CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The City of Chesterfield Salary Administration Manual described herein has been established to meet the following objectives and goals:

A. To promote economy and effectiveness in the personnel services rendered to the City of Chesterfield.

B. To establish and maintain a uniform plan of position classification based upon relative duties, responsibilities and functions of positions in the classified service.

C. To ensure that employees receive fair compensation for their contribution to the ongoing operation and effectiveness of the City of Chesterfield administration and that the City receives fair return for its payroll expenditures.

D. To provide a modern system of personnel administration which will support the City of Chesterfield's role as an equal opportunity employer, and in which fair and equal opportunity shall be accorded to all qualified persons to be employed, promoted and retained on the basis of merit and fitness.

E. To make the City of Chesterfield an attractive employer and to encourage each employee to render their best service to the City of Chesterfield.

F. To guide managers and supervisors administering the salary administration program and to assist them in the administration of the program so that it is fair and consistent to individual employees and the City of Chesterfield.

CHAPTER II

DEFINITIONS

Words used in this manual in the present tense include the future as well as the present, the singular includes the plural; and the plural includes the singular. The following words have the significance attached to them in this section, unless otherwise apparent from the context of the section in which they appear.

CITY - City of Chesterfield, Missouri

CITY ADMINISTRATOR - The Chief Administrative officer of the City of Chesterfield.

DEPARTMENT HEADS - The recognized Department Heads of the City of Chesterfield.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE - An employee who is scheduled to work forty (40) hours per week on a regular basis.

MAY - Is permissive or optional.

SHALL - Is mandatory

SUPERVISOR OR MANAGER - A person having the responsibility of assigning work, guiding and disciplining employees

FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE (FOP) – Reference to those employees within the Police Department represented by the Eastern Missouri Coalition of Police, Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 15 and the Chesterfield Police Officers Association.

CHAPTER III

COMPENSATION CLASSIFICATION AND ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

Section 1. Compensation Classification - Description and Purpose

The Compensation Classification plan is comprised of a list of compensation classifications for positions supported by written specifications (i.e., job descriptions) setting forth the duties and responsibilities within each class of positions. The purpose of the classification plan shall be to:

A. Provide similar pay for similar work.

B. Establish qualification standards for recruiting purposes.

C. Provide a means of analyzing work distribution, areas of responsibility, lines of authority, and other relationships between positions.

D. Assist in determining budget requirements.

E. Provide a basis for developing standard work performance.

F. Establish lines of promotion and career growth.

G. Indicate training needs.

H. Provide uniform titles for positions.

All full-time employees of the City of Chesterfield shall be included in a position classification plan with the exception of the City Administrator, who shall remain a non-classified employee. Commissioned law enforcement employees will be addressed in a separate volume.

Section 2. Compensation Classes

Compensation classifications shall consist of one or more positions that are similar in the basic character of their duties and responsibilities so that the same pay level, title and qualification requirements can be applied and the positions can be treated fairly and equitably under like conditions.

Section 3. Job Descriptions

Job descriptions are concise, written documents summarizing accountability, nature and scope, duties, qualifications, contacts, complexity and working conditions associated with a position. Job descriptions are important sources of information for developing performance standards, evaluating jobs in the marketplace, and training employees.

Current job descriptions will be maintained for all positions in the position classification plan. The format and definition of terms used in the job descriptions will be as follows:

A. Identification - This section will list the position title, the department which the associated position is assigned and the immediate supervisor.

B. Position Summary - This section shall broadly explain the kind and level of work which characterizes the position and thereby distinguishes it from other classes. It may include references to such factors as level of responsibility, independence of action, areas of expertise, and supervision exercised.

C. Principal Duties and Responsibilities - This section shall list a variety of duties and responsibilities which will customarily be performed by the associated position. This section may not be construed as setting forth all the specific responsibilities and duties, nor shall it limit or modify the right of any appointing authority to assign, direct, and control the work of employees. All job descriptions shall include the phrase "performs all other related work as required," to provide flexibility in assigning employees as necessary.

D. Skills, Knowledge and Abilities - This part of the job description shall set forth the special skills, knowledge and abilities which are required of new employees at the time of their appointment.

