# Indiana Tech Workforce

## Labor Market Survey 2026

**Top 10**
Indiana tech roles, ranked for local demand

**$40K–$170K+**
Salary planning bands for Indianapolis and statewide

**8 sectors**
Hiring difficulty scored across Indiana’s economy

**90 days**
to a working employer playbook, by company size

**Employer-Led. Student-Focused. Indiana Built.**

Data current as of May 2026


Prepared by

TechIndiana

In partnership with

Evolve HR
Workforce Strategy

# Executive Summary

**Bottom line:** Indiana's technology labor market is not just short on talent—it is misaligned. Employers need cybersecurity, data, software, systems integration, and AI-enabled roles at a pace the traditional pipeline cannot meet. The need is statewide because most technology workers sit inside non-tech employers.

The winning strategy for 2026–2028 is to **build repeatable pipelines for roles that can be learned on the job,** while reserving external recruiting dollars for specialized senior talent.

## What Leaders Should Take Away

| The Signal | The Action |
|---|---|
| Indiana's tech workforce is undersized: ~3.7–4.0% vs. 5.8% nationally. | Build talent internally. The external market cannot supply every open role. |
| Indianapolis drives wage premiums, but demand is cross-sector and statewide. | Use Indy bands for specialized roles; regional bands for support and analyst pipelines. |
| Data, cybersecurity, software, and systems roles are the pressure points. | Prioritize apprenticeships and incumbent upskilling in these areas first. |
| Traditional support and programming roles are being absorbed into higher-skill work. | Redesign entry-level jobs to include AI tools, data literacy, security basics, business-process knowledge. |
| ~50% of tech postings nationally do not require a four-year degree. | Commit to a 24-month workforce plan by role—not a reactive requisition model. |

*Sources: CompTIA 2026; BLS 2024–2034; BLS OEWS May 2024; TechIndiana analysis.*

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# 1. National Tech Workforce Snapshot

The U.S. tech workforce is rebounding after a flat-to-slight decline in 2025. CompTIA's 2026 report estimates net tech employment at approximately 9.6 million, projecting 1.9% growth in 2026.

| Metric | Value |
|---|---|
| **Net Tech Employment (2025)** | ~9.6 million workers |
| **Projected 2026 Growth** | +1.9% / ~185,000 new jobs |
| **National Median Tech Wage** | $112,805; more than double the median for all occupations |
| **Tech Workers Outside Tech Sector** | ~60% nationally (broader in Indiana) |
| **Annual Replacement Rate** | ~6% / ~323,000 workers per year |
| **AI Job Postings (Jan. 2026)** | 275,000+ referencing AI skills |
| **Tech Economic Impact** | $2.3 trillion / ~8.7% of U.S. GDP |
| **10-Year Growth** | ~2× the overall employment growth rate |

*Source: CompTIA 2026; BLS Employment Projections 2024–2034.*

**Critical narrative:** Technology work is no longer concentrated in technology firms. The talent problem belongs to every sector.

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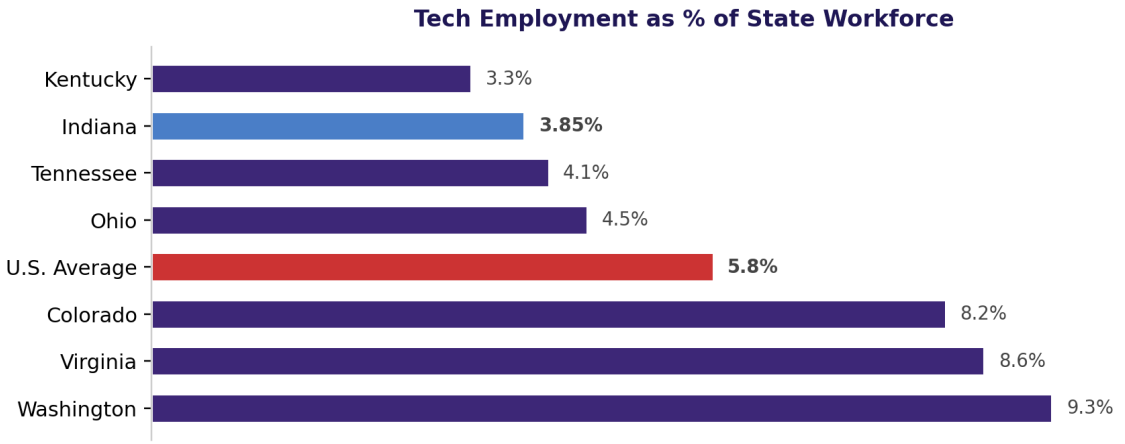
# 2. Indiana in Context

Indiana remains below the national average in tech employment concentration—a two-sided challenge and opportunity.




