A day to recognize workers started in 1882

The first observance of Labor Day is believed to have been a parade of 10,000 workers on Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City, organized by Peter J. McGuire, a Carpenters and Joiners Union secretary.

By 1893, more than half the states were observing "Labor Day" on one day or another, and Congress passed a bill to establish a federal holiday in 1894. President Grover Cleveland signed the bill soon afterward, designating the first Monday in September as Labor Day.

There were 153.2 million people 16 and older in the nation's labor force in July 2011.

Of full-time workers 18 to 64, 84.7 percent were covered by health insurance during all or part of 2009.

The number of people who work from home — 5.9 million. About 11 percent of those who worked at home for some or all of their workweek reported working 11 or more hours in a typical day in 2005. Only about 7 percent of workers who worked outside the home reported doing so.

The 2009 real median earnings for male and female full-time, year-round workers, was $47,127 and $36,278, respectively.

Most people drive to work alone — 76.1 percent. Another 10.0 percent carpool and 5 percent take public transportation (excluding taxicabs).

The average time it takes people in the nation to commute to work is 25.1 minutes.