Los Angeles Mobility Atlas

February 2026

About the Burning Glass Institute

Situated at the intersection of learning and work, The Burning Glass Institute advances data-driven research and practice on the future of work and of workers. We work with employers, educators, and policymakers to develop solutions that build mobility, opportunity, and equity through skills.

Through our expertise in mining new datasets for actionable insight, The Burning Glass Institute's discourse-shaping research draws attention to pressing problems and frames the potential for new approaches. Building on a legacy of breakthrough innovation in labor market analytics, the Institute serves as a trusted source bridging industry, educators, policy makers, and workers.

As rapid change increasingly challenges employers and workers alike, the Institute delivers insightful analysis of labor market trends and develops innovative, data-first models of economic mobility and workforce equity.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

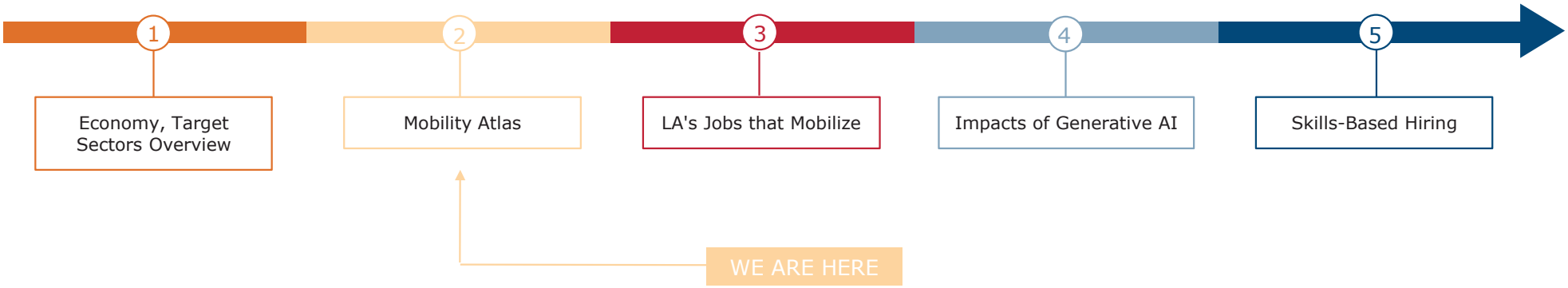
Advancing Economic Mobility in the LA Basin
Project Overview

The size strength of Los Angeles' economy masks intolerable levels of poverty and instability. At the same time, the forces that are disrupting economies across the US and the world – gig work, artificial intelligence, immigration changes – are especially acute in LA.

The Burning Glass Institute is leveraging public and proprietary data in order to reveal patterns of economic mobility and stagnation. BGI aims to identify the factors that influence economic mobility in LA and inform targeted interventions and policies that will support workers transitioning to better paying, more stable jobs and careers.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Second in a Series of Research Briefs



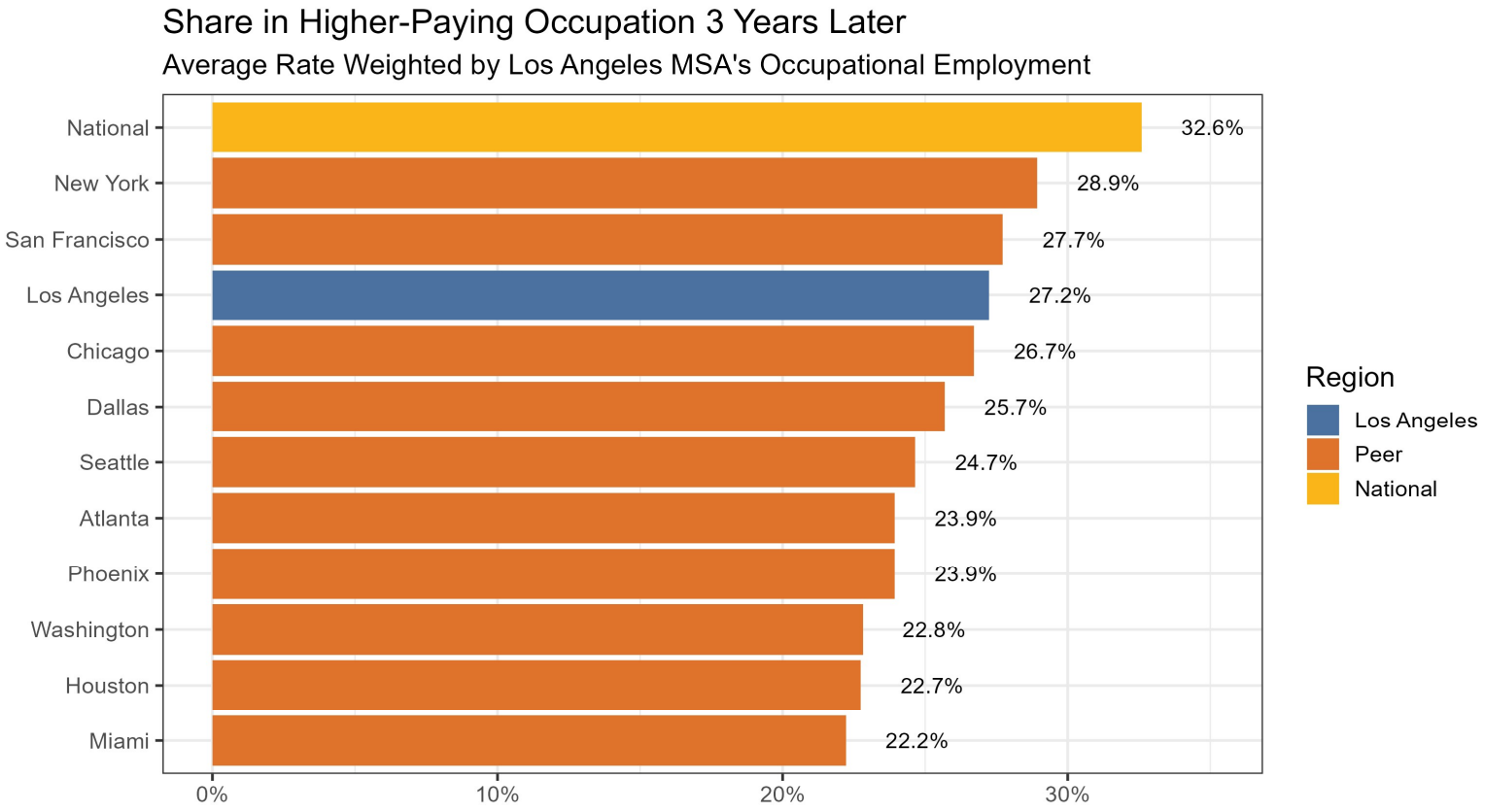
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Los Angeles worker mobility lags that of California and the US as a whole



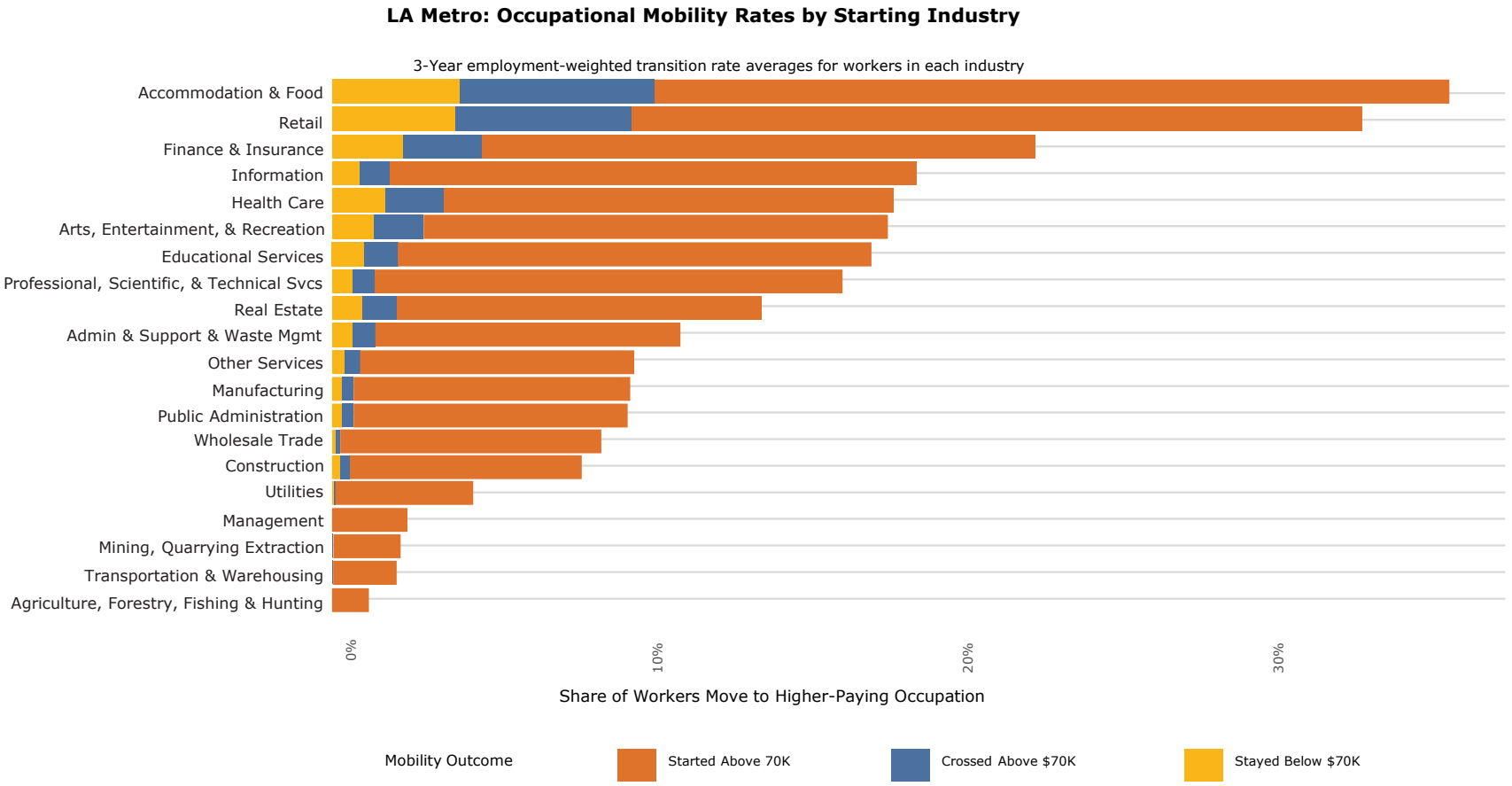
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Of major metros, LA mobility is above average but lags the Bay Area and New York. Though all of the largest metros lag the national average for mobility frequency



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

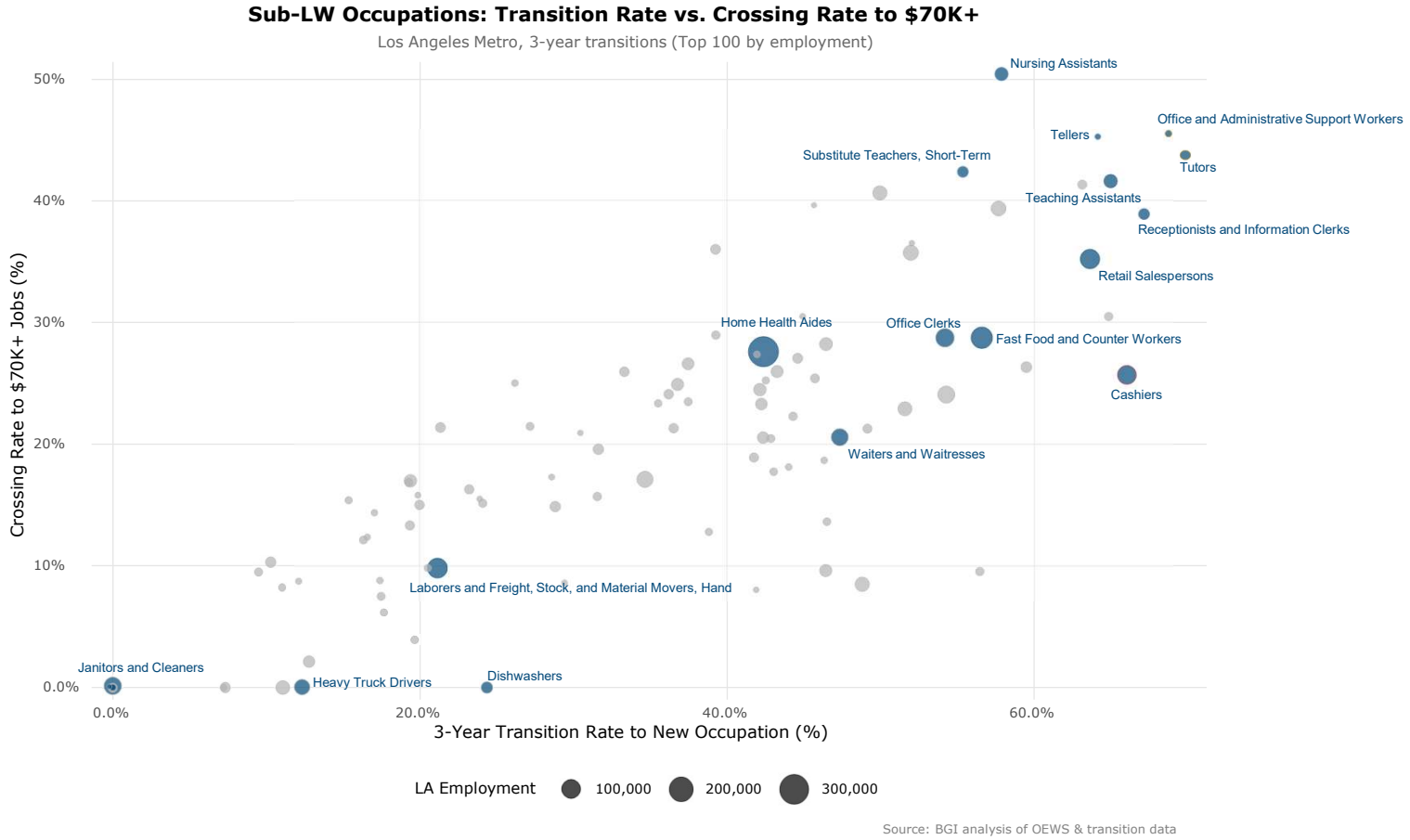
Even in higher-mobility industries, advancement across the Living Wage threshold is a challenge