*Source: CompTIA 2025/2026.*


*Sources: CompTIA 2023 (Indiana); TechPoint 2024; Indiana DWD; TechIndiana analysis.*

## Indianapolis Metro vs. Rest of Indiana

| Planning Question | Indianapolis | Rest of Indiana |
|---|---|---|
| **Deepest specialized hiring?** | Enterprise software, data, cybersecurity, product, platform roles. | Embedded in manufacturing, health, logistics, education, local gov. |
| **Strongest wage premiums?** | Senior software, cybersecurity, cloud, AI/data, product roles. | Mid-level systems, support, automation, data analyst, infrastructure. |
| **Best apprenticeship starts?** | Data analyst, IT support-to-cyber, software QA, junior dev. | IT support, systems analyst, automation/data, cybersecurity ops, cloud. |
| **Primary risk?** | Overpay for scarce lateral hires while underbuilding entry pipelines. | Underinvest because roles less visible but operationally critical. |

*Source: TechIndiana analysis.*

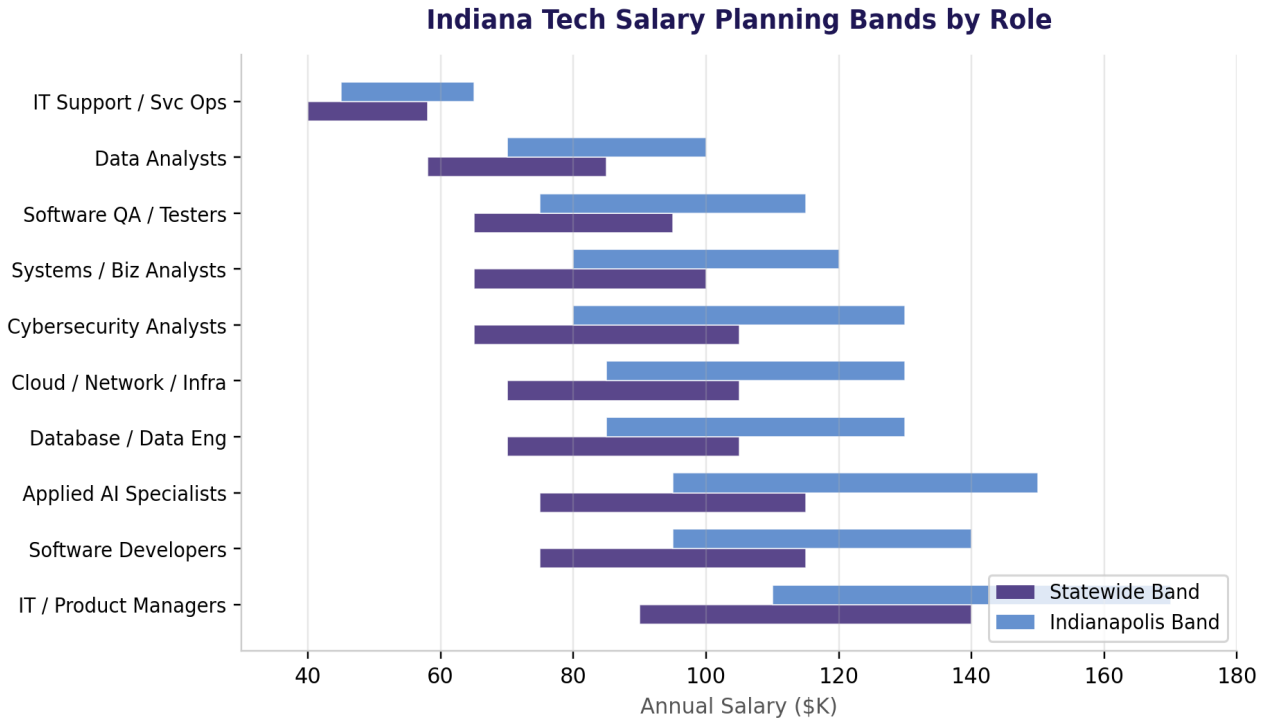
# 3. Indiana's Top 10 Technology Roles

*Re-ranked for Indiana's industry mix, cross-sector demand, and pipeline opportunity.*