E. Minimum Education, Certification, and Experience Requirements - This section shall present a general statement of the minimum experience, education and other additional training/certifications which would ordinarily provide adequate preparation for a position and for successful performance of the work characteristics of the position.

Section 4. Maintenance of Job Descriptions

It will be the responsibility of each Department Head to review the job description of each position in their department regularly. Appropriate revisions and recommendations shall be submitted to the City Administrator for review and approval. The City Administrator may require revisions prior to approval. The Human Resources Manager shall maintain copies of each currently approved job description.

Section 5. New Job Descriptions

If a new job position is created, the Department Head is responsible for developing a description. The new job description shall be submitted for review and approval by the City Administrator. Under no circumstances shall a salary action be taken until such process is completed.

Section 6. Position Evaluation

Position evaluation is the process of determining the value of a position and assigning it to the appropriate compensation classification level. It shall be the responsibility of the City Administrator to assign each job title to its appropriate group by function and then by positions which are substantially similar with respect to difficulty, responsibility, and character of work. Such similar positions shall require generally the same amount of training and experience for proper performance to merit approximately equal pay.

Section 7. Position Evaluation Reviews

It shall be the responsibility of the Department Head to re-evaluate job positions for which revised position descriptions have been submitted; evaluate new positions for which position descriptions have been submitted; and submit all position evaluations and re-evaluations to the City Administrator for approval.

CHAPTER IV

THE PAY PLAN AND SALARY ADMINISTRATION POLICIES

Section 1. Pay Plan Structure

The City of Chesterfield pay plan structure consists of forty-six (46) individual compensation positions. Each compensation classification position consists of an alpha-numeric identifier (e.g. D4), a compensation minimum, midpoint and maximum, and is characterized by a defined "spread", which is the percentage difference between the maximum and minimum compensation levels. The compensation classifications are designed to include values for each civilian job position within the City of Chesterfield. The compensation classifications are designed to uniformly increase at four (4%) percent between each successive position. The pay plan structure is generally designed with 30% spread between the minimum and maximum compensation for each classification. However, there are a number of specific positions that have been identified as "critical" positions, and those positions have been designed with 40% spread of compensation values.

A. A sufficient number of pay levels were included to capture the full range of job values represented in the city administration and the full range of job values anticipated in the future.

B. Each pay level was made wide enough (30% - 40%) to allow employees to earn merit increases while performing their responsibilities.

C. The distance between pay levels (4%) was made large enough to reflect actual differences in relative values of jobs in each pay level.

D. Each position was assigned to the pay level which best represented its combined internal value to the City and external value in the marketplace.

Section 2. Annual Adjustment of Compensation Classification Ranges for Non-FOP employees

An annual uniform adjustment will be made to the compensation classification ranges based upon the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost?cu, Midwest region, All items CUUR0200SA0, not seasonally adjusted, one-year recorded percent index change over the previous year, as reported for June in the prior calendar year. To ensure that the minimum and maximum value of the pay levels reflect the current market value of city jobs and the movement of salaries in comparable labor markets, the compensation plan ranges shall be adjusted annually, in January, immediately after distribution of the annual merit increases, if applicable. ~~This adjustment to the salary ranges will be applied the following January after merit increases (if awarded) have been applied.~~ Individual salary increases will not occur as a result of this range adjustment process, unless the salary of an employee is beneath the minimum salary for his/her position after any merit increase has been awarded. In any year where the CPI is zero or less, there will be no adjustment to salary ranges the following year. However, in any given year, the annual compensation plan adjustment is limited to a value that shall not exceed 75% of the merit pool approved by City Council. This limitation is essential to preserve separation between existing employees and new hires.

Section 3. Determination of Annual Budget for Performance Based (Merit) Increases

The Finance and Administration Committee of Council will annually make a recommendation to the full City Council with regard to what amount to budget for performance based compensation adjustments in the upcoming budget. Staff will provide information to the Finance and Administration Committee including but not limited to; CPI, Cost of Labor indexes, and City Revenues such that the Committee can provide the recommendation for the value of the merit pool budget.

