

# Finance & Accounting Career Guide

A guide for financial managers, accountants and auditors, personal financial advisors, billing and posting clerks.



# Finding Your Way to a Career: Finance & Accounting

All businesses, from small entrepreneurs to multi-national corporations, rely on accurate financial records to make sound business decisions. Finance and accounting workers play a vital role in these organizations. These professionals make sure financial records are completed accurately in accordance with all laws that govern financial transactions and record keeping.

## How to use this document to learn more.

As one of the Top 100 Hot Jobs for 2022, finance & accounting is a promising occupation for job seekers in West Michigan. To find out if this might be a good career choice for you, use this Career Map to examine:

- Who might enjoy this kind of work.
- Qualifications needed in this career field.
- Growth potential and levels of pay.
- Valuable skills for this type of work.
- Common tools and technology used in this work.
- Occupations, responsibilities, and other job titles.

This information is drawn from national data and insights from West Michigan employers. It is meant as a starting point for job seekers and career coaches to work together in the exploration of meaningful and fulfilling careers.



## Exploring Occupations in Finance & Accounting

Finance & accounting workers play a vital role in businesses large and small. From advising business owners on investment strategies, to reconciling sales transactions, to completing tax documents, Finance and accounting professionals must have excellent attention to detail. Professionals in these careers must stay up to date on regulations and economic trends that would impact the businesses they support.

# The Path to Success

## Who might enjoy this type of work?

People who work in the finance & accounting field tend to enjoy:

- Following set procedures and routines.
- Working with data and details more than with ideas.
- Having a clear line of authority to follow.
- Working with projects, starting and carrying out tasks that provide solutions.
- Being the decision maker while leading a group of people.
- Working with, communicating with, and teaching people.
- Helping or providing service to others.

People who do well in this work generally perform well in such areas as:

- Responsibility
- Achievement
- Adaptability
- Teamwork
- Information Skills

## Qualifications needed in this career field.

Nationally, most people working in finance and accounting have a bachelor's degree.

Sample certifications include:

**Financial Managers sample credentials:** Certified Public Accountant, Certified Financial Planner

**Accountants and Auditors sample credentials:** Certified Public Accountant

**Personal Financial Advisors sample credentials:** Series 7 General Securities Representative License (Stockbroker), Certified Financial Planner, Series 66 Uniform Investment Adviser.

**Billing and Posting Clerks sample credentials:** Certified Public Accountant, Certified Accounting Technician

## Growth potential and levels of pay.

In the West Michigan counties of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa, there were 9,641 finance and accounting jobs in 2020. That number is projected to grow by at least 5% to 9,989 by 2025.

## Valuable skills for this type of work.

Tasks and functions performed by finance & accounting include:

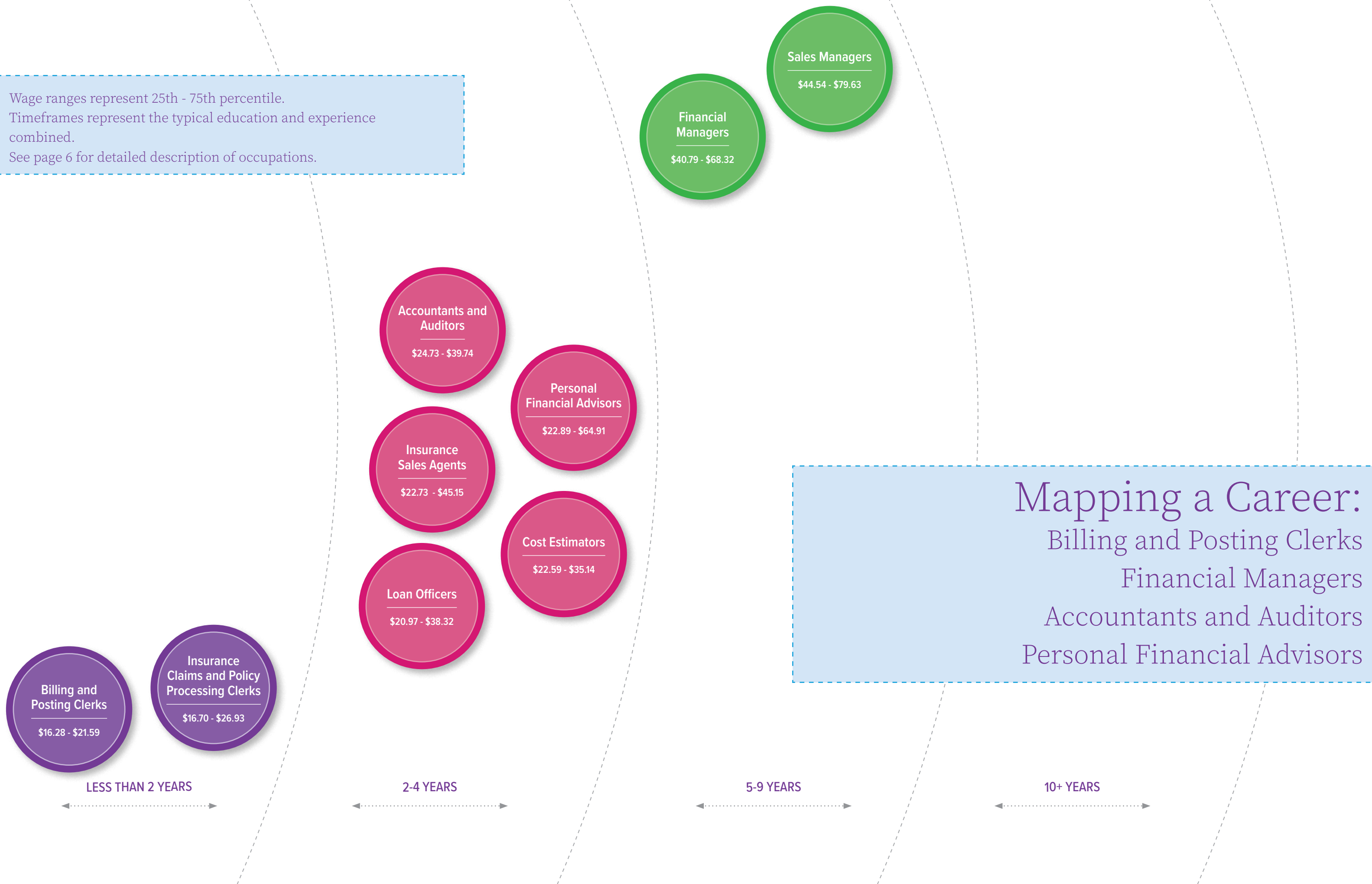
- Interacting with computers.
- Getting information.
- Communicating with supervisors, peers, or subordinates.
- Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships.
- Making decisions and solving problems.
- Evaluating information to determine compliance with standards.