| # | Role | Why It Matters | Indy vs. Statewide | Pipeline Guidance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Data Analysts / Scientists** | Every major sector needs operational, financial, clinical, supply-chain data capability. | Very high Indy; high statewide. | Build entry data analyst apprenticeships; layer Python/SQL, visualization, AI-assisted analysis. |
| 2 | **Cybersecurity Analysts** | Cyber risk universal across regulated sectors: healthcare, finance, mfg, education, gov. | Very high Indy; mod–high statewide. | Start with IT support + security ops; build to full analyst over 12–24 months. |
| 3 | **Software Developers** | Core growth role; Indiana demand in enterprise systems, modernization, embedded business software. | Very high Indy; selective statewide. | Use junior dev, QA-to-dev, and low-code/process automation pathways. |
| 4 | **Systems / Business Analysts** | Translators between operations and technology, esp. healthcare, mfg, logistics, public sector. | High Indy; very high practical need statewide. | Strong apprenticeship fit: business process, requirements, workflow, data, integration. |
| 5 | **Cloud / Network / Infra** | Cloud, identity, connectivity, resilient operations are foundational for distributed employers. | High everywhere. | Combine network fundamentals, cloud admin, cybersecurity basics, vendor certs. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | **Database / Data Engineers** | Data quality, integration, governance, AI-readiness depend on stronger data infrastructure. | High Indy; moderate statewide. | Upskill analysts and devs into data engineering; prioritize SQL, ETL, governance. |
| 7 | **Software QA / Testers** | AI and software modernization increase need for quality, validation, compliance, automated testing. | High Indy; moderate statewide. | Excellent apprenticeship bridge to software development and product operations. |
| 8 | **Applied AI Specialists** | Dedicated AI roles smaller but strategic; applied AI fluency matters across many jobs. | Indy for dedicated; statewide for AI-enabled. | Build applied AI associates who use, evaluate, and govern AI tools. |
| 9 | **IT Support / Service Ops** | Indiana employers need scalable entry points into tech despite automation pressure. | High everywhere; critical for SMBs. | Redesign as AI-augmented support + security, endpoint, cloud, customer-success. |
| 10 | **IT / Product Managers** | Leadership demand grows as every employer becomes more technology-dependent. | Very high Indy; selective statewide. | Build from internal talent; pair apprenticeship grads with leadership development. |

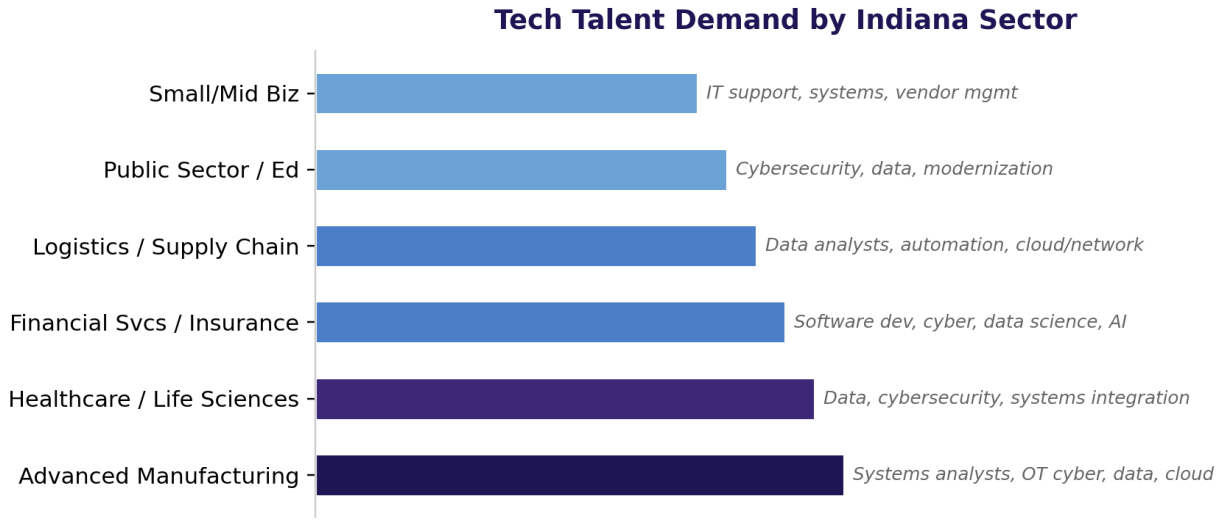
*Sources: BLS OOH 2024–2034; CompTIA 2026; Indiana DWD; TechIndiana analysis.*