Source: BGI analysis of job transitions data and OEWS employment

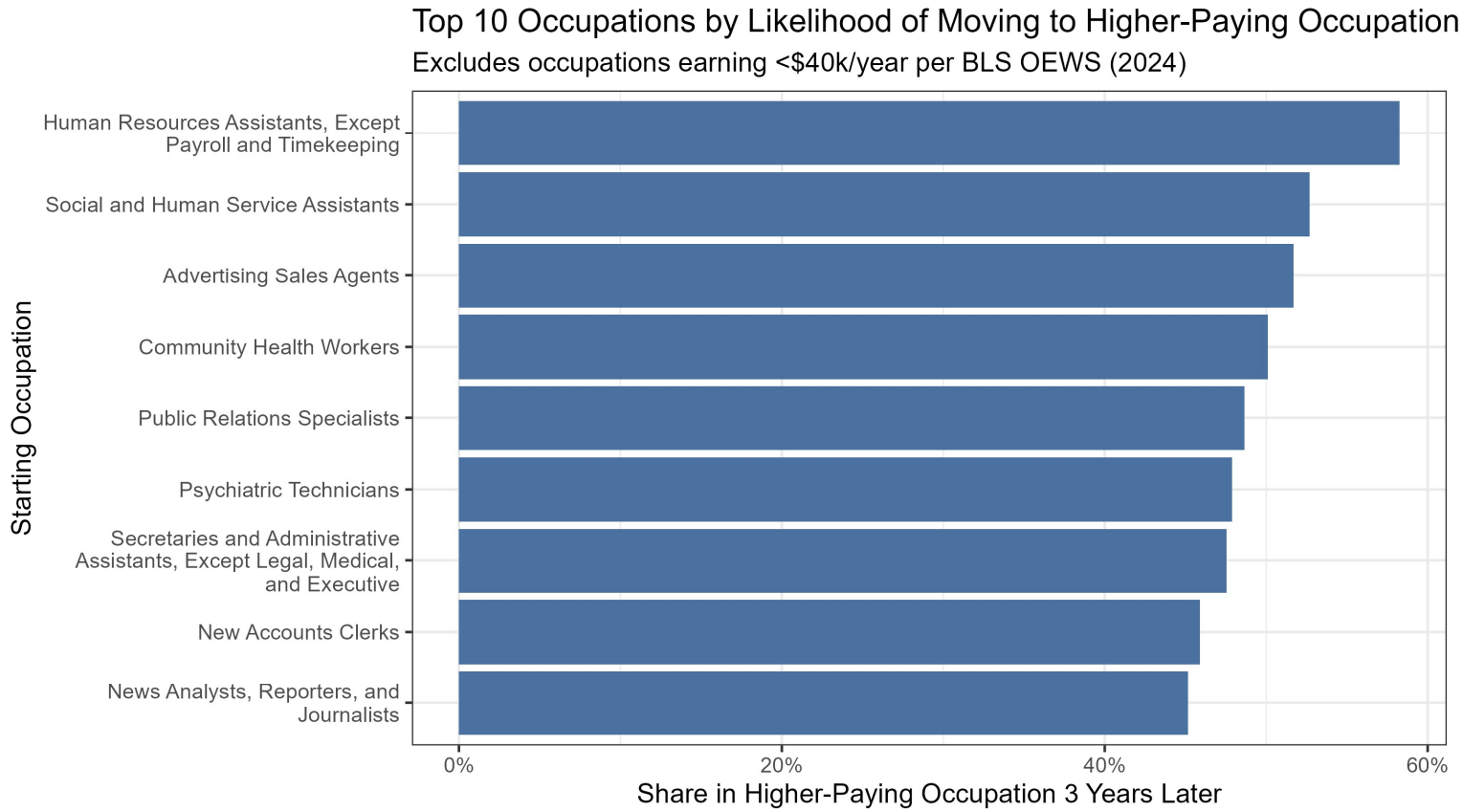
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

True mobility calls for advancement that is both frequent, and of high quality. The largest occupations in Los Angeles rarely achieve both



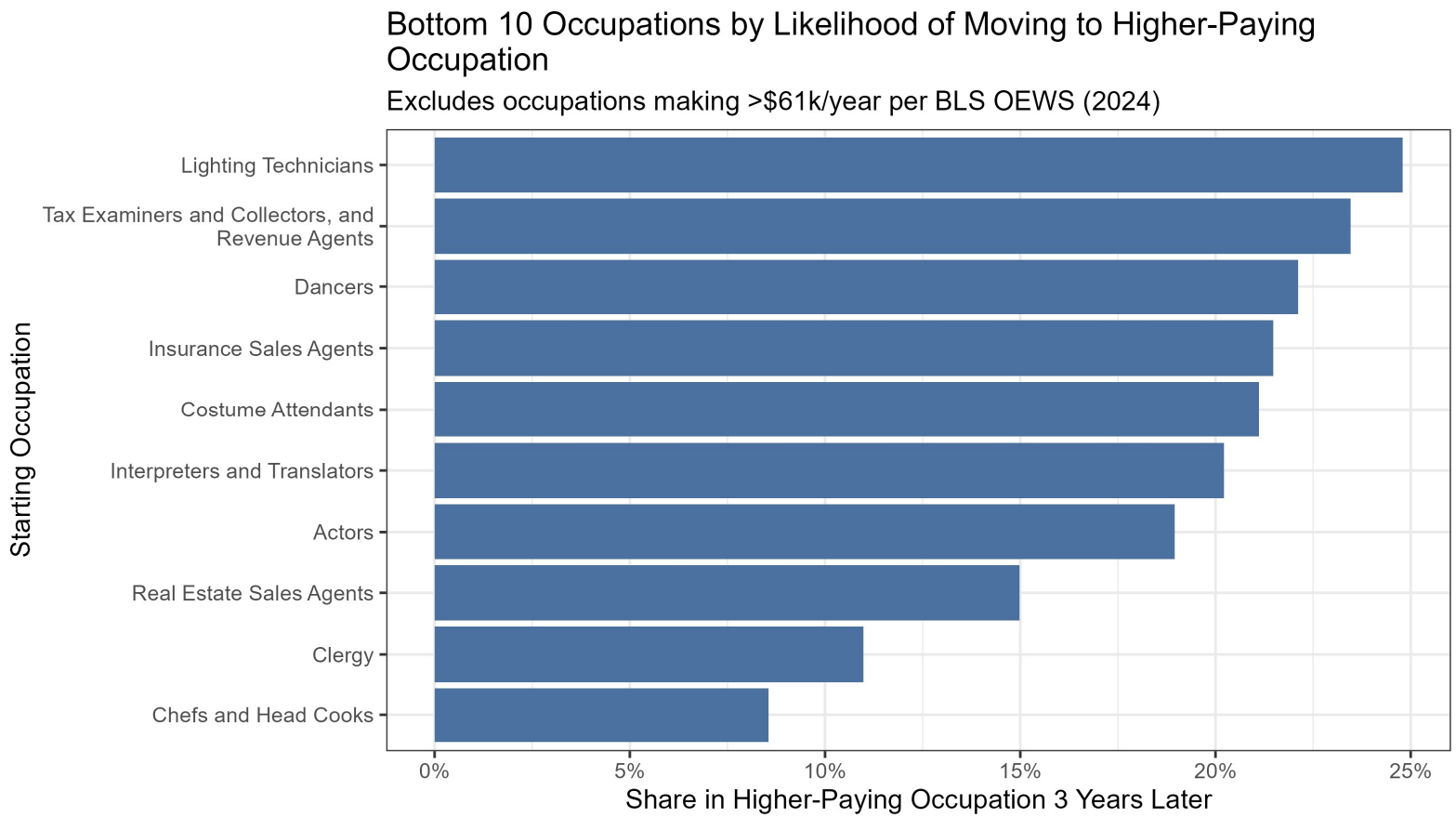
Source: BGI analysis of OEWS & transition data

LA's Highest-mobility occupations center on more junior office and healthcare roles



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

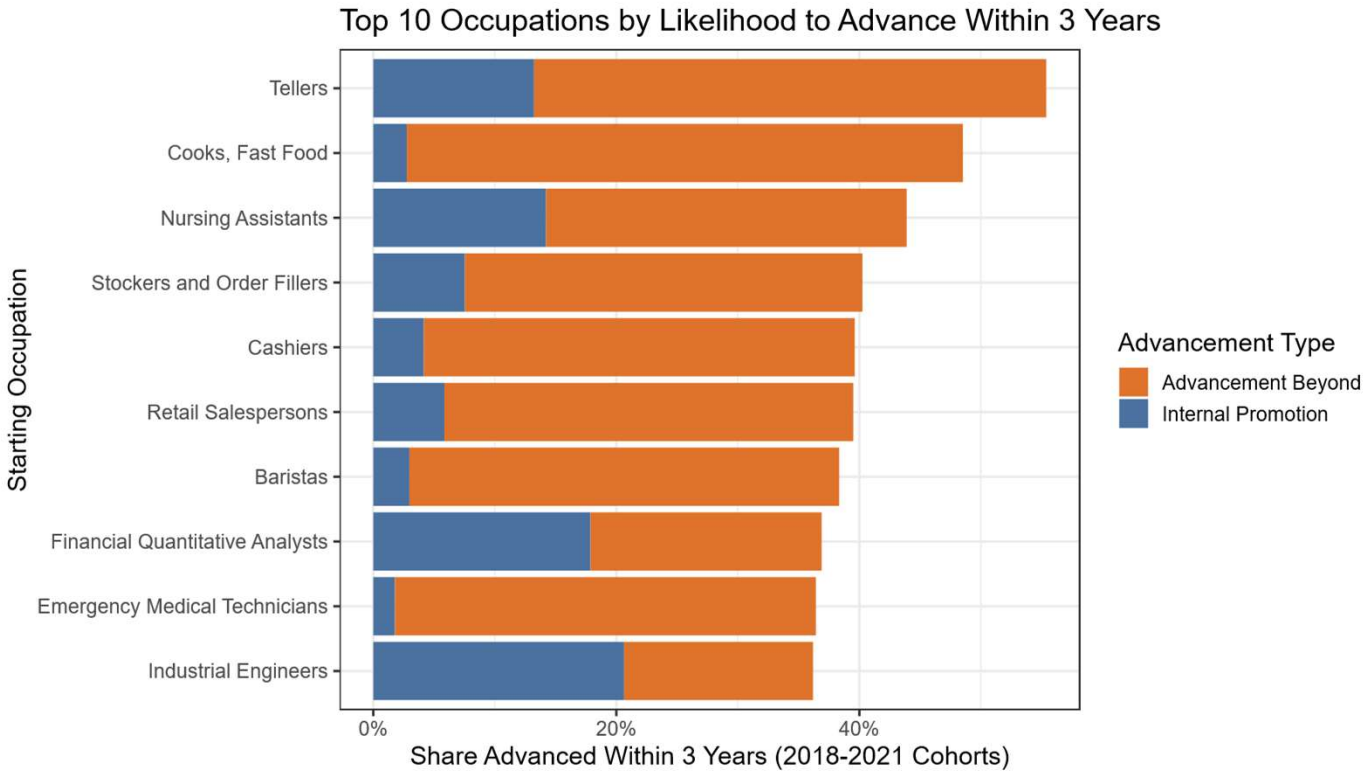
Lower-mobility occupations often have a ceiling on within-field progression



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Mobility doesn't always entail a change of occupations

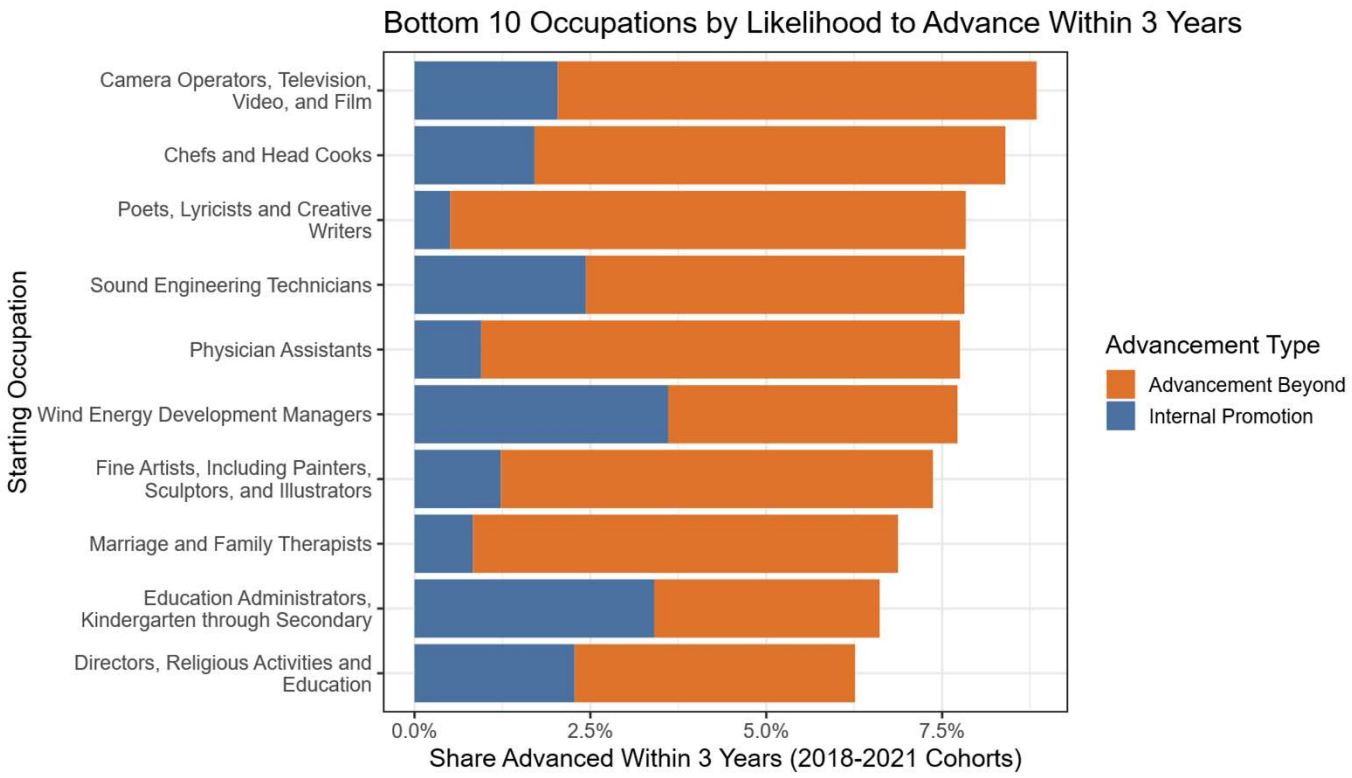
Workers can also move up by being promoted (within their company) or by taking a higher-paying job at a different company



