

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Human Resource Management

Assigning SOC Extension Codes

The most recent documentation on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system is the *Standard Occupational Classification Manual*, published October 2000 (SOC-2000). Information on this publication may be obtained from the US Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service (NTIS). The SOC provides classifications for all legitimate work performed for pay in the United States.

SOC codes consist of six digits that are usually written in the form 00-0000. These digits identify increasingly detailed classifications of work ranging through major group, 00-0000; minor group, 00-0000; broad occupation, 00-0000; and detailed occupation, 00-0000.

Those who wish to record more detail than the SOC allows are encouraged to develop extensions to the basic SOC codes.

Extensions to this coding system are usually written by placing a decimal point after the SOC code and appending some number of digits.

When Virginia decided to add SOC codes to its position records, it allowed for a four-digit extension to these codes. These extensions are the subject of this document.

If extensions are used to identify subgroups of work, then titles and definitions are also needed to accompany the extension codes. In order to capitalize on the existence of a coding scheme that already provides extensions to the SOC system, including titles and definitions, Virginia considers the O*NET when it develops extension codes.

The O*NET is the job classification system that has replaced the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) for use by the state employment security agencies (SESAs) in recording employers' job orders and applicants' work experience. It is based on the SOC and provides two-digit extensions to the SOC codes. O*NET codes, thus have the form, 00-0000.00. The most recent version of the O*NET system, O*NET 3.1, provides extensions for 121 of the 821 detailed occupations in the SOC in order to identify more detailed groupings of work.

When the last digit in an SOC–2000 detailed occupation code is a 9, it signals that the classification is used to identify “All Other” workers in a broad occupation – that is, those workers who do not belong in a specifically described detailed occupation within the broad occupation. O*NET 3.1 assigns a “99” extension to all such detailed occupations. The O*NET “99” extension, therefore, does not identify a specialized grouping of work within the detailed occupation. An example of the O*NET coding scheme appears below.

Example:

SOC Code	O*NET Code	SOC – O*NET Title
19-3030		Psychologists (SOC Broad Occupation composed of three detailed occupations, one being “All Other”)
19-3031	19-3031.00	Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists (holds three O*NET extensions)
	19-3031.01	Educational Psychologists
	19-3031.02	Clinical Psychologists
	19-3031.03	Counseling Psychologists
19-3032	19-3032.00	Industrial-Organizational Psychologists (no subgroups)
19-3039	19-3039.99	Psychologists, All Others

Virginia assigns its four-digit extension codes in a manner that does not conflict with the O*NET extensions. This means that the two left-most digits are used for O*NET extensions or for Virginia-specific identifiers. If Virginia identifies work that matches an O*NET extension, then it assigns the same two O*NET digits to identify this work. If Virginia identifies a group of work that does not match an O*NET definition, then it assigns two digits that do not conflict with existing O*NET identifications. If Virginia wishes to identify subgroups of work within either the O*NET or the Virginia-specific grouping, it uses the third digit in the extension code. The fourth digit is reserved for a level indicator.

An example of a third digit assignment to identify a subspecialty within an O*NET specialty follows.

Example:

13-2011.0000	Accountants and Auditors (SOC detailed occupation with a null extension)
13-2011.0100	Accountants (O*NET specialty)
13-2011.0200	Auditors (O*NET specialty)
13-2011.02 <u>1</u> 0	Internal Auditors (Virginia subspecialty)
13-2011.02 <u>2</u> 0	External Auditors (Virginia subspecialty)

Note that because O*NET uses the “99” extension in a specific way, Virginia does not use “99” to identify subgroups of work in the two left-most digits of the extension code.

The whole SOC-Extension code structure used in Virginia may be represented as:

aa-bccd.eefg

where:

aa	is the SOC major group
b	is the SOC minor group
cc	is the SOC broad occupation
d	is the SOC detailed occupation
ee	is the O*NET or Virginia-specific identification of a work specialty within a detailed occupation
f	identifies a subspecialty of work
g	identifies the work-level (e.g. trainee, journey, expert)

The development of specialty and subspecialty identifiers is coordinated by Virginia's Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). Identifiers are developed either by work-teams formed by DHRM or by DHRM compensation consultants in response to agency requests. Contact DHRM's Office of Compensation and Policy for additional information on this subject.