*Salary bands are planning ranges. Validate against current postings.*

## 4. Top Tech Roles by Indiana Sector

Indiana's most useful workforce strategy is sector-by-sector.



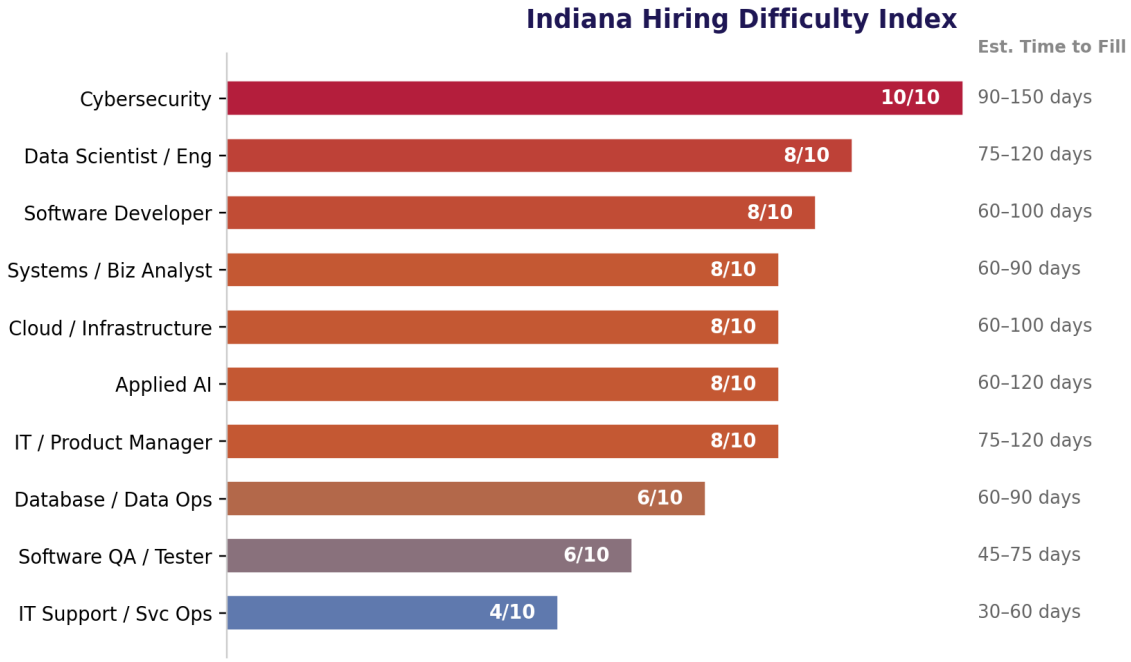

*Source: TechIndiana sector analysis.*

| Sector | Highest-Value Roles | Why | Best Workforce Bet |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Advanced Mfg / Logistics** | Systems analysts, industrial data, OT cyber, network/cloud, automation hybrids | Plants, warehouses, suppliers need secure, connected, data-driven ops. | Build IT support-to-systems and data analyst apprenticeships with ops/ERP/cyber exposure. |
| **Healthcare / Life Sci** | Data analysts, cybersecurity, systems integration, database/data eng, cloud support | HIPAA, EHR, clinical ops, life-sciences data, digital patient operations raise demand. | Build analyst and cyber pathways tied to compliance, data governance, workflow. |
| **Financial Svcs / Insurance** | Software devs, cybersecurity, data science/analytics, AI governance, risk/fraud | Fraud, compliance, CX, automation make data and secure software essential. | Prioritize data/cyber/software apprenticeships and incumbent AI upskilling. |
| **Public Sector / Education** | Systems analysts, cybersecurity, service ops, data analysts, cloud/network support | Modernization, citizen services, data reporting, cyber resilience are constraints. | Use apprenticeships to build durable entry pipelines, reduce contractor dependence. |
| **Small and Mid-Size Biz** | Versatile IT support, systems analysts, vendor managers, security-aware generalists | SMBs need broad technical capability but cannot hire every specialty. | Train multi-skilled early-career talent; share services and cohort training. |

*Source: TechIndiana sector analysis and employer engagement.*

## 5. Hiring Difficulty Index

*Scored on demand, supply depth, wage pressure, and experience requirements.*




*Source: TechIndiana analysis. Time-to-fill estimates are directional.*