Should the City Council elect to fund an annual merit increase, the amount allocated to the annual budget will be based on the following, and any other factors the Council chooses to consider.

A) A percentage stipulated and approved by City Council based upon CPI, economic factors, and revenues available to the City.

B) Actual salaries of all current and eligible employees who were on the payroll as of September 1 of current year. This will exclude the salaries of employees who are at the maximum of the range for their job position, but may include a dollar sum adjustment to account for employees who may be near the maximum salary for their respective range and otherwise eligible for less than the approved percentage that has been allocated to the annual budget.

C) It is anticipated that any merit increase dollars not used for employees who may have left the payroll prior to September 1 of the following year will be sufficient to allow and award partial year increases for those employees who may join the payroll after September 1 of the current year.

D) There will be no allocation made for vacant positions as of September 1st of the current year or positions that are forecast to be vacant or eliminated.

A dollar figure will be calculated based upon the above criteria, and this amount will forwarded to the City Council as a recommended value to be included in the proposed budget.

Section 4. Compensation Below Assigned Pay Level

In no event shall a probationary employee's compensation be increased as a result of the annual CPI-U compensation plan adjustment. A probationary employee may temporarily be compensated below grade, until they have successfully completed their probationary period and received their first annual merit increase, at which time their compensation shall be adjusted to ensure they are within the appropriate pay grade.

If an employee's salary is too low to coincide with the position classification plan, the compensation will be increased to the minimum value of the newly assigned pay level.

Section 5. Compensation Above Assigned Pay Level

As a result of a compensation classification adjustment and/or the re-evaluation and reassignment of certain positions in the position classification plan, individual salaries may be above the maximum value of the appropriate pay level.

If an employee's salary is too high, they shall not receive merit increases until such time as they are "recaptured" by the appropriate pay level. Once the employee's salary falls within the appropriate salary level, they will once again be eligible for merit increases.

Section 6. Compensation Levels For New Hires

The salary level for a new employee will depend upon the employee's qualifications. As a rule, new employees will be hired at the minimum amount of their pay level. Any hires above the minimum pay level up to the established maximum salaries described in the previous paragraph, may not occur without a written recommendation by the Department Head to the City Administrator stating why the candidate exceeds the minimum qualifications for the position. New employees may be hired at a compensation level not more than ten percent (10%) above the minimum pay for their job classification with the expressed approval of the Department Head. When job or market conditions necessitate, new employees may be hired at a compensation level up to the job classification midpoint only with the written permission of the City Administrator.

If at any time, acute competition, demonstrated exceptional qualifications of a candidate and/or labor shortages in the labor market create an unusually difficult situation for hiring personnel, the City Administrator may request that the Finance and Administration Committee so declare such situation and provide exemptions from the hiring salary limitation.

Section 7. Compensation Actions

The following types of compensation action may occur and affect the placement of any employee in the merit pay plan:

A. Promotions - A promotion is the assignment of an employee from one position to another position having a higher maximum salary. When an employee is promoted to a position in a higher classification, the employee's salary shall be increased to not less than the minimum rate for the higher classification or to another point in salary range, whichever provides the employee with a salary increase of at least five percent (5%) above their current rate of pay. This action should be distinguished from a reclassification of a position which is assigned to a higher pay level.

B. Demotions - A demotion is the involuntary assignment of an employee from one position to another position having a lower maximum salary. When an employee is involuntarily demoted to an assignment in a classification having a lower maximum rate than the salary received at the time of reassignment, then the employee shall receive the maximum rate established for the classification to which the employee is being demoted; otherwise, the employee shall receive their present rate if that rate is lower than the maximum rate of the classification to which they are being demoted.

C. Separations - Separations shall include resignation, dismissal, retirement, lay-off, disability or death. No salary actions shall be taken as a result of an employee's separation, unless such action is specified by ordinance or an employee contract.

D. Transfer - A transfer is the voluntary assignment of an employee from one position to another position having either a lower or higher maximum salary. An employee who voluntarily transfers to another position will be subject to the pay level of the position being accepted and will start at a salary most equivalent to their salary in the previous position but not to exceed the maximum rate of the new range or fall below the minimum rate of the new range.

