

Data center employment brief

October 8, 2026. Estimated permanent and construction employment, and salaries, for a 450 MW hyperscale campus of 1,320,000 square feet.

225 to 300

PERMANENT ON-SITE
JOBS

About
\$102,000

WEIGHTED AVERAGE BASE
SALARY

1,500 to
2,200

REGIONAL JOBS
SUPPORTED

3,500 to
5,000

CONSTRUCTION JOB-
YEARS

Basis of the estimates. These are Willow Lakes team estimates for a campus of 450 MW and 1,320,000 square feet, using industry staffing benchmarks and typical economic-impact multipliers. They are not the output of a site-specific economic model. Direct full-time employment falls into two phases: permanent on-site operations and a temporary construction and development phase, counted as full-time-equivalent job-years.

1. Permanent full-time direct jobs (on-site operations)

Modern AI data centers are highly automated and density-focused rather than headcount-intensive. The benchmark for high-density hyperscale facilities is about one direct full-time employee per 1.5 to 2.0 MW of capacity, or roughly one per 8,000 to 10,000 square feet. For a 450 MW, 1.32 million square foot campus, that equals **225 to 300 permanent on-site full-time jobs**.

OPERATIONAL ROLES

FUNCTION	SHARE	ROLES	JOBS
Mission-critical facilities and MEP engineering	30%	High-voltage electrical engineers, HVAC and liquid-cooling technicians, generator mechanics, building-management-system operators	about 70 to 90
IT infrastructure and data center operations	35%	Hardware technicians, fiber and cabling specialists, network engineers, rack deployment team	about 80 to 105
Physical security and access control	20%	24/7/365 perimeter and badge-access security personnel	about 45 to 60
Site management, EHS and logistics	15%	Site director, environmental health and safety, inventory, shipping and receiving, compliance managers	about 30 to 45

2. Indirect and induced jobs (economic multiplier)

In economic-impact studies, data center operations typically carry a job multiplier of 3.5x to 5.0x.

- **Indirect jobs (supply chain and vendors):** about 800 to 1,200, including third-party maintenance contractors, specialized liquid-cooling vendors, security-systems integrators and local utility support.
- **Induced jobs (local economy):** about 500 to 700, driven by local spending in retail, housing, food services and municipal services funded by the property tax base.
- **Total permanent economic impact:** 1,500 to 2,200 regional jobs supported.

3. Construction and build-out (temporary direct jobs)

Permanent headcount is lean, but building a 450 MW, 1.32 million square foot facility creates large short-term labor demand over a 2 to 3 year build-out.

- **Direct construction trades:** 3,500 to 5,000 full-time-equivalent job-years: electricians, pipefitters for liquid cooling, steelworkers, civil engineers and concrete contractors.
- **Peak on-site trades:** up to 1,200 to 1,800 workers on site daily during core mechanical, electrical, plumbing and shell construction.

Summary

JOB CATEGORY	DIRECT HEADCOUNT	TOTAL REGIONAL IMPACT (WITH MULTIPLIERS)
Permanent operations	225 to 300 FTEs	1,500 to 2,200 jobs
Average salary (permanent)	\$90,000 to \$110,000 a year	Above the regional median
Construction phase	3,500 to 5,000 FTE-years	6,000+ total job-years

Salaries

For permanent on-site operational roles at a high-density hyperscale data center, the average salary ranges between \$95,000 and \$115,000 a year, excluding performance bonuses, overtime and equity compensation. Mission-critical facilities need specialized electrical, mechanical and liquid-cooling expertise to maintain 99.999% (“five nines”) uptime, so these jobs pay significantly more than standard commercial or light-industrial roles in the South Florida market.

SALARY BY DEPARTMENT

ROLE OR DEPARTMENT	ESTIMATED AVERAGE BASE SALARY	KEY RESPONSIBILITIES
Site director, operations management	\$160,000 to \$210,000	Overall facility management, SLA compliance, vendor governance and team leadership
Mission-critical MEP engineers	\$105,000 to \$135,000	High-voltage distribution, generator systems, BMS monitoring, continuous liquid-cooling operations
HVAC and liquid- cooling technicians	\$85,000 to \$110,000	Chiller maintenance, coolant distribution unit loops, heat-exchanger monitoring
Data center and hardware technicians	\$75,000 to \$95,000	Rack deployments, GPU node swaps, cabling and fiber patching, physical diagnostics
Network and security infrastructure engineers	\$100,000 to \$130,000	Dark fiber integration, switch configurations, physical and logical network security
Physical security and access control	\$55,000 to \$70,000	24/7/365 perimeter guard force, badging, biometric verification, visitor escorts
EHS, logistics and inventory managers	\$70,000 to \$90,000	Environmental health and safety compliance, hazardous-waste management, hardware receiving and asset tracking

KEY METRICS

- **Weighted average base salary:** about \$102,000 a year.
- **Total average compensation with benefits and bonuses:** about \$130,000 to \$140,000 a year.
- **Comparison to the regional baseline:** St. Lucie County’s median household income is \$71,457 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 to 2024 American Community Survey, in 2024 dollars). The permanent workforce at Willow Lakes would earn a base salary about 1.4 times that figure, and about 1.8 to 2.0 times with benefits and bonuses, adding high-wage employment to Fort Pierce with far less demand on schools and traffic than a residential development of comparable size.