| Role | Demand | Supply | Diff. | Time | Employer Move |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cybersecurity** | Very High | Low | **Extreme** | 90–150d | Grow from IT support, network, cloud, SOC associate roles. |
| **Data Sci/Eng** | Very High | Low–Mod | **High** | 75–120d | Split: apprentice data analysts now; reserve external $ for senior. |
| **Software Dev** | High | Moderate | **High** | 60–100d | Junior dev + QA pathway; clarify stack before recruiting. |
| **Sys/Biz Analyst** | High | Moderate | **High** | 60–90d | Build internal translators; recruit for curiosity and process skill. |
| **Cloud/Infra** | High | Moderate | **High** | 60–100d | Train network/support into cloud, identity, security. |
| **Applied AI** | Emerging | Low | **High** | 60–120d | Define applied tasks clearly; avoid over-specifying credentials. |
| **Software QA** | Mod–Hi | Moderate | **Moderate** | 45–75d | Excellent bridge into development and product operations. |
| **IT Support** | Very High | Higher | **Moderate** | 30–60d | Scalable entry point; redesign around AI, security, cloud. |

*Source: TechIndiana analysis.*

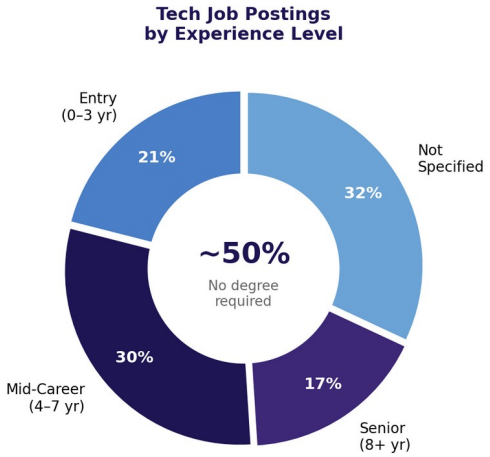
## 6. Declining Roles: What It Really Means

The point is not to abandon these roles but to redesign them so workers develop toward the next role.

| Role | Signal | Why | Indiana Guidance |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Computer Programmers** | **–6%/10yr** | Absorbed into software engineering, platforms, AI-assisted dev. | Train for dev, QA automation, integration, business context. |
| **User Support Specialists** | **–3%/10yr** | Routine tickets automated; complex support stays human. | Keep as entry but add security, SaaS admin, AI troubleshooting. |
| **Network/Systems Admins** | **~flat** | Cloud + managed services reduce traditional tasks. | Retrain into cloud admin, cyber hygiene, automation, resilience. |

*Source: BLS OOH, 2024–2034.*

# 7. Hiring by Experience Level




## The Skills-Based Hiring Shift Is Real

Nearly 50% of tech job postings do not require a four-year degree. Entry-level demand (0–3 years) is 21% of postings—a real market for credentialed, apprenticeship-trained talent.