E. Performance - Performance is the carrying out of required action and displayed patterns of behavior. Performance evaluations shall determine performance levels and the assigned merit increases according to performance.

F. Overtime - All full-time non-exempt employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act must be compensated at the rate of 1-1/2 times the number of hours worked over forty (40) in a seven (7) day work week or over an established work period or receive compensatory time off. The work week for purposes of this section shall be defined as beginning at 12:01 a.m. Sunday morning and proceeding for seven (7) full continuous days until midnight the following Saturday night.
Authorized absences with pay during the work week or work period because of vacation, holidays, military training leave, or compensatory time off shall be considered authorized work for the purposes of calculating overtime. The City reserves the right to change work schedules during the work week or work period to reduce overtime liability.

G. Overtime/Callouts on Holidays and Vacation - Any non-exempt employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act, who are called to work on a holiday or while on vacation shall be paid at the rate of one

(1) times the employee's hourly rate for all hours worked. Such overtime compensation shall be in addition to regular pay received for the holiday. Both the holiday hours and the hours worked on the holiday shall be included in the calculation of all hours worked for the work week.

H. Call-Outs - If an employee is called back to work outside of a normally scheduled work day or is called back to work after having completed a regularly scheduled work day, the City shall compensate the employee a minimum of two (2) hours.

I. Approval of Overtime - The City shall not be obligated to pay overtime not expressly authorized in advance by a direct supervisor. Employees who perform unauthorized overtime work shall not receive payment. All overtime should be recorded and claimed in the appropriate pay period and on the appropriate time sheet.

J. Scheduling of Overtime - When scheduling overtime, supervisors shall attempt to equitably distribute overtime among all qualified employees and it shall be assigned to the most appropriate position classification which can perform the work.

Supervisors shall when possible, give employees reasonable advance notice of overtime work. When sufficient personnel with appropriate skills are not available on a voluntary basis to perform required overtime, employees who refuse to work assigned overtime or who fail to report upon notice for overtime work may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

K. Compensatory Time Off - All employees covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act are eligible for compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay when work hours exceed forty (40) hours in a seven (7) day work week or their work period hours. Employees cannot receive both compensatory time and overtime as compensation for the same excess hours worked. The city will grant compensatory time off in lieu of overtime unless the operations of the city would be unduly disrupted by the employee's absence from work.

Accrual of compensatory time shall be limited to a maximum of forty (40) hours for all covered employees except those employees responding to an emergency or significant event. In this event, compensatory time may be temporarily accrued up to eighty (80) hours.

Compensatory time shall be accrued at a rate of one and one- half (1-1/2) hours for each excess hour worked. All compensatory time accrual as well as compensatory time taken, must be approved by the employee's supervisor and reviewed by his Department Head. Employees will be compensated for unused accrued compensatory time remaining at the time of separation from employment.

CHAPTER V

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROGRAM

Section 1. Objectives

The objectives of the City of Chesterfield Performance Appraisal Program are to optimize each employee's job performance by providing good information to an employee in regard to established performance standards. Employees must be compared to their job description and work performance and not to their co-workers. The Performance Appraisal Program also provides managers and supervisors with a more acceptable tool for employee compensation decision-making.

Section 2. Policy

To accomplish the objectives of the Performance Appraisal Program, it is important that both managers and employees view the process as a positive tool to produce more effective working relationships and work ethic. This is more likely to occur when employees understand their job responsibilities, receive feedback on their performance against specific job standards and are given the opportunity to develop useful action plans to improve performance when deficiencies exist.

Section 3. Performance Appraisal Schedule

The City of Chesterfield Performance Appraisal Schedule shall be as follows:

A. All new employees shall be evaluated after six (6) months of service from their date of hire. They shall be evaluated again after twelve (12) months of service from their date of hire.