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Lower-mobility occupations do better by looking externally

The least mobile occupations include a wide range of media and arts roles



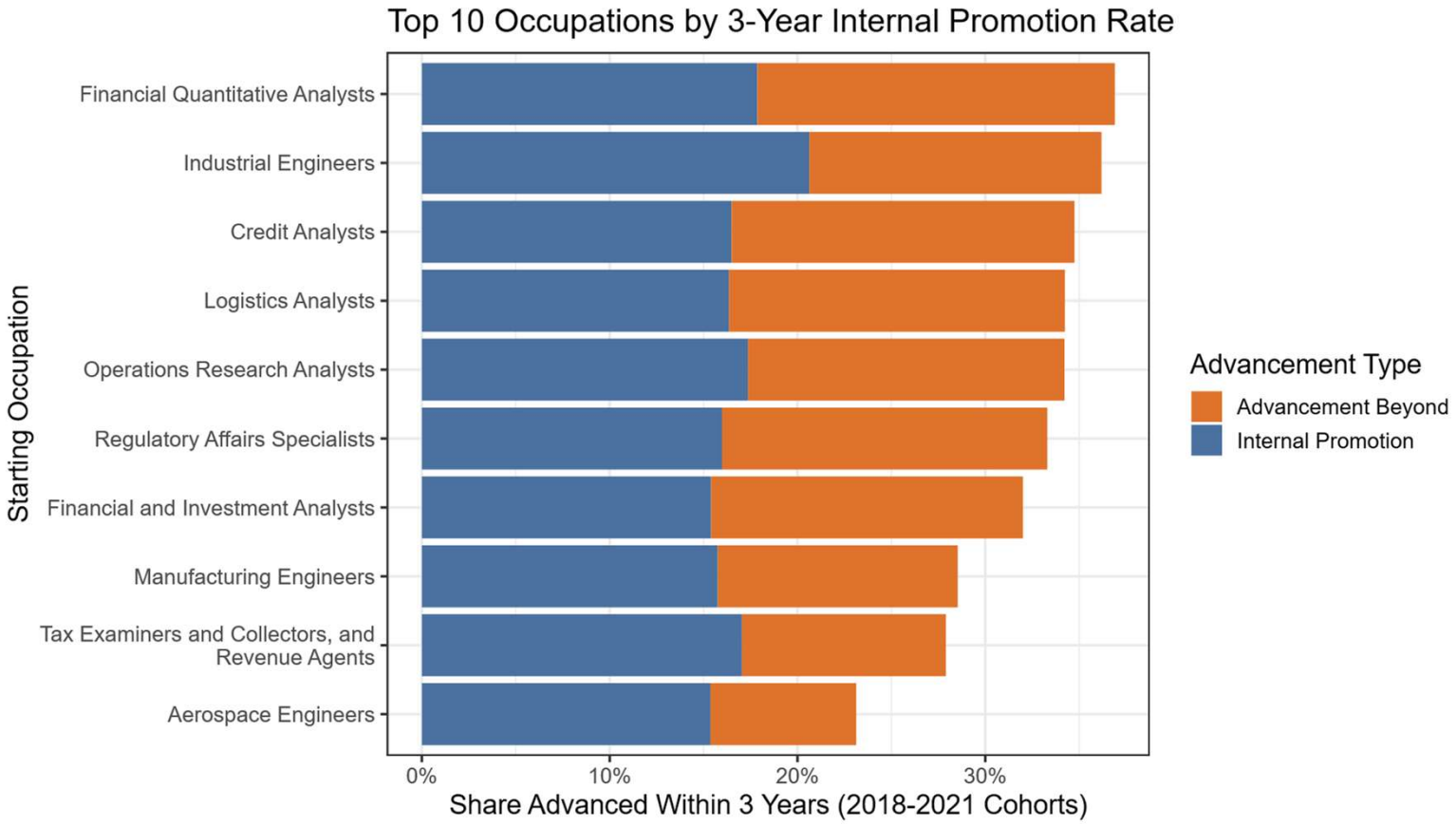
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

For many frontline jobs, advancement comes primarily by changing employers



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Even for jobs with high internal promotion rates, workers often find mobility by switching companies



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Mobility takes many forms – sometimes all at once

Of the largest 100 LA occupations, top 10 for promotions, wage increases, and living wage attainment

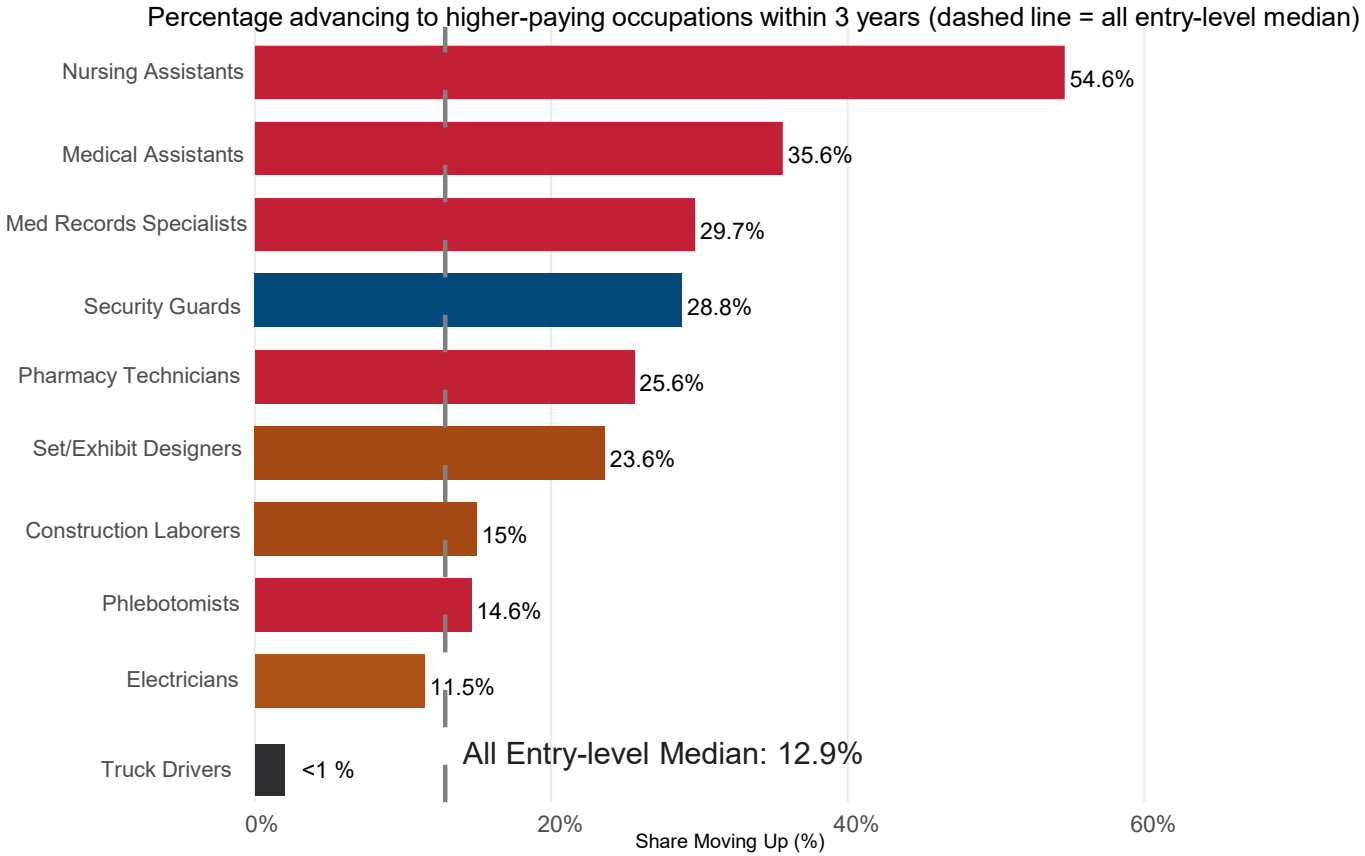
Greatest Share of Upward Transitions	Largest Percentage Wage Increase	Most Frequent Transition to $70k+ (from below 70k)
Cashiers	Nursing Assistants	Nursing Assistants
Tutors	Home Health Aides	Tutors
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	Tutors	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term
Receptionists and Information Clerks	Retail Salespersons	Teaching Assistants, All Other
Retail Salespersons	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	Social and Human Service Assistants
Teaching Assistants, All Other	Teaching Assistants, All Other	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
Nursing Assistants	Fast Food and Counter Workers	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	Cashiers	Receptionists and Information Clerks
Social and Human Service Assistants	Receptionists and Information Clerks	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks
Fast Food and Counter Workers	Cooks, Fast Food	Customer Service Representatives

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Target Occupations:

Mobility for roles receiving the most training support via Los Angeles' Workforce Development Boards

LA's Workforce Boards are targeting High Mobility occupations. Are Workforce System clients experiencing the same mobility outcomes as others in those roles?

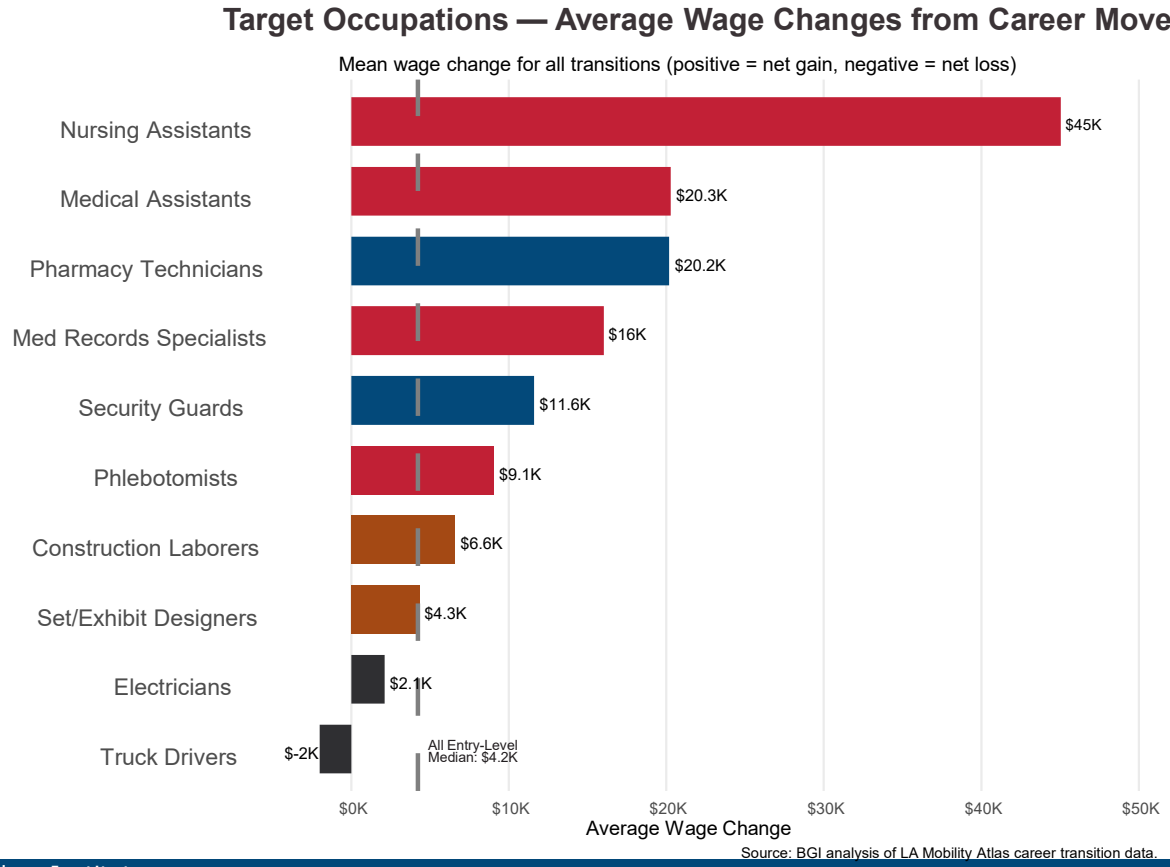


Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas career transition data.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

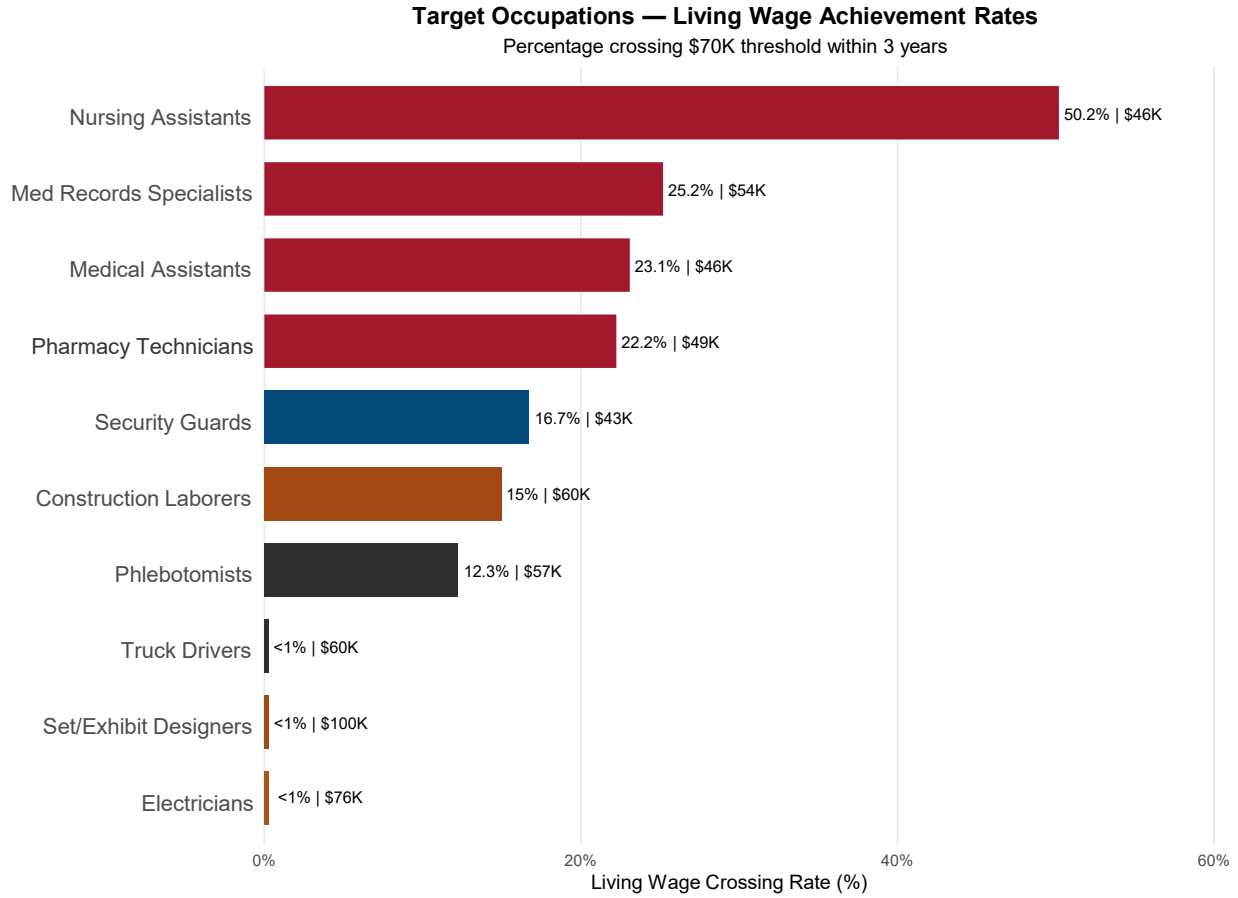
Most workers advancing these roles experience better-than-average wage gains.