***Structured apprenticeship breaks the experience paradox.***

*Source: CompTIA Tech Jobs Report (June 2025), Lightcast data.*

# 8. The AI Effect on Indiana's Tech Labor Market

AI is changing the skill profile of nearly every technology role.

| AI Signal | Meaning for Indiana | Response |
|---|---|---|
| AI skill mentions rising quickly. | AI becoming default competency across software, data, ops, support, finance, HR. | Add AI fluency to every tech pathway. |
| Dedicated AI roles are senior. | Most employers should not start by hiring elite AI researchers. | Build applied AI associates, data analysts, automation analysts. |
| AI raises data quality importance. | Poor data infrastructure blocks AI value. | Invest in data analysts, data engineering, governance. |
| AI changes entry-level work. | Routine tasks shrink; early-career workers ramp faster with AI tools. | Redesign apprenticeships around judgment, workflow, security, validation. |

*Source: CompTIA 2026; Ball State CICS 2025.*

**Indiana AI context:** 82.5% of Indiana organizations have adopted AI—but 60% provide no structured training. Structured training yields a 2.96× outcome multiplier.

## Fastest-Growing Tech Occupations

| Occupation | Growth vs. National | Outlook |
|---|---|---|
| **Data Scientists and Analysts** | 420% of national rate | Fastest in tech |
| **Cybersecurity Analysts/Engineers** | 346% | +33% |
| **Software Developers/Engineers** | 188% | +15% |
| **CIOs, IT Directors, Managers** | 175% | +7% |
| **Software QA and Testers** | 110% | +15% |

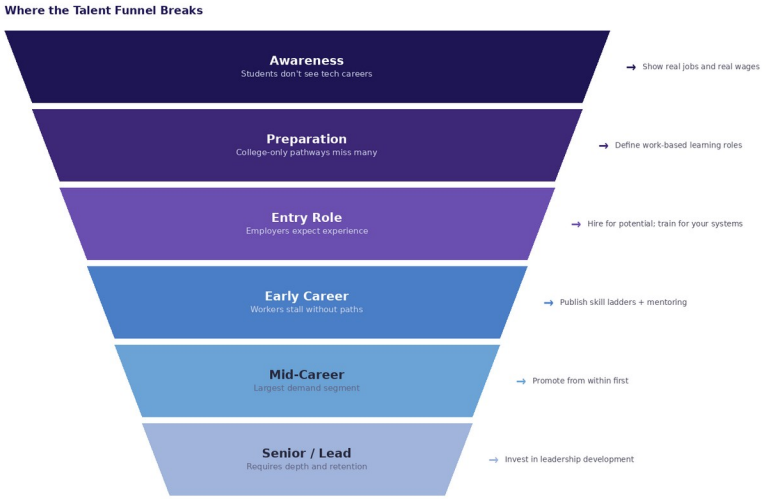
*Source: CompTIA 2026; BLS/Lightcast.*

# 9. What Indiana Employers Are Getting Wrong

*Indiana employers can improve outcomes quickly by changing a few common habits.*

| The Mistake | The Fix |
|---|---|
| **Over-hiring for experience** | Many postings ask for 3–5 years for work learnable through a structured pathway. |
| **Cybersecurity as senior-only** | Cyber has entry/associate tasks buildable from support, network, cloud, compliance. |
| **Underinvesting in data foundations** | AI outcomes require clean data, governance, and analysts who understand the business. |
| **Misapplying salary benchmarks** | Specialized Indy roles price near national. Statewide averages lose Indy candidates. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Job descriptions as wish lists** | Poorly scoped postings deter early-career talent. Define must-haves vs. nice-to-haves. |
| **Apprenticeship as charity** | $1.47 return per $1 invested + higher retention + faster ramp. It's a supply-chain strategy. |
| **Ignoring small-employer needs** | Small employers need shared cohort training. Can't build alone—but can participate. |