B. After the six (6) month and twelve (12) month evaluations, all employees shall be evaluated annually prior to January 1. If a new employee received their twelve (12) month service evaluation after January 1 and prior to April 1 of any given year, they shall be added to the next annual evaluation cycle with all other employees on November 1. If a new employee has received his twelve (12) month service evaluation on or after April 1 and prior to January 1, they shall not be required to be evaluated during the next regular annual evaluation cycle. They shall, however, be eligible for a pro-rata merit increase effective the first full pay period after January 1st, based upon the percentage amount included in the fiscal year budget for merit increases. From that date forward, the employee shall be included in the regular January 1st evaluation cycle.

C. Following the successful completion of the twelve (12) month probationary evaluation and the annual evaluation thereafter, an employee shall be eligible for a merit based increase in compensation as determined in conjunction with the compensation plan in effect at the time of the evaluation. The total dollars budgeted for salary increases shall be determined each year by the City Council during the annual budget process.

Section 4. Performance Appraisal Evaluation

All evaluations completed by subordinate supervisors must be approved by each level of supervision in the department including the Department Head. The City Administrator shall evaluate all Department Heads and Executive staff.

The Department Head will forward their recommendations for merit awards to the Finance Director, who shall review them and forward them to the City Administrator for final approval.

Prior to the six (6) month or twelve (12) month service date or January 1, the Department Heads shall review all performance evaluations with the individual employees in their respective department. Employees shall sign their evaluation forms and all original evaluation forms shall be returned to the Personnel Office to be filed permanently in the employee's personnel file. At a different meeting, the Department Head shall conduct the salary discussion and communicate the merit increase.

Section 5. Performance Appraisal Appeal

If employees do not agree with the performance evaluation they receive, they may appeal the review to their Department Head. Signature on the evaluation form shall not signify acceptance of the evaluation. It shall merely be acknowledgement of the review with the employee by the Department Head. The appeal shall be filed separately. Employees can access forms on CCNET. All appeals must be filed within seven (7) days of the evaluation. Failure to do so will be regarded as acceptance of the evaluation, and the right to further appeal will be forfeited. Appeals must be filed in duplicate with the Department Head and the Human Resources

Manager. The Human Resources Manager shall notify the City Administrator of all performance evaluation appeals.

Following receipt of an appeal, the Department Head must review and decide on the appeal within seven (7) days. The Department Head shall notify the employee and Human Resources Manager of the decision. If the employee is unwilling to accept the determination of their Department Head, they may request the appeal be reviewed by the City Administrator. The City Administrator must review and decide on the appeal within fourteen (14) days. The decision of the City Administrator shall be final.

The performance appraisal appeal shall not be confused with the appeals process for the administration of discipline for employees. Disciplinary actions involving dismissal, suspension, or demotion shall be separately provided for in the grievance procedure described in the City of Chesterfield Personnel Rules and Regulations.

The appropriate form for a performance appraisal appeal may be obtained from the Human Resources Manager or on CCNET.

CHAPTER VI
COMPENSATION DECISION-MAKING

Section 1. Objective

It is the City of Chesterfield's objective to develop a fair and equitable linkage between the performance appraisal system and the merit pay plan. The compensation plan approved by the City Council shall be used for this purpose.

Section 2. Policy

All compensation decisions shall follow the performance appraisal process and the overall performance ratings for each employee shall be individually reviewed and awarded. All decisions regarding compensation should be made without the influence of issues which bear no relationship to the review of work performance.

Section 3. Merit Increases

A merit increase is the total payment granted an employee as a result of his overall performance rating. A merit increase cannot be granted which would result in any employee exceeding the maximum compensation assigned for their specific job title.

Section 4. Procedure to Determine Compensation

The following procedure shall be used in compensation decision-making:

A. The Finance Director shall inform the Department Heads of the actual payroll and total dollars available for merit increases. The Finance Director shall also provide information relative to the current compensation classifications.

B. The Performance Appraisal Program shall have specific guidelines for assisting Department Heads in tying the percent merit increase to the work performance score. When there are multiple employees within a single job title, the merit award assigned to each employee should reflect their relative performance ranking. In no circumstance, should an employee with a lesser performance ranking receive a superior merit increase as compared to a peer having the same job title, with a lower performance rank.

