiyohi, Meeker, McLeod, and Renville Counties. Table 4 below contains information on the estimated employment and market wages for the top 40 occupations needed by the Telephone Call Center industry, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (See Table 4.)

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Industry-Specific Occupational Employment Statistics*

**Table 4: Top 40 Occupations in the "Telephone Call Centers" industry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr. 2006**

SOC Occupation Title	Industry Percent Dist. of Workers	Region 6E (Willmar area)				Minnesota	Region 6E
		25th Percent Wage	Median Hourly Wage	75th Percent Wage	Regional Estimated Employ.	Median Hourly Wage	Percent of State Wage
Total, all occupations	100	\$9.86	<b>\$13.56</b>	\$19.87	<b>49,170</b>	<b>\$16.24</b>	83.5%
Telemarketers	39.4	\$8.80	<b>\$10.02</b>	\$11.14	<b>160</b>	<b>\$11.05</b>	90.7%
Customer service representatives	25.6	\$12.03	<b>\$14.00</b>	\$17.18	<b>310</b>	<b>\$15.36</b>	91.1%
Switchboard operators, including answering service	6.2	\$10.48	<b>\$11.88</b>	\$13.04	<b>20</b>	<b>\$11.86</b>	100.2%
First-line supervisors of office & admin. support workers	2.5	\$10.97	<b>\$14.58</b>	\$20.32	<b>360</b>	<b>\$21.40</b>	68.1%
Order clerks	2.4	\$6.48	<b>\$7.81</b>	\$11.60	<b>170</b>	<b>\$14.13</b>	55.3%
First-line supervisors/managers of non-retail sales workers	2.3	\$25.44	<b>\$31.33</b>	\$35.84	<b>110</b>	<b>\$35.89</b>	87.3%
Computer support specialists	2.1	\$15.43	<b>\$17.59</b>	\$20.98	<b>110</b>	<b>\$21.08</b>	83.4%
Sales representatives, services, all other	1.8	\$13.34	<b>\$17.33</b>	\$21.86	<b>110</b>	<b>\$25.29</b>	68.5%
Office clerks, general	1.2	\$9.18	<b>\$10.65</b>	\$12.84	<b>1,130</b>	<b>\$12.58</b>	84.7%
General & operations managers	1	\$23.79	<b>\$31.43</b>	\$47.30	<b>560</b>	<b>\$40.64</b>	77.3%
Interviewers, except eligibility & loan	0.8	\$11.83	<b>\$13.20</b>	\$14.58	<b>30</b>	<b>\$12.54</b>	105.3%
Training & development specialists	0.7	\$18.48	<b>\$20.34</b>	\$22.26	<b>90</b>	<b>\$25.13</b>	80.9%
Computer systems analysts	0.6	\$26.23	<b>\$31.43</b>	\$36.37	<b>70</b>	<b>\$32.73</b>	96.0%
Bill & account collectors	0.5	\$10.01	<b>\$12.37</b>	\$14.28	<b>60</b>	<b>\$15.22</b>	81.3%
Business operation specialists, all other	0.5	\$17.18	<b>\$19.83</b>	\$22.88	<b>770</b>	<b>\$22.39</b>	88.6%
Computer & information systems managers	0.4	\$36.87	<b>\$46.35</b>	\$52.81	<b>70</b>	<b>\$49.31</b>	94.0%
Sales reps., wholesale & mfg., exc. tech. & sci. products	0.4	\$17.05	<b>\$22.05</b>	\$30.38	<b>450</b>	<b>\$25.15</b>	87.7%
Computer programmers	0.4	\$18.48	<b>\$20.62</b>	\$22.94	<b>40</b>	<b>\$32.06</b>	64.3%
Executive secretaries & administrative assistants	0.4	\$13.93	<b>\$16.80</b>	\$19.52	<b>270</b>	<b>\$18.83</b>	89.2%
Receptionists & information clerks	0.4	\$8.67	<b>\$10.73</b>	\$13.39	<b>400</b>	<b>\$12.01</b>	89.3%
Data entry keyers	0.4	\$11.37	<b>\$12.40</b>	\$13.35	<b>60</b>	<b>\$12.72</b>	97.5%
Sales managers	0.4	\$39.03	<b>\$53.65</b>	\$70.87	<b>80</b>	<b>\$49.38</b>	108.6%
Computer software engineers, systems software	0.3	\$26.06	<b>\$36.43</b>	\$49.58	<b>160</b>	<b>\$39.44</b>	92.4%
Bookkeeping, accounting, & auditing clerks	0.3	\$10.40	<b>\$13.06</b>	\$16.12	<b>740</b>	<b>\$15.30</b>	85.4%
Network & computer systems administrators	0.3	\$19.95	<b>\$23.61</b>	\$29.57	<b>110</b>	<b>\$29.13</b>	81.1%
Management analysts	0.3	\$31.57	<b>\$40.42</b>	\$51.75	<b>60</b>	<b>\$32.55</b>	124.2%
Accountants & auditors	0.3	\$19.19	<b>\$22.99</b>	\$27.38	<b>320</b>	<b>\$25.34</b>	90.7%
Sales & related workers, all other	0.2	\$20.53	<b>\$24.44</b>	\$26.88	<b>60</b>	<b>\$18.07</b>	135.3%
Mail clerks & mail machine operators, except postal service	0.2	\$7.48	<b>\$11.10</b>	\$14.84	<b>20</b>	<b>\$11.81</b>	94.0%
Secretaries, except legal, medical, & executive	0.2	\$12.95	<b>\$15.45</b>	\$19.13	<b>110</b>	<b>\$16.37</b>	94.4%
Payroll & timekeeping clerks	0.2	\$11.80	<b>\$14.17</b>	\$16.26	<b>70</b>	<b>\$16.70</b>	84.9%
First-line supervisors/managers of retail sales workers	0.2	\$10.61	<b>\$13.60</b>	\$17.14	<b>460</b>	<b>\$15.74</b>	86.4%
Reservation & transportation ticket agents & travel clerks	0.2	\$9.02	<b>\$11.47</b>	\$14.51	<b>10</b>	<b>\$17.21</b>	66.6%
Human resources assistants, except payroll & timekeeping	0.2	\$12.05	<b>\$14.20</b>	\$18.52	<b>60</b>	<b>\$16.71</b>	85.0%
Operations research analysts	0.2	\$21.47	<b>\$24.79</b>	\$37.20	<b>30</b>	<b>\$25.03</b>	99.0%
Administrative services managers	0.2	\$24.70	<b>\$34.46</b>	\$44.52	<b>30</b>	<b>\$35.68</b>	96.6%
Employment, recruitment, & placement specialists	0.2	\$15.18	<b>\$16.96</b>	\$19.96	<b>30</b>	<b>\$21.63</b>	78.4%
Truck drivers, light or delivery services	0.1	\$9.77	<b>\$11.07</b>	\$13.14	<b>320</b>	<b>\$13.13</b>	84.3%
Laborers & freight, stock, & material movers, hand	0.1	\$8.21	<b>\$10.97</b>	\$13.94	<b>650</b>	<b>\$12.16</b>	90.2%
Demonstrators & product promoters	0.1	\$7.91	<b>\$8.50</b>	\$9.09	<b>20</b>	<b>\$10.04</b>	84.7%
<b>Total, Call Center Occupations</b>					<b>8,690</b>		

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Industry-Occupation Matrix; DEED Minnesota Salary Survey 2nd Quarter 2006

<http://data.bls.gov/oep/servlet/oep.nioem.servlet.ActionServlet?Action=empios&Type=Industry>

<http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi/tools/oes/geog.asp>