*Source: TechIndiana analysis.*

## 10. Employer Playbook: What to Do Now

| Your Situation | Next 90 Days | 12-Month Move | 24-Month Goal |
|---|---|---|---|
| **No formal pipeline** | Identify top 3 roles. Rewrite JDs. Pilot one. | Launch first apprentice/upskilling cohort. | Repeatable annual pipeline. |
| **Some entry, weak retention** | Map entry → progression. Add mentorship. Publish ladders. | IT support → cyber/cloud. QA → dev. Analysts → data ops. | Reduce lateral hiring; promote from within. |
| **High cyber/data/SW demand** | Separate senior specialty from trainable associate work. | Senior mentors. Associate pathways. | Bench of early-career talent ready for mid-level. |
| **Small employer (<50)** | One versatile role: support + security + systems + vendor. | Shared cohort training. | One internal generalist managing vendors and systems. |
| **Large employer (500+)** | Calculate replacement demand. Identify repeated openings. | Multiple pipelines: data, cyber, SW/QA, support/cloud. | Apprenticeship as workforce planning. |

*Source: TechIndiana.*

## 11. Salary Planning Guidance

Use three bands: statewide baseline, Indianapolis market, hard-to-fill premium.

| Role | Statewide | Indianapolis | Premium Trigger |
|---|---|---|---|
| **IT Support** | $40K–$58K | $45K–$65K | Security, cloud, healthcare, multi-site. |
| **Data Analyst** | $58K–$85K | $70K–$100K | SQL + BI + domain + AI-enabled analytics. |
| **Cybersecurity** | $65K–$105K | $80K–$130K+ | IR, cloud security, healthcare/finance compliance. |
| **Software Dev** | $75K–$115K | $95K–$140K+ | Modern stack, seniority, product, cloud-native. |
| **Systems/Biz Analyst** | $65K–$100K | $80K–$120K | ERP/EHR/CRM modernization, data integration. |
| **Cloud/Infra** | $70K–$105K | $85K–$130K | Identity, security, multi-cloud, HA ops. |
| **Applied AI** | $75K–$115K | $95K–$150K+ | Production AI, governance, data eng, model evaluation. |

*Planning ranges from public data. Validate against current postings.*

# Appendix: How INCAP Aligns to the Top Roles

INCAP is strongest when positioned as a structured solution to specific employer pain points.

| Role | INCAP? | Entry Point | Time | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **IT Support / Service Ops** | Yes | HS or adult apprentice | Immed–6 mo | Best first on-ramp; design as support + security + cloud. |
| **Data Analyst** | Yes | HS or adult apprentice | 6–12 mo | Strong fit for SQL, spreadsheets, visualization, process, AI-assisted analysis. |
| **Systems / Biz Analyst** | Yes | Adult or advanced HS | 9–18 mo | Requires business context; excellent fit for employer-led training. |
| **Software QA / Tester** | Yes | HS or adult apprentice | 6–12 mo | Strong bridge into development, product, and automation. |
| **Junior Software Dev** | Yes, with structure | Adult or advanced HS | 12–24 mo | Requires mentoring, stack clarity, and real project work. |
| **Cybersecurity Associate** | Partially / over time | IT support-to-security | 12–24 mo | Start with cyber hygiene, monitoring, endpoint, identity, incident escalation. |
| **Cloud / Network Support** | Yes | IT support-to-cloud | 12–24 mo | Pair fundamentals with vendor credentials and hands-on systems exposure. |
| **Data Engineer** | Partially | Data analyst-to-ops | 18–30 mo | Better as a progression role than first destination. |
| **Applied AI Associate** | Yes, as capability | Data/support/systems | 6–18 mo | Focus on use cases, validation, prompt/workflow design, privacy, governance. |
| **Tech / Product Mgr** | Eventually | Promotion from pathways | 3+ years | Build leadership from internal talent. |

*Source: TechIndiana INCAP program design.*

**Key principle:** INCAP builds reliable entry and early-career talent for roles that compound into mid-career capability over 24–36 months.

## Sources and Data Notes

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Ball State CICS, Indiana AI Workforce Report (2025).

TechIndiana analysis of CompTIA, BLS, and Indiana DWD data.

***Caution:*** Public data lags current conditions. Rankings and difficulty guidance are for planning; refine with fresh posting data and employer input.

**$1.47**
**return per $1**
invested in apprenticeship

**6%**
**annual replacement**
rate in tech occupations

**50%**
**of tech postings**
require no 4-year degree

## Pipeline beats poaching.

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