ONE LOUISVILLE

Defense & Aerospace
Talent Overview



WHY LOUISVILLE?

Louisville provides access to a broad defense and aerospace talent base, including engineers, precision manufacturing professionals, logistics experts and military-connected talent.

Supported by Fort Knox, a deep regional network of universities and technical programs, and UPS Worldport at SDF, companies can hire skilled workers at every level while benefiting from competitive labor costs, global connectivity, and the ability to scale.

TALENT AT A GLANCE[1]

42,844
Direct defense & aerospace industry jobs in the Louisville MSA

2.7x
Employment expected for a region this size

$9.3B
Defense & aerospace GRP in 2025

115.6K
Workers in defense- and aerospace-related occupations

BUILDING THE TALENT PIPELINE[2]

Recruit regionally. Operate centrally.

Louisville is within a six-hour drive of more than 20 R1 research institutions, giving employers a deep pipeline of engineers, researchers, technicians and military-connected talent across aerospace engineering, advanced manufacturing, materials science, logistics and maintenance.

GRADUATES AT SCALE[2]

63,000+

graduates completed defense– and aerospace–relevant programs within six hours of Louisville in the past three years.

REGIONAL RESEARCH & TRAINING NETWORK

Within six hours of Louisville

University of Louisville
University of Kentucky
Purdue University
The University of Tennessee Knoxville
The Ohio State University
University of Cincinnati
Kent State University

TOP TALENT AREAS[1]

- Mechanical & Aerospace Engineers
- Machinists & CNC Operators
- Quality Engineers & Inspectors
- Logistics & Supply Chain Managers
- Maintenance Mechanics & Equipment Technicians

Sources: 1. Lightcast Q3 2026 Data Set; 2. Lightcast 2026 Educational Completions Data (2022–2024).
Data Note: Employment, concentration and GRP figures use One Louisville's custom Defense & Aerospace definition (25 NAICS codes); 115.6K covers related occupations across all industries.

The Louisville Advantage

ONE LOUISVILLE

MAJOR REGIONAL DEFENSE & AEROSPACE EMPLOYERS

Raytheon · REDWIRE · BAE SYSTEMS · LOCKHEED MARTIN · BOEING · UPS · Parker · Honeywell · Collins Aerospace · First Class Air Support (A First Class Air Company) · ASRC FEDERAL · Whelan Machine

INDUSTRY IN ACTION · TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

Defense Innovation OnRamp Hub: Kentucky — Connects regional innovators with U.S. Department of Defense opportunities.	Raytheon — Operates a major manufacturing and defense facility in Louisville.
BAE SYSTEMS — Overhauls major-caliber weapon systems and submarine components.	REDWIRE — Builds spaceflight research payloads and spacecraft systems in Southern Indiana.
Parker — Motion and control technologies for aerospace and defense.	LOCKHEED MARTIN — Engineering, manufacturing and field support in nearby Lexington.
Metropolitan College — A UPS, UofL and JCTC partnership: tuition benefits and a logistics pipeline.	University of Louisville — Speed School engineers graduate with three co-op semesters of experience.
Center for Applied Energy Research — Research in advanced carbon materials, composites and manufacturing.	Purdue University — Nationally ranked leader in aerospace engineering and research.

The Academies of Louisville (Jefferson County Public Schools) — Engineering, Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace Engineering and Aviation pathways across 15 public high schools.

DID YOU KNOW?

Louisville-area companies manufacture naval defense systems and develop spaceflight research payloads used aboard the International Space Station.

Sources: Academies of Louisville; Lightcast 2026; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data Note: Employment figures encompass total available talent for the identified industry, not only talent currently employed in the sector.

One Louisville helps businesses…

Talk with our economic development and talent team about locating, expanding, or hiring here.

ONELOUISVILLE.ORG
LIVEINLOU.COM

- Connect with defense & aerospace manufacturers and suppliers
- Connect with universities, colleges, and workforce partners
- Build customized talent attraction and recruitment strategies
- Support internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning
- Navigate site selection, expansion, and community resources
- Promote your opportunities through Live in Lou