Can Workforce Boards support their clients to match overall advancement rates?



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

But even for the better-performing occupations, more will remain below the living wage threshold than will exceed it



Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas career transition data.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Economic Mobility in LA's Priority Sectors

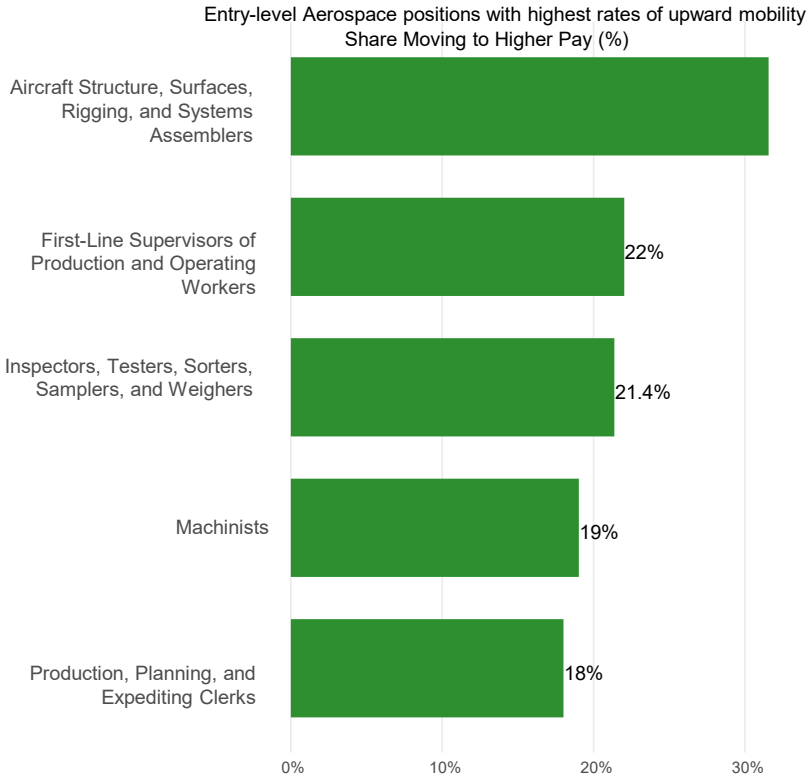
Aerospace

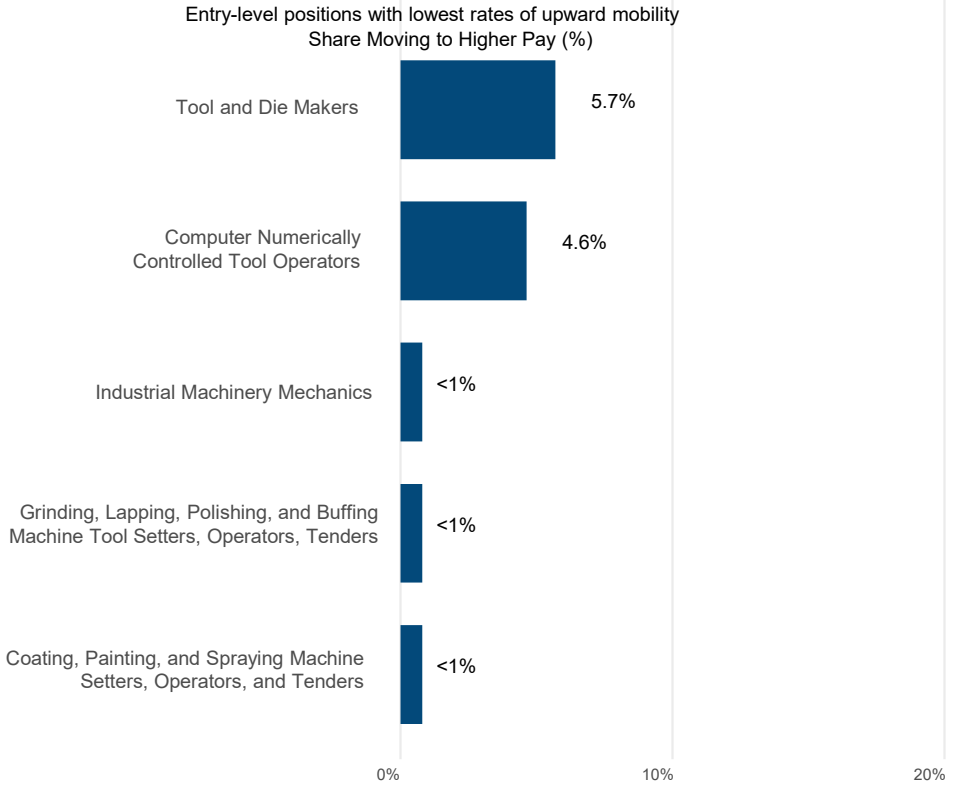
Los Angeles Aerospace Workers experience more mobility than in other Aerospace metros whether they stay in the sector or go elsewhere

	Within-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs	Out-of-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs
1	**Los Angeles**	Seattle
2	Seattle	**Los Angeles**
3	Wichita	Hartford
4	Hartford	Wichita
5	Albuquerque	Albuquerque

©2025 The Burning Glass Institute

Assemblers, Inspectors, Machinists, Supervisors, and Planning Clerks in LA's Aerospace sector advance more rapidly, while Tool & Die Makers, CNC Operators, and Mechanics tend to stay in those roles

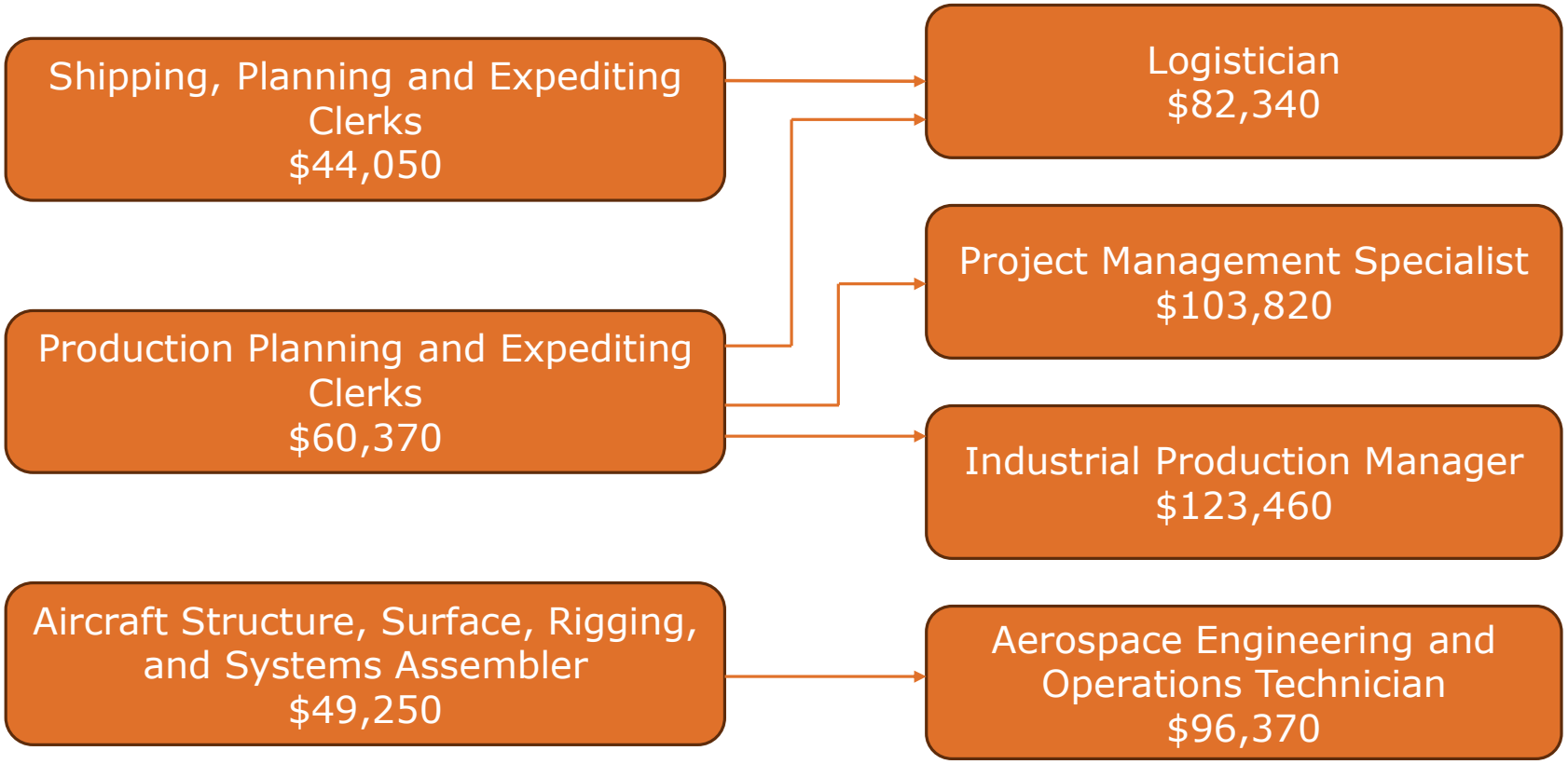




Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas sector framework and 3-year transition data.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Technical skills drive pathways to a living wage in LA's Aerospace's sector



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

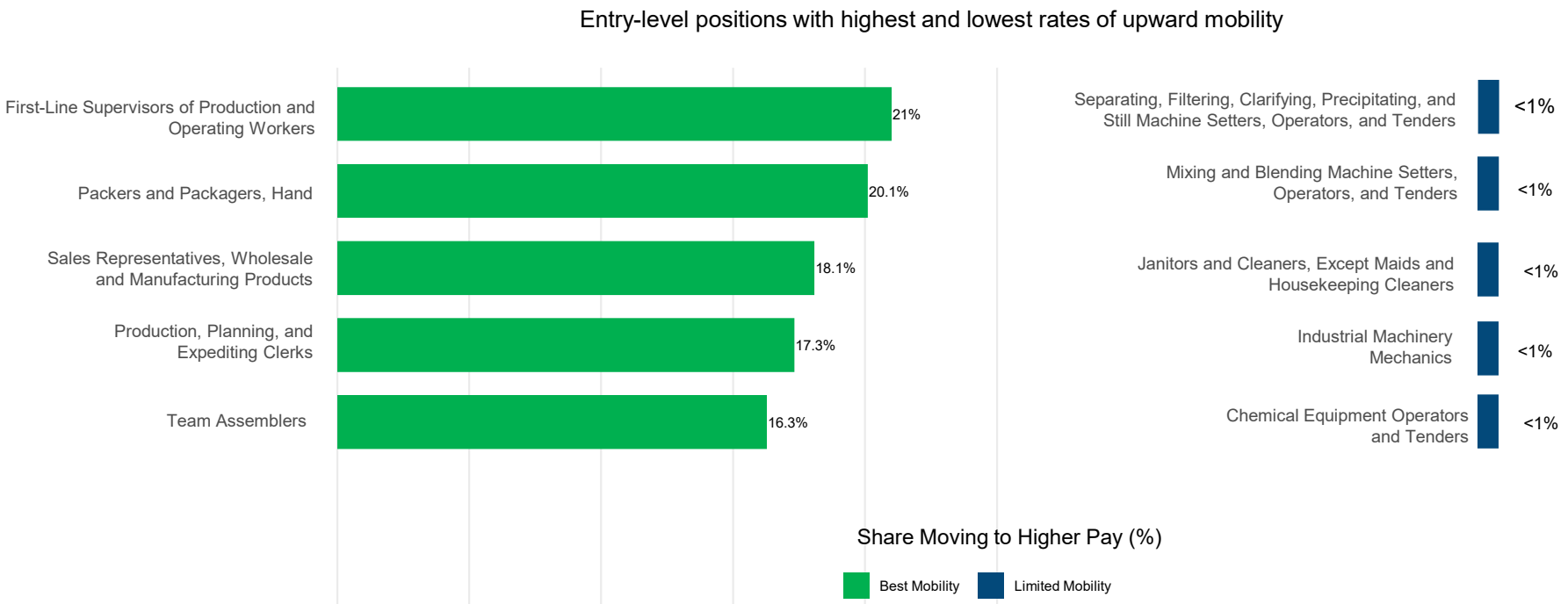
Biotechnology

Los Angeles Biotech Workers advance more than those in competitor cities by leaving the sector

	Within-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs	Out-of-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs
1	San Diego	**Los Angeles**
2	Boston	Boston
3	**Los Angeles**	San Diego
4	Durham-Chapel Hill	Durham-Chapel Hill
5	San Juan-Bayamon	San Juan-Bayamon

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

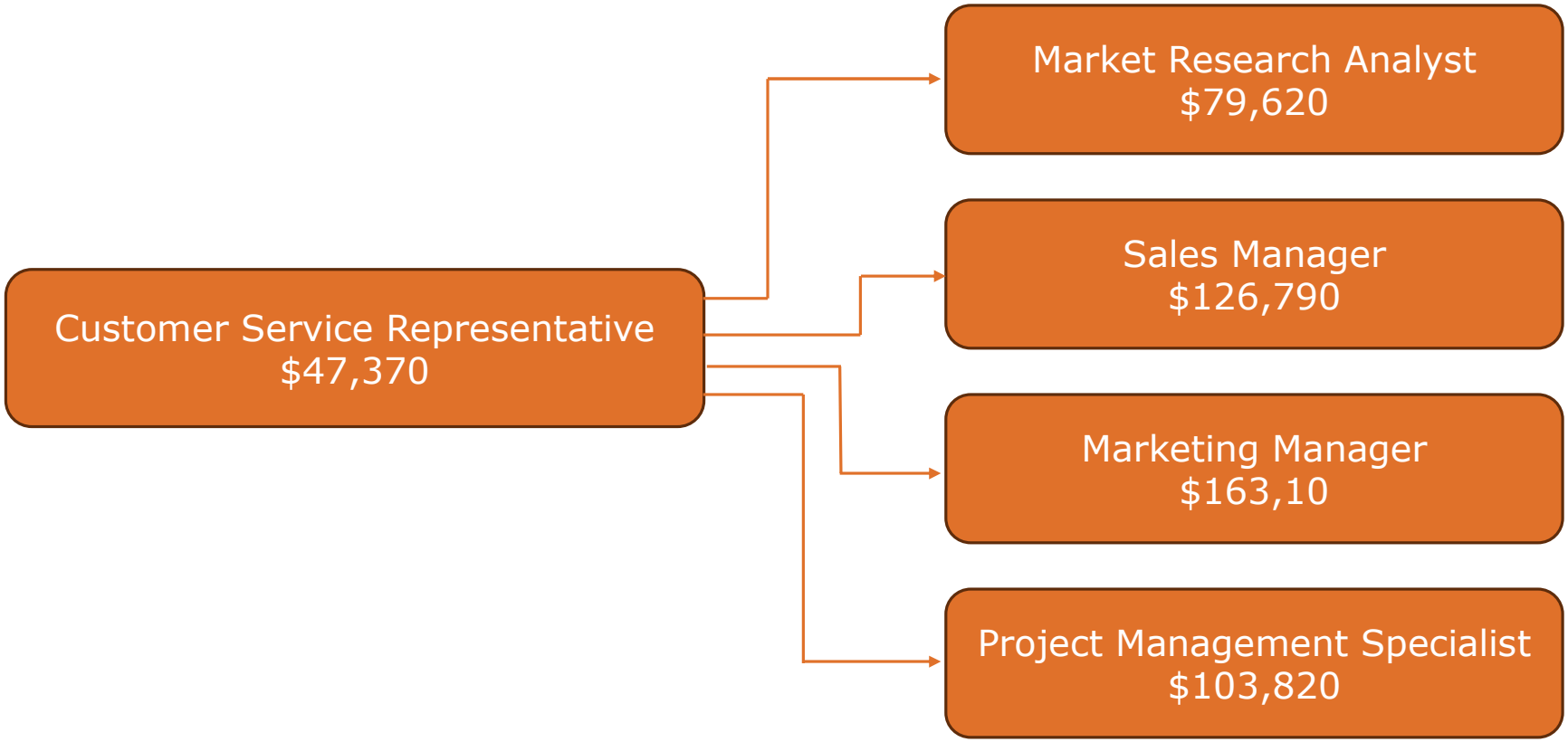
Production workers are among Biotechnology's highest and lowest mobility roles



Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas sector framework and 3-year transition data.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Customer service roles serve as launching point for living wage roles in sales, marketing, and internal customer support



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Healthcare

Los Angeles Healthcare Workers experience greater mobility than counterparts in other cities when transitioning out of the sector, but lag competitor cities when staying within healthcare

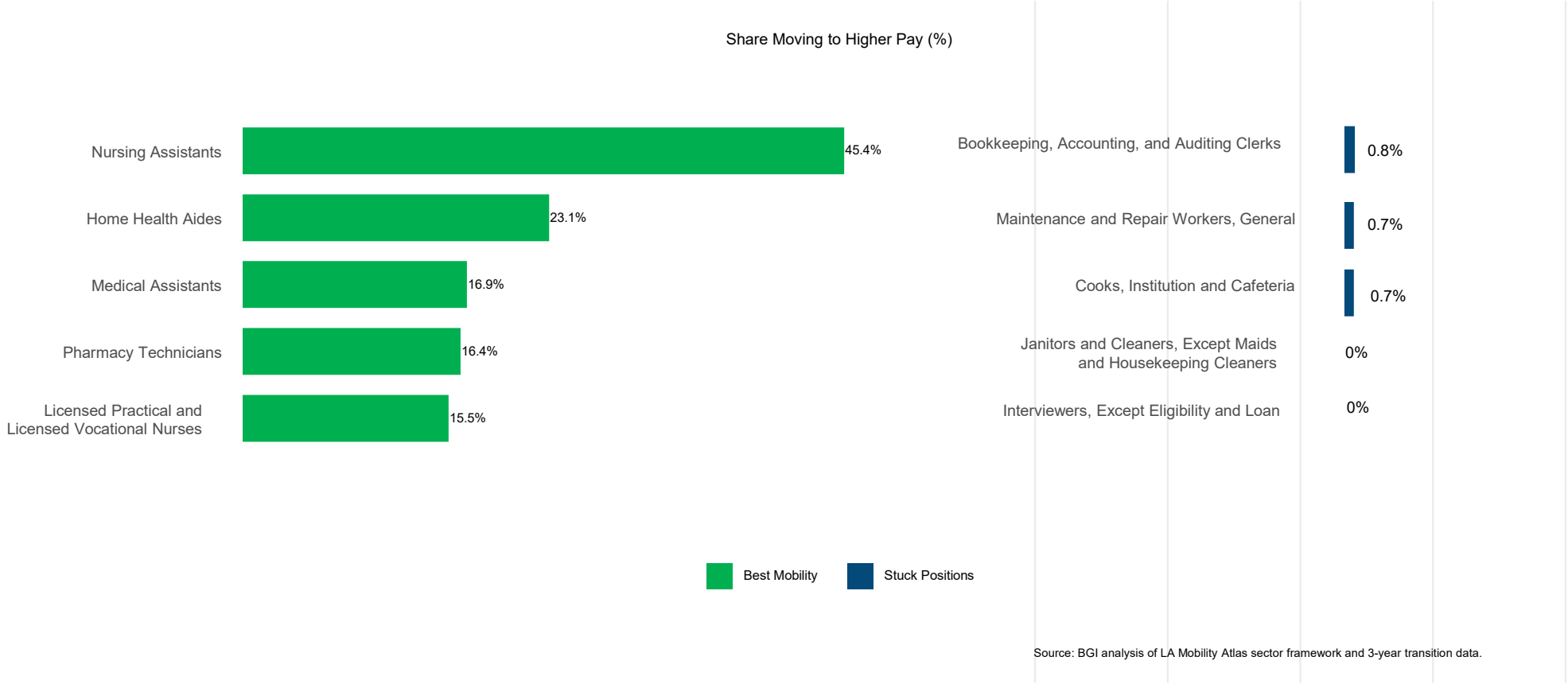
	Within-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs	Out-of-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs
1	Philadelphia	**Los Angeles**
2	Tampa-St. Petersburg	New York
3	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn	Tampa-St. Petersburg
4	New York	Philadelphia
5	**Los Angeles**	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Healthcare's patient care workforce enjoys more frequent mobility than facilities and support roles

Healthcare delivery — Entry Level Job Mobility

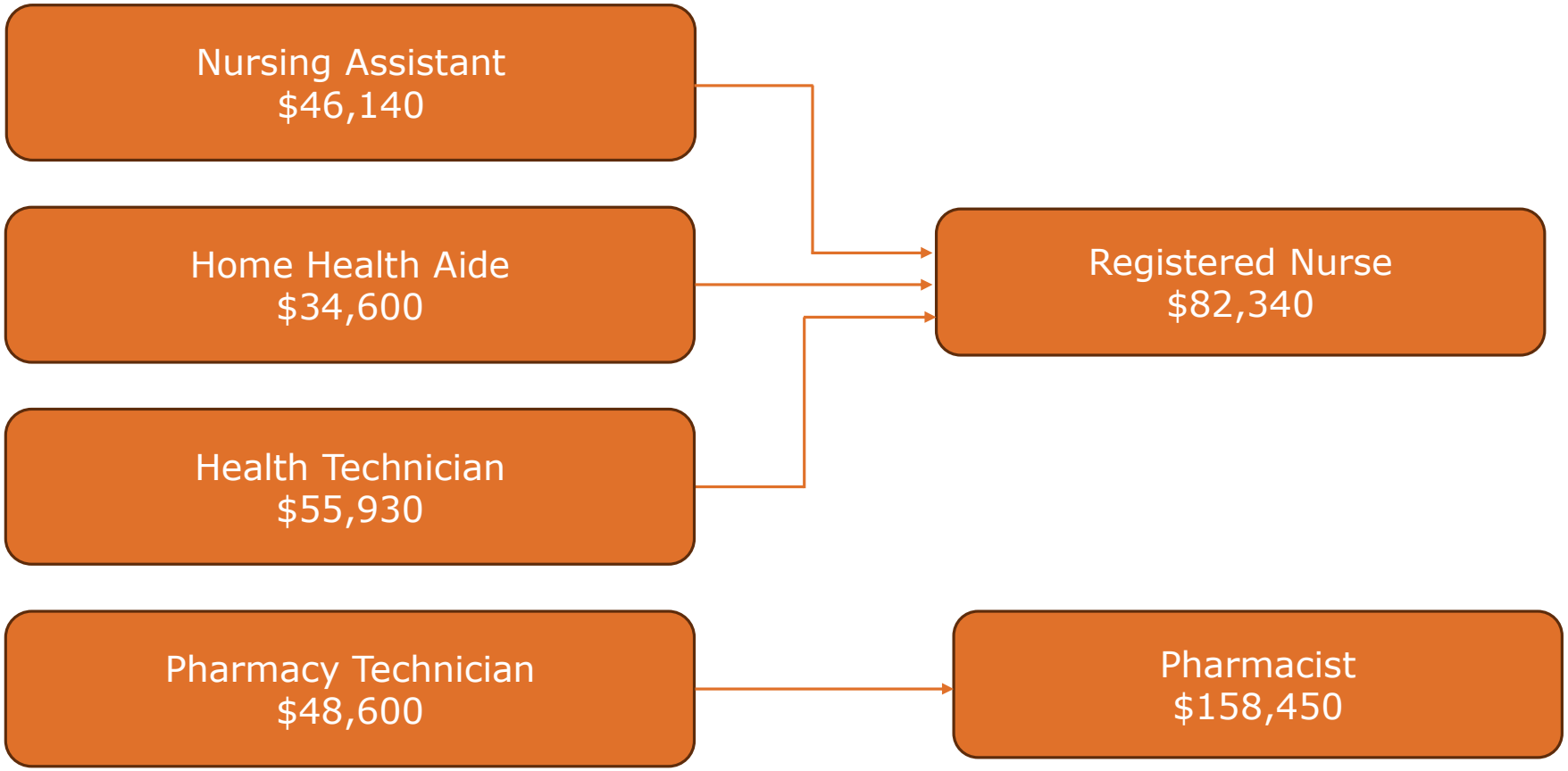
Share of workers who transition to higher-paying roles within 3 years



Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas sector framework and 3-year transition data.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Healthcare's most frequent Living Wage moves build in patient care capabilities



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

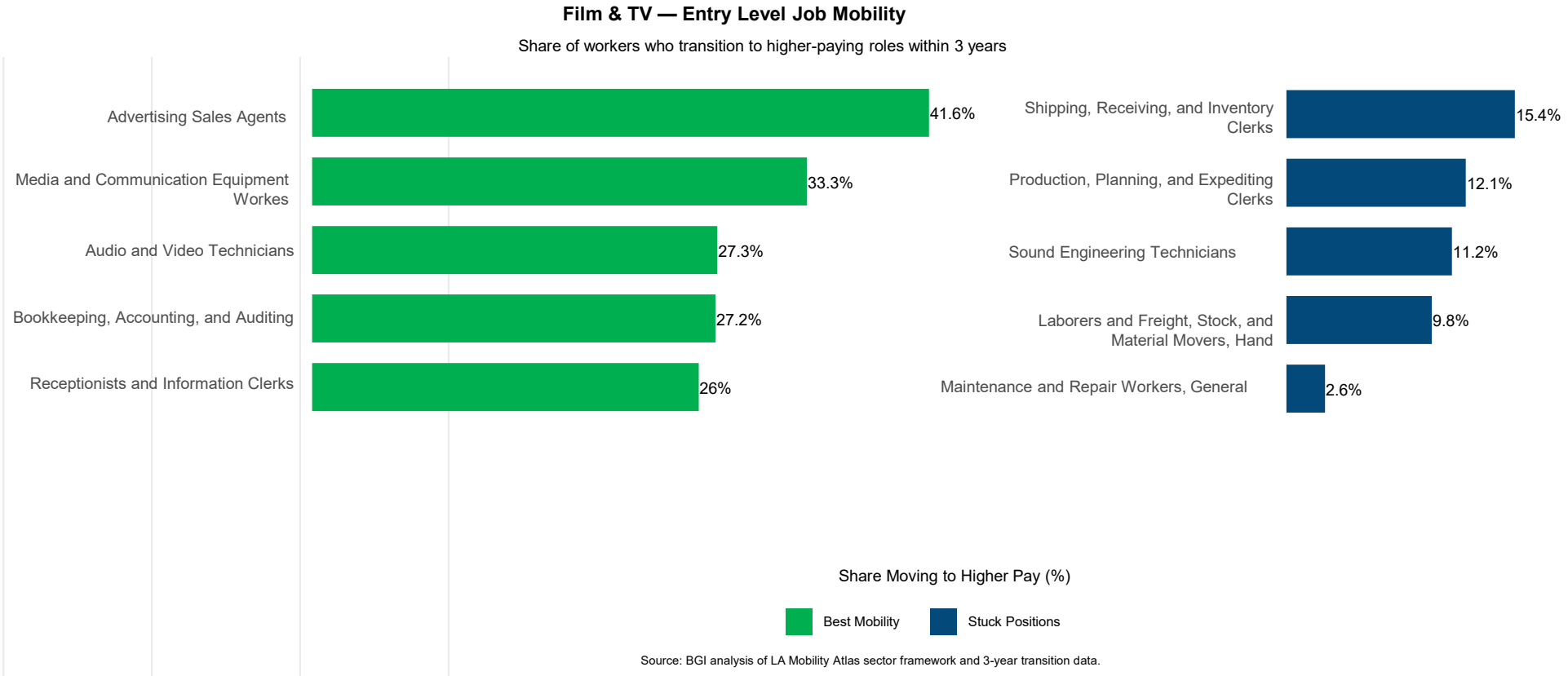
Film/TV

Los Angeles Film/TV Workers advance in LA do better than peers when they remain within the sector

	Within-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs	Out-of-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs
1	**Los Angeles**	Seattle
2	New York	San Francisco
3	San Francisco	Atlanta
4	Seattle	New York
5	Atlanta	**Los Angeles**

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

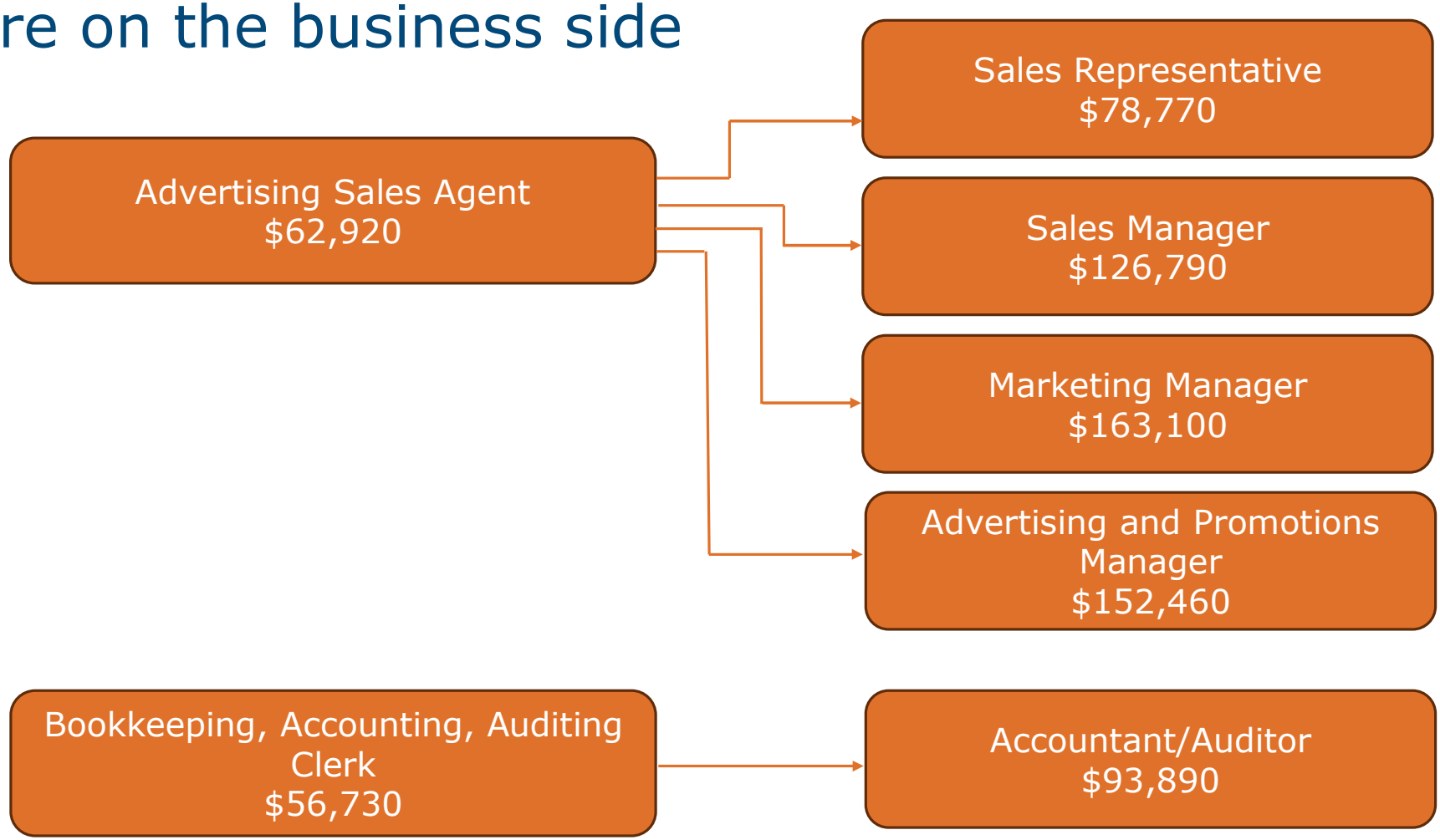
The gap between highest and lowest mobility roles is narrower in Film & TV than in LA's other priority sectors



Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas sector framework and 3-year transition data.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

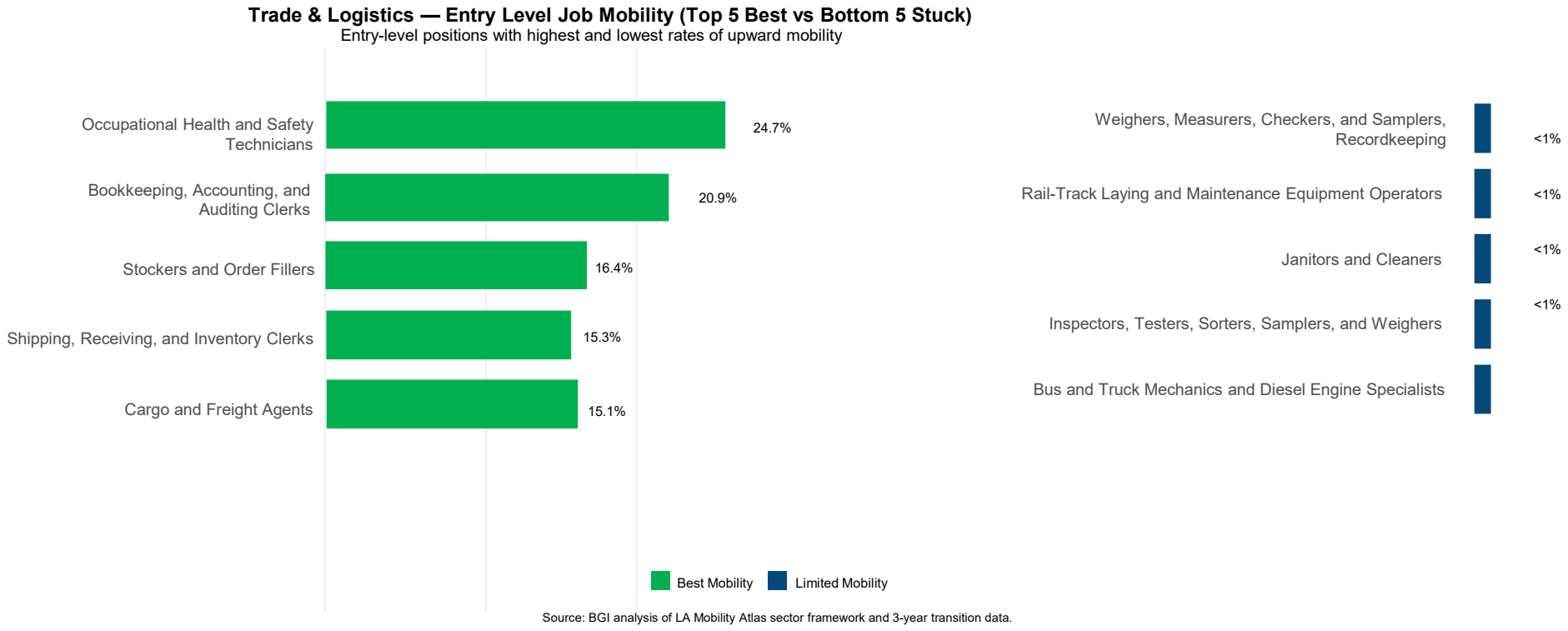
Film & TV's Most Frequent Living Wage moves are on the business side



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Mobility in Trade/Logistics

Many Frontline Trade & Logistics workers have a harder time advancing



Source: BGI analysis of LA Mobility Atlas sector framework and 3-year transition data.

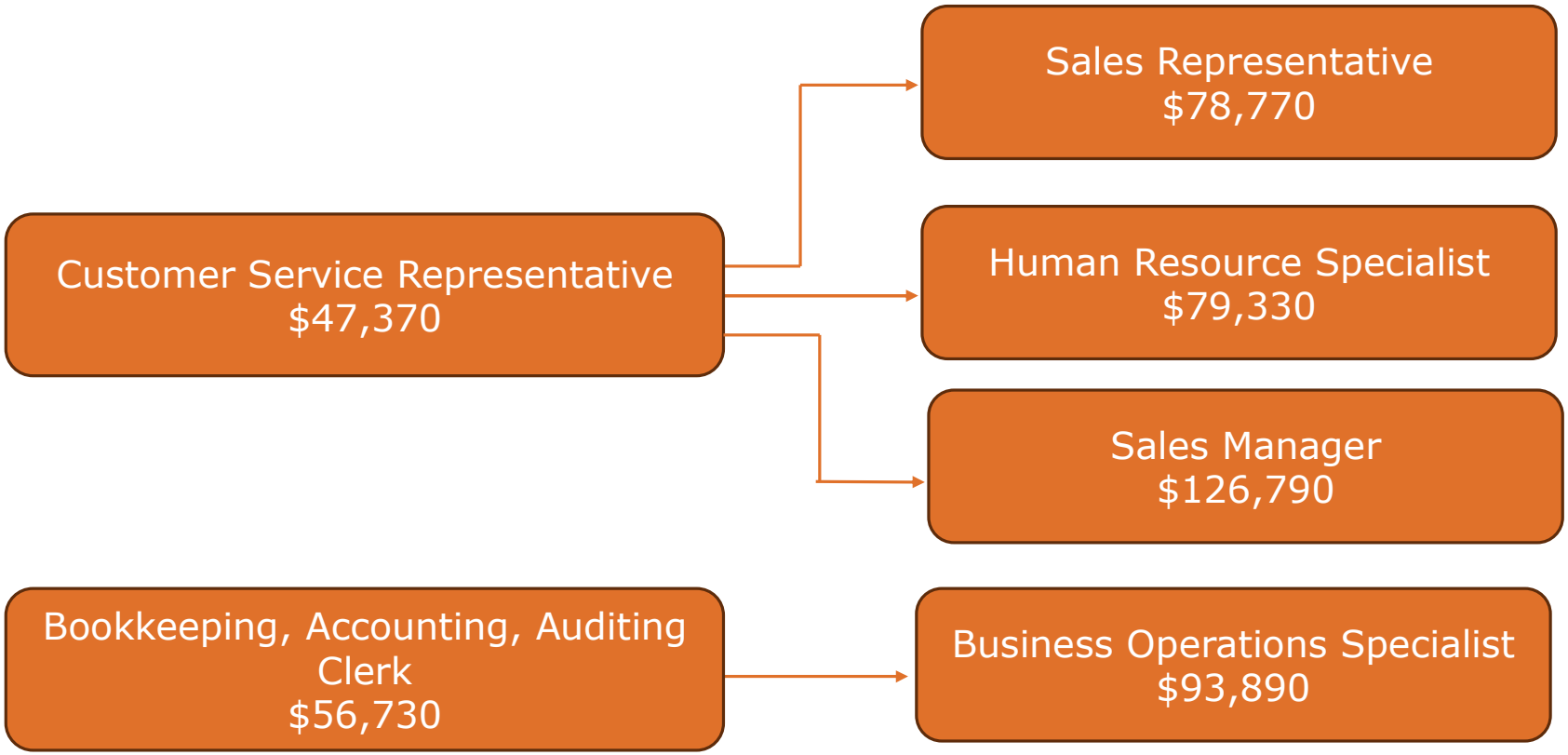
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Compared with competitor metros, Los Angeles Trade and Logistics workers advance more frequently when leaving the sector

	Within-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs	Out-of-Sector Mobility vs Top Employment MSAs
1	Riverside-San Bernardino	**Los Angeles**
2	Memphis	Indianapolis-Carmel
3	Indianapolis-Carmel	Louisville
4	Louisville	Riverside-San Bernardino
5	**Los Angeles**	Memphis

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

LA's Trade & Logistics sector workers attain a Living Wage in business roles



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

LA Companies, Mobility Metrics

The Top-Performing Companies by American Opportunity Index Metrics

(After Normalizing within Occupations and Weighting by

Estimated Occupation Prevalence Within Each Company)

Four Key Dimensions for Measuring Worker Opportunity

Mobility	Wage	Access	Culture
Internal Promotion: Are workers moving up within the firm?	**Wage Quality:** How well do workers get paid?	**Degrees:** How likely are people without degrees to get hired?	**Retention:** Do workers stay?
Promoting Out: Do workers move to better jobs when they leave?	**Wage Growth:** How much do workers' wages rise over time?	**Experience:** How likely are people with little experience to get hired?	**Leadership:** Are managers and executives drawn from within?
BENEFITS **Longer retention**	**BENEFITS** **Reduced turnover costs, better worker output**	**BENEFITS** **Expanded talent pools, faster time-to-fill**	**BENEFITS** **Lower recruiting costs, higher productivity**

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

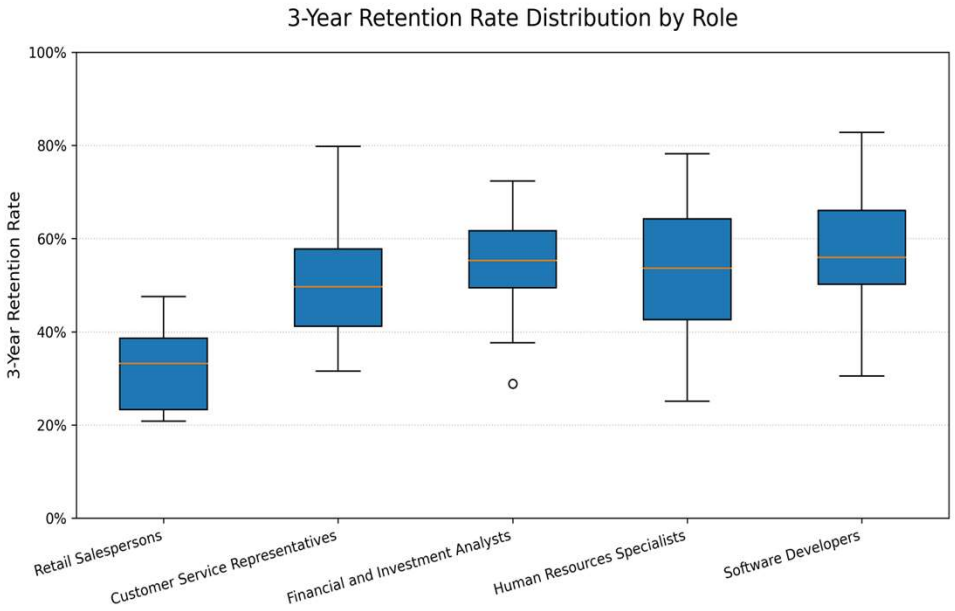
Employers that provide lots of internal growth and stability are typically also those that require more education and experience of their hires

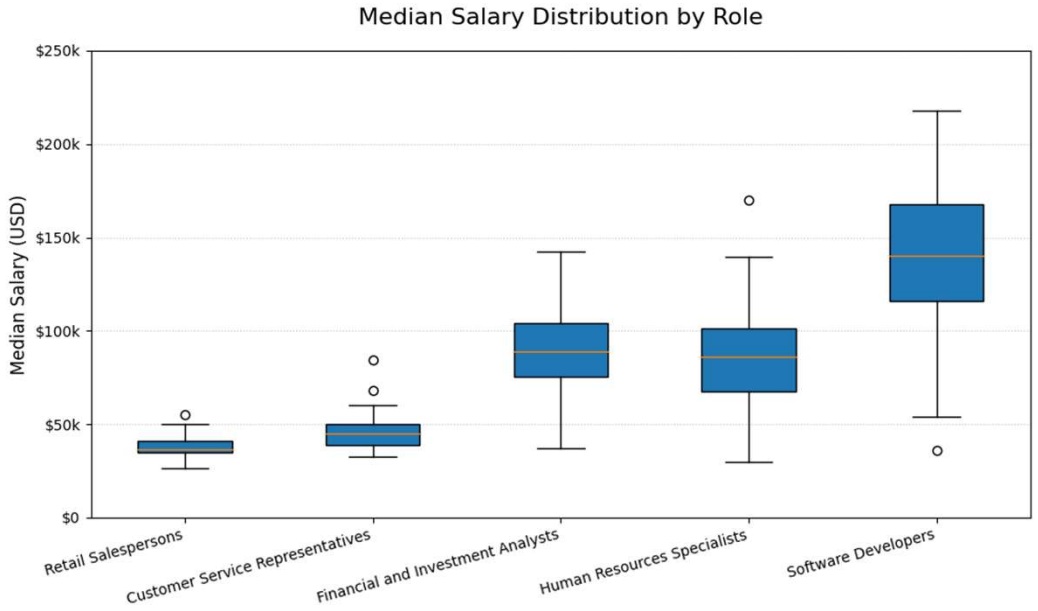
Lower barrier to entry (entry-level, non-degree hires) can capitulate on wage, internal advancement.

	Internal Promotion	External Promotion	Retention	Non-Degree Hires	Entry-Level Hires	Wage Level	Wage Growth	Leaders From Within
Internal Promotion	1.000	-0.160	0.164	-0.067	-0.080	0.194	-0.027	0.330
External Promotion	-0.160	1.000	-0.715	0.198	0.500	-0.642	0.231	-0.167
Retention	0.164	-0.715	1.000	-0.209	-0.387	0.414	-0.102	0.325
Non-Degree Hires	-0.067	0.198	-0.209	1.000	-0.198	-0.264	-0.217	-0.126
Entry-Level Hires	-0.080	0.500	-0.387	-0.198	1.000	-0.455	0.191	0.075
Wage Level	0.194	-0.642	0.414	-0.264	-0.455	1.000	-0.060	0.046
Wage Growth	-0.027	0.231	-0.102	-0.217	0.191	-0.060	1.000	0.027
Leaders From Within	0.330	-0.167	0.325	-0.126	0.075	0.046	0.027	1.000

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

What Does The Range of Outcomes Look Like?



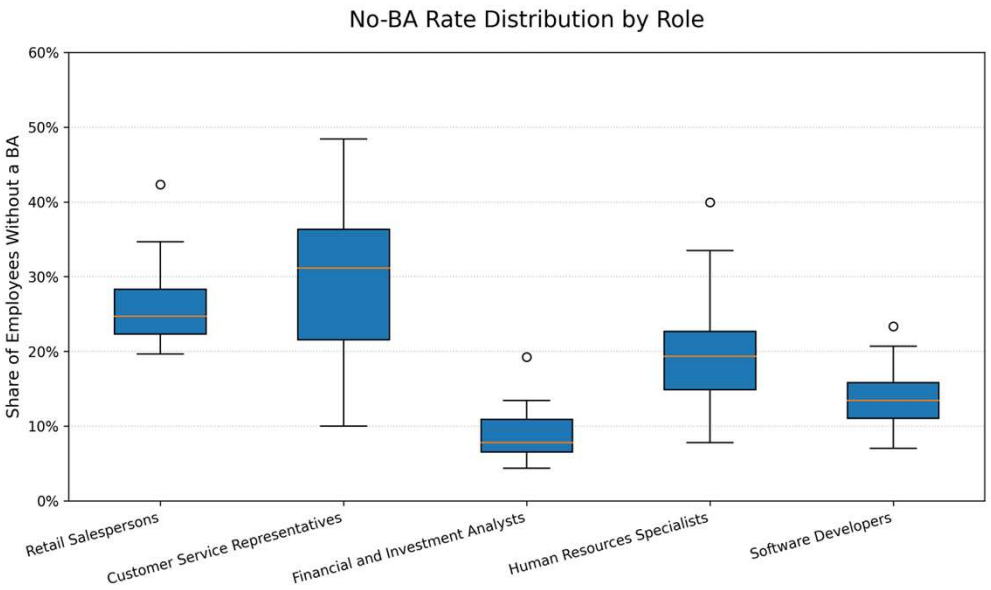


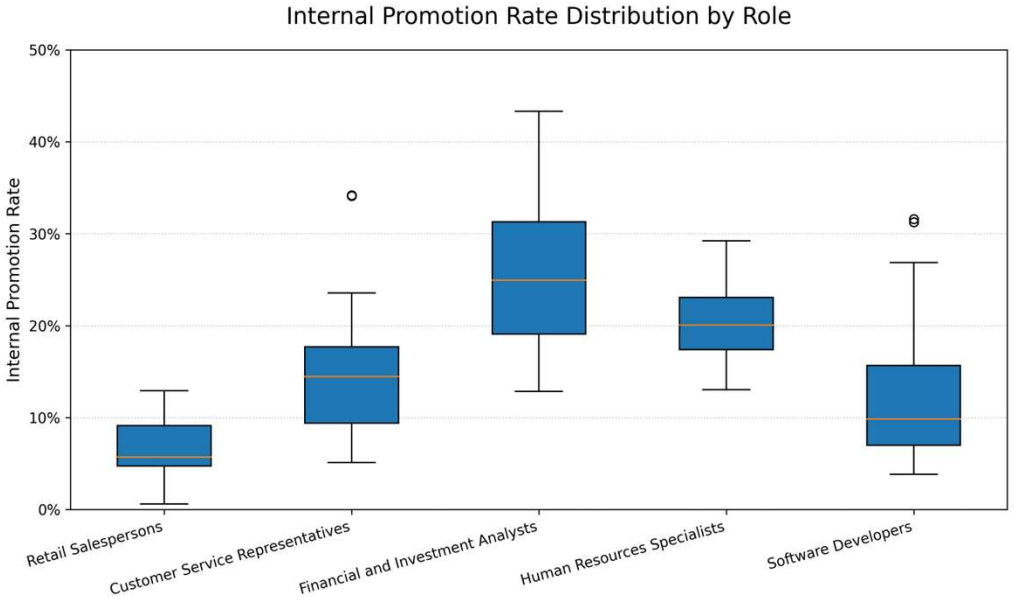
- Strong firms for retention retain their workers far longer; across roles, the 75th percentile firms for retention are retaining workers in the same role at a 50% greater rate than the 25th percentile firms
- When you look at the extremes, the difference is even more stark; 90th percentile firms often boast double the retention rate of 10th percentile firms for the same role

- The level of pay dispersion by firm depends strongly on occupation. In frontline roles, 75th and 25th percentile firms have narrow pay differences – but roles like Software Developer have a far greater range.
- Firms that pay top dollar (at the 90th percentile) for software developers offer a **median** salary for the role that is 4x higher than 10th percentile firms.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

What Does The Range of Outcomes Look Like?





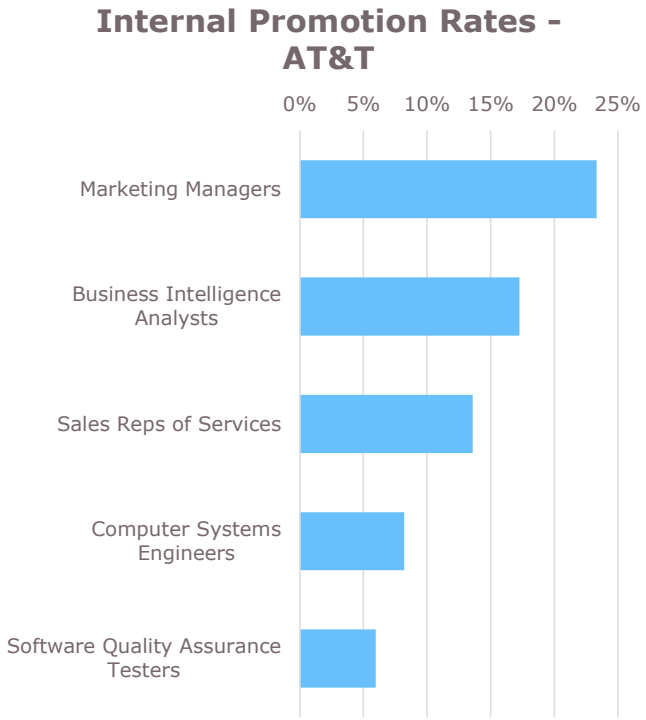
- If you don't have a degree, it's no problem for some roles at some employers – but others like financial analyst are most likely closed off to you
- Some fields represent a diverse field of educational attainment – like Customer Service, which rarely requires a degree but workers often have one, and Human Resources, which often requires a degree but still has a good supply of non-degreed workers depending on the firm.

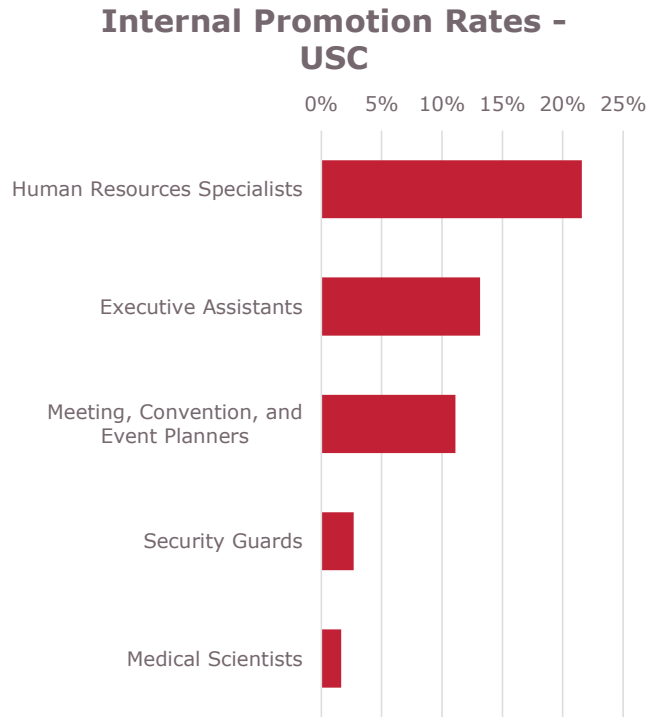
- Whether for software developers, customer service, or retail sales, 75th percentile firms are about twice as likely to promote workers as 25th percentile firms.
- Some roles are more disposed to promotion overall, like investment analysts – but customer service reps at high-mobility firms are more likely to get promoted than investment analysts at low-mobility firms.

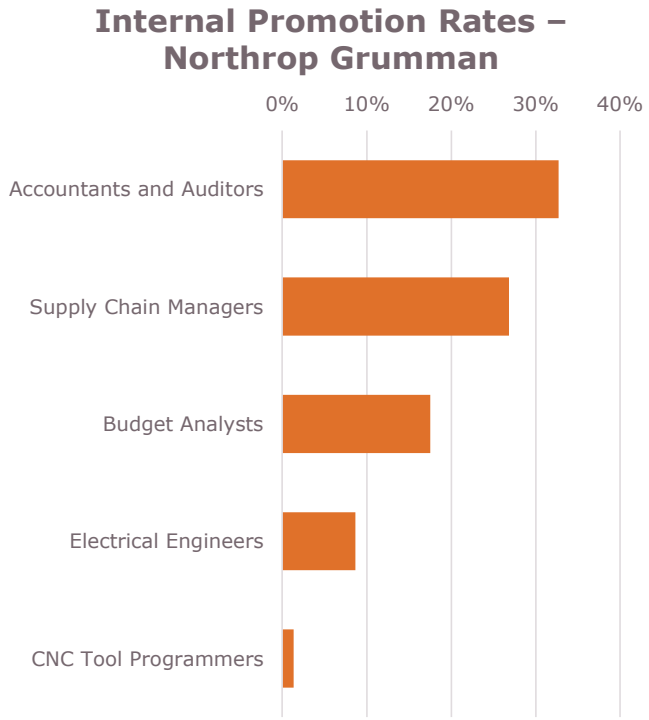
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Occupation matters, but it's not destiny

Upward Mobility Varies Dramatically by Role – Even for Workers at the Same Employer



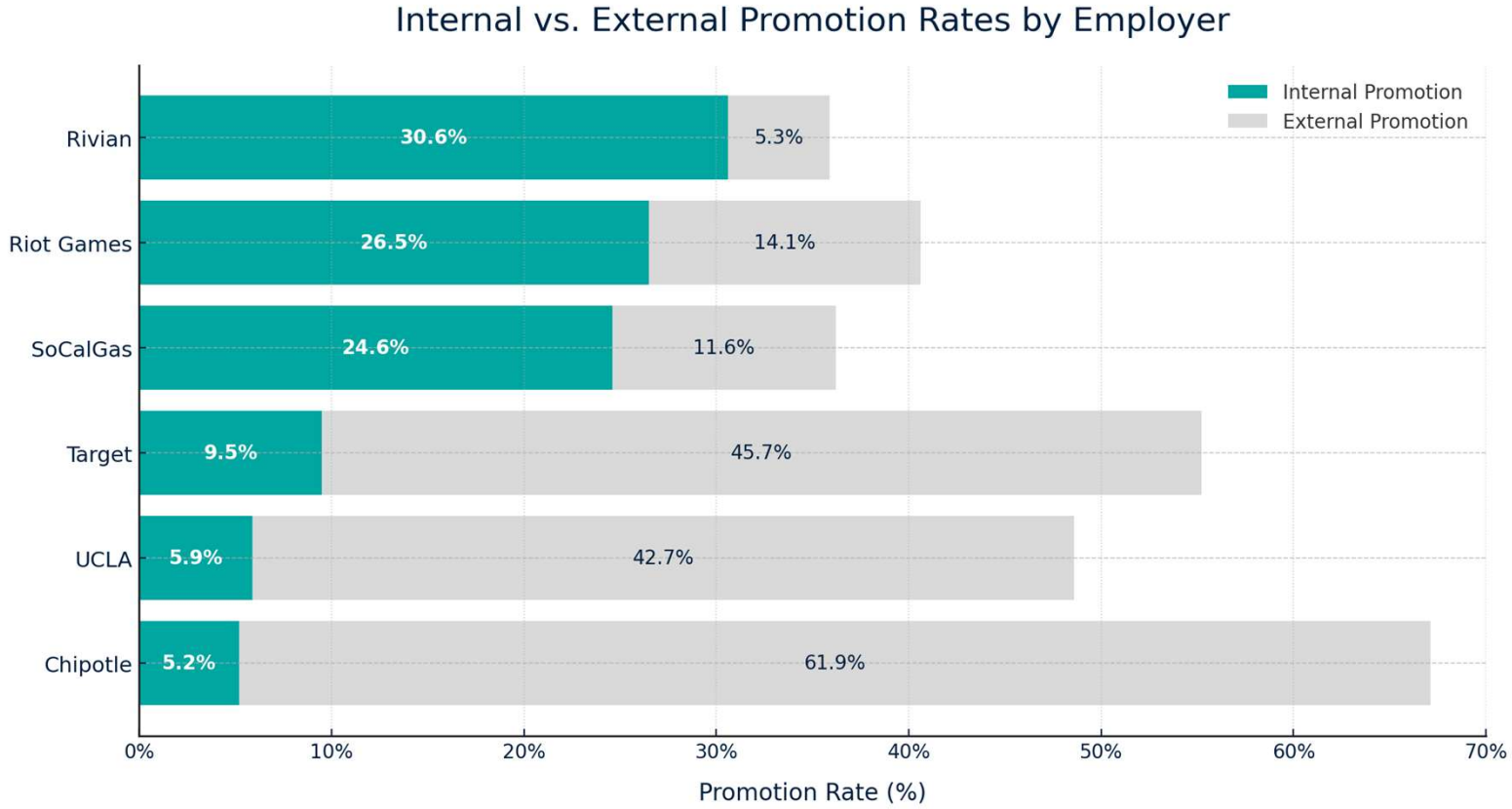




©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Do Workers Progress Internally or After Leaving?

At firms like Riot and Rivian, most advancement is internal, while at employers like UCLA, Chipotle, and target, the vast majority of progression comes when workers exit



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Top Performing Employers across Key Metrics

Internal Advancement

1	PIH Health
2	Creative Artists Agency
3	Chipotle
4	DirecTV
5	Lionsgate
6	Molina Healthcare
7	Applied Medical
8	Ernst & Young
9	Nordstrom
10	Vans

External Advancement

1	Riot Games
2	Servicetitan
3	Activision Blizzard
4	Salesforce
5	Mattel
6	Alteryx
7	SpaceX
8	Dreamworks
9	PIH Health
10	SoCalGas

Leaders from Within

1	Target
2	Vans
3	SoCal Gas
4	Niagara Bottling
5	Northrup Grumman
6	Mattel
7	Southern California Edison
8	Johnson & Johnson
9	PricewaterhouseCoopers
10	SpaceX

Premium Pay

1	Meta
2	PIMCO
3	Salesforce
4	Google
5	Rivian
6	Alteryx
7	Kaiser Permanente
8	Netflix
9	Riot Games
10	Bytedance

Annual Wage Growth

1	Trader Joe's
2	Molina Healthcare
3	Creative Artists Agency
4	CSU Fullerton
5	Meta
6	Ingram Micro
7	Hoag Health System
8	Eastwest Bank
9	Activision Blizzard
10	CSU Los Angeles

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Top "Internal Growth" Companies

Companies Where Top-Paid Employees Typically Come From Within, Internal Promotion Rates are High, and Wage Growth is High

1. Mattel
2. ServiceTitan
3. SoCalGas
4. Alteryx
5. Medtronic
6. Vans
7. Riot Games
8. Niagara Bottling
9. Target
10. Applied Medical
11. Salesforce
12. The Aerospace Corporation
13. Taco Bell
14. PricewaterhouseCoopers
15. Lionsgate
16. Southern California Edison
17. Johnson & Johnson
18. Dreamworks
19. PIMCO
20. PIH Health

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Top “Stability” Companies

Companies With High Wages and High Retention

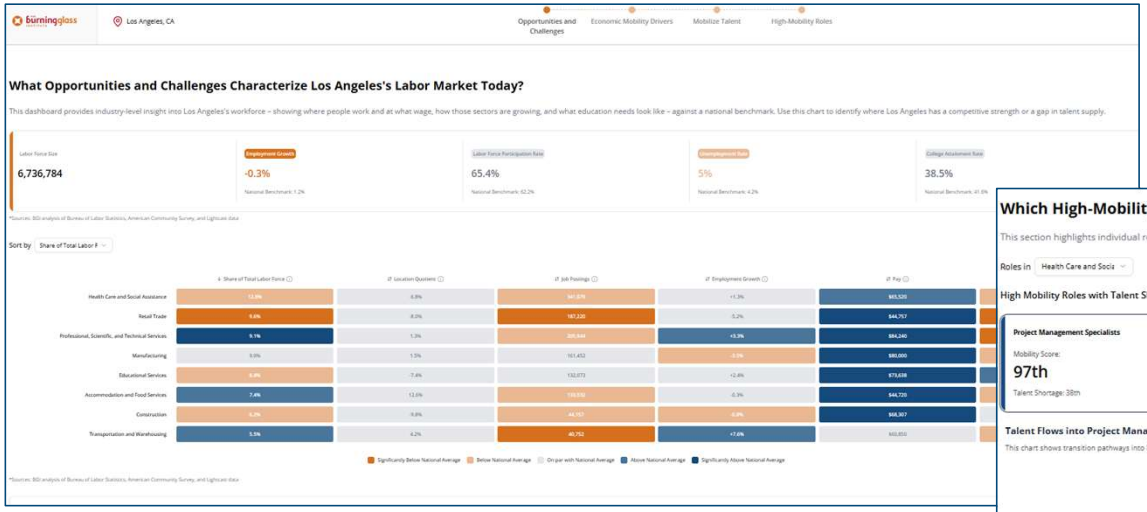
1. Google
2. AbbVie
3. Riot Games
4. PIMCO
5. Salesforce
6. Microsoft
7. Trader Joe's
8. Los Angeles USD
9. Meta
10. Rivian
11. Netflix
12. SoCalGas
13. Anduril Industries
14. DirecTV
15. Pacific Life
16. Southern California Edison
17. City of Hope
18. City National Bank And Trust
19. Turner Construction Company
20. Johnson & Johnson

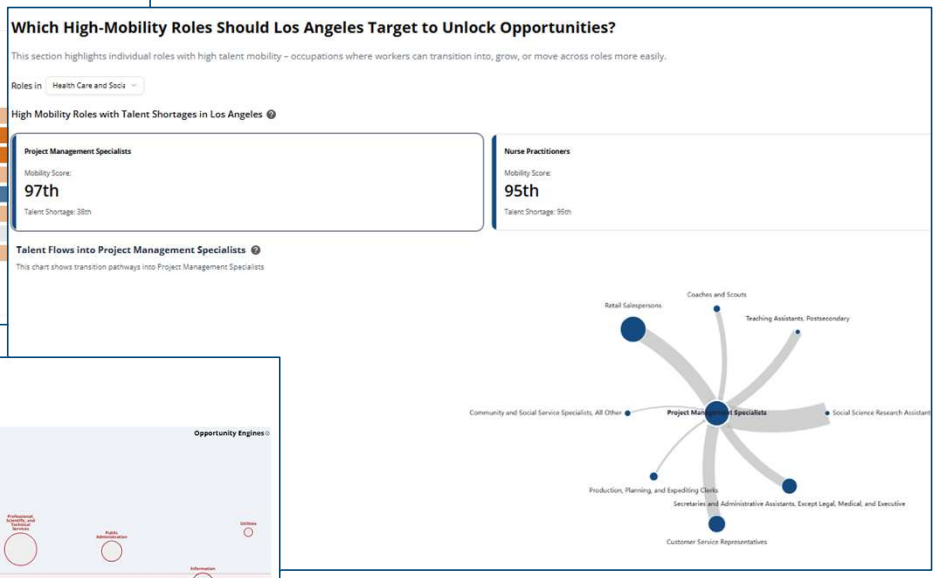
©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

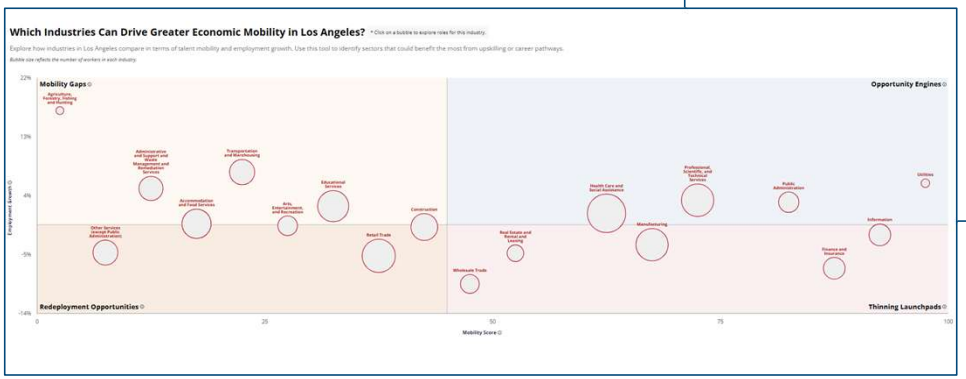
Mobility Monitor

Explore Mobility across the Los Angeles economy

Across a wider range of industries, occupations, pathways





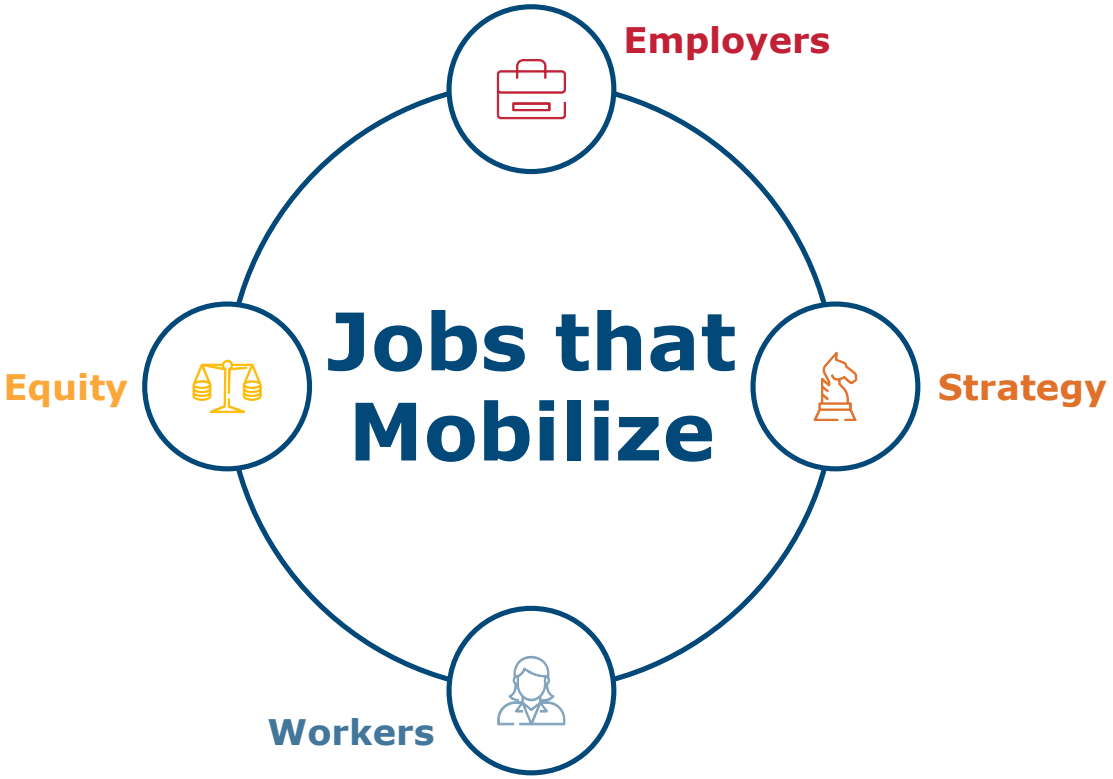


https://losangeles.ourtalentmobility.org/

Next Phase: Jobs That Mobilize (JTM)

The Forces Behind Jobs That Mobilize

Aligning Workers, Employers, Strategy, and Equity



- **A Connected System**: Every pillar—employers, workers, equity, and strategy—needs to inform and strengthen the others.
- **Built for Action**: Designed to guide real decisions and real investments.
- **Flexible and Future-Ready**: As markets evolve, the framework adapts—keeping pathways aligned with changing demands.
- **Driving Mobility**: Ensure every worker has a clear, supported path to good jobs that fuel both personal and regional growth.

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Reimagining Transitions

Mapping Real, Accessible Pathways to elevate Untapped Talent

By breaking jobs down into their component skills, we can discover overlaps that weren't previously apparent in a traditional job-title based understanding of the labor market.



©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

The Jobs that Mobilize (JTM) formula was developed at the National Level

But we need your help to ensure its relevance and meaning in the Los Angeles ecosystem

- **The Opportunity:** Advance and expand mobility for LA workers by aligning occupations, skills adjacencies, and mobility accelerators
- **The Need:** Los Angeles stakeholder perspective on how to best prioritize the which JTMs to focus on
- **Time Commitment**: One virtual session to understand the principles that underpin BGI's Jobs that Mobilize framework, and to prioritize the factors that surface JTMs
- **Outcome:** Together we will surface key occupations and mobility pathways unique to the Los Angeles market

©2026 The Burning Glass Institute

Thank You

If you would like to....

- Receive a copy of today's presentation
- Raise questions that you hope can be addressed in upcoming research
- Help engage other stakeholders in this conversation

Please email Joel Simon at jsimon@burningglassinstitute.org