## Common tools and technology used in this work.

Tools: calculators, computers

Tech: financial analysis software, spreadsheet software, customer relationship management software

Wage ranges represent 25th - 75th percentile.  
Timeframes represent the typical education and experience combined.  
See page 6 for detailed description of occupations.



Mapping a Career:  
Billing and Posting Clerks  
Financial Managers  
Accountants and Auditors  
Personal Financial Advisors

# Finance & Accounting: A Field Guide

## Occupations, responsibilities and other job titles.

### Financial Managers

Direct or coordinate accounting, investing, banking, insurance, securities, and other financial activities of a branch, office, or department of an establishment.

**Examples of locally used job titles:** banking center manager (BCM), branch manager, credit administration manager, financial center manager, regional manager, service center manager

### Accountants and Auditors

Analyze and interpret accounting records to prepare financial statements, give advice, or audit and evaluate statements prepared by others. Install or advise on systems of recording costs or other financial and budgetary data.

**Examples of locally used job titles:** accountant, accounting officer, audit partner, auditor, certified public accountant (CPA), cost accountant, financial auditor, general accountant, internal auditor, revenue tax specialist

### Personal Financial Advisors

Advise clients on financial plans using knowledge of tax and investment strategies, securities, insurance, pension plans, and real estate. Duties include assessing clients' assets, liabilities, cash flow, insurance coverage, tax status, and financial objectives. May also buy and sell financial assets for clients.

**Examples of locally used job titles:** certified financial planner (CFP), financial advisor, financial consultant, financial counselor, financial planner, investment adviser, investment advisor, portfolio manager, wealth advisor

### Billing and Posting Clerks

Compute and record billing, accounting, statistical, and other numerical data for billing purposes. Prepare billing invoices for services rendered or for delivery or shipment of goods.

**Examples of locally used job titles:** account services representative, accounting clerk, billing clerk, billing coordinator, cost accounting clerk, item processing clerk, statement clerk, statement distribution clerk, statement processor, statement services representative



West Michigan Works! is part of the statewide Michigan Works! system and the workforce development agency in West Michigan. We serve the employers and job seekers of Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon and Ottawa counties.

We partner with employers, educators, economic developers and community organizations to create a qualified workforce that meets our region's current and future talent needs and fuels our shared economic future.

Learn more at: <https://www.westmiworks.org/>



CareerPoint helps students and job seekers find their place in the world of work by matching interests and abilities with training, support, and meaningful and rewarding careers.

By providing training and tools, CareerPoint supports the workforce professionals who help people navigate the West Michigan job market.

CareerPoint promotes evidence-based coaching to help students and job seekers discover and follow pathways to rewarding careers. This model follows seven steps to each participant's success.

Learn more at: <https://talnetcareerpoint.org/>