

Abundant Career Opportunities in Transportation, Distribution and Logistic

The job market in Illinois is on an upswing, and job seekers in our state are once again finding many potential opportunities for rewarding employment. With one look in the Help Wanted section of your local newspaper, one is sure to find countless listings of employment opportunities. However, there has been a paradigm shift for blue collar workers in recent years with the loss of many manufacturing jobs. The shortage of jobs in this field has left many workers with traditional manufacturing backgrounds unsure of their futures. However, with another look at that Help Wanted section, one can certainly find dozens of job listings for the areas of transportation, distribution, and logistics- careers closely tied to manufacturing. What kind of opportunities can be found in these fields, and how do they relate to Illinois workers? Read on to find out.

Transportation, distribution, and logistics are related career fields dealing with the way that people and freight are moved from one place to another. Obviously, this is a very vital concern for our society. If you hail a taxi cab, ride a city bus, or buy any merchandise at your local grocery store, you are benefiting from these important services. However, as much as we depend upon the workers in these fields to make our society run smoothly, there is a critical shortage of qualified workers in these fields in the state of Illinois. This means that there are not yet enough trained workers to fill all of the job openings in this field, and that pursuing this line of work is a very wise career move for the Illinois job seeker.

Some of the jobs in the area of **transportation, distribution, and logistics** include the following:

Transportation Operators - These workers drive or pilot the vehicles that move people and freight. Included are commercial aircraft pilots, helicopter pilots, taxi cab drivers, city and school bus drivers, and semi-truck drivers.

Salespersons and Service Representatives - These workers are involved in the sales of transportation services and the retention of clients, as well as helping to solve related problems that may arise.

Facility and Mobile Equipment Maintenance Workers - Workers in this area are responsible for keeping vehicles and facilities operating smoothly, finding more effective ways to operate vehicles, and for refueling and routine maintenance.

Logistics Planning and Management - These workers plan and manage the transportation of freight and people. Responsibilities include planning the best routes of travel and scheduling departures and arrivals.

Transportation Infrastructure Planning, Management, and Regulation Workers - Persons working in this area design and oversee all aspects of operation for public transportation systems, including roads and highways, air transit, railroads, and ocean-going vessels. These workers are generally employed by government agencies.

Warehousing and Distribution - Workers in this sector are responsible for storing and distributing products and materials. Related jobs include freight and materials movers, shipping and receiving clerks, forklift operators, and warehouse managers.

Health, Safety, and Environmental Management - These workers assess and handle risks associated with transportation and distribution, and ensure the safety of the public and the environment.

(Cited at http://www.nde.state.ne.us/nce/documents/TranspDistribution_Logistics.pdf, Nebraska's Career Education)

Unlike many fields where specific education and degrees are mandated, there are fewer general education requirements to enter into the field of transportation, distribution, and logistics. Additionally, there is a good deal of opportunity for advancement in this field with additional training, unlike many other types of careers. However, there are also many careers available in this sector that requires 4+ year degrees. Just as the requirements for entrance into this field vary from job to job, the job responsibilities themselves vary.

With a high school diploma or GED, a job seeker in Illinois may be able to find a position in this field such as shipping and receiving clerk, taxi cab driver, cashier, customer service representative, travel agent, or vehicle refueling worker. By acquiring additional training and/or earning certification, a job seeker may also be able to find work as a bus driver, semi-truck driver, semi-truck owner-operator, forklift operator, flight attendant, helicopter pilot, salesperson, vehicle repair specialist, or electrician.

By earning an Associate's Degree, a job seeker has much greater employment and earning potential. Jobs that may be available to a job seeker with an Associate's Degree include warehouse supervisor, surveying and computer-aided drafting, railway conductor, commercial pilot, marketing management, parts and sales management, administrative assistant, aircraft maintenance worker, and more.

With an advanced degree such as a Bachelor's or Master's Degree, the job possibilities include industrial engineer, aircraft engineer, marketing analyst, air traffic controller, railway engineer, operations manager, warehouse manager, logistics and materials manager, environmental engineer, environmental scientist, and mechanical engineer.

Regardless of which job in this field you plan to pursue, it is very helpful to prepare yourself for the demands of the career by focusing heavily on math and science courses in high school or college. Helpful skills to have if considering this field would be welding certification, forklift operation certification, computer-aided drafting classes, and/or skills or class work related to automotive technology, industrial technology, or diesel mechanics. If you have a background in manufacturing, you may already possess much of the experience and skills necessary for a career in transportation, distribution, and logistics.

Certain types of careers, such as those in manufacturing, often experience a decline in job availability and demand due to influences such as the economy and foreign competition. While manufactured goods do need to be replenished and replaced, there is not always a steady demand for particular products. With the field of transportation, distribution, and logistics, however, there is a constant and self-renewing need for this sector's services. People and freight will always need transportation from one place to another, and thus there will always be a demand for workers to make this happen.

To search for jobs in Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, visit [Illinois' Job Bank](#) web site. Select "Transportation & Materials Moving" in the job category and select your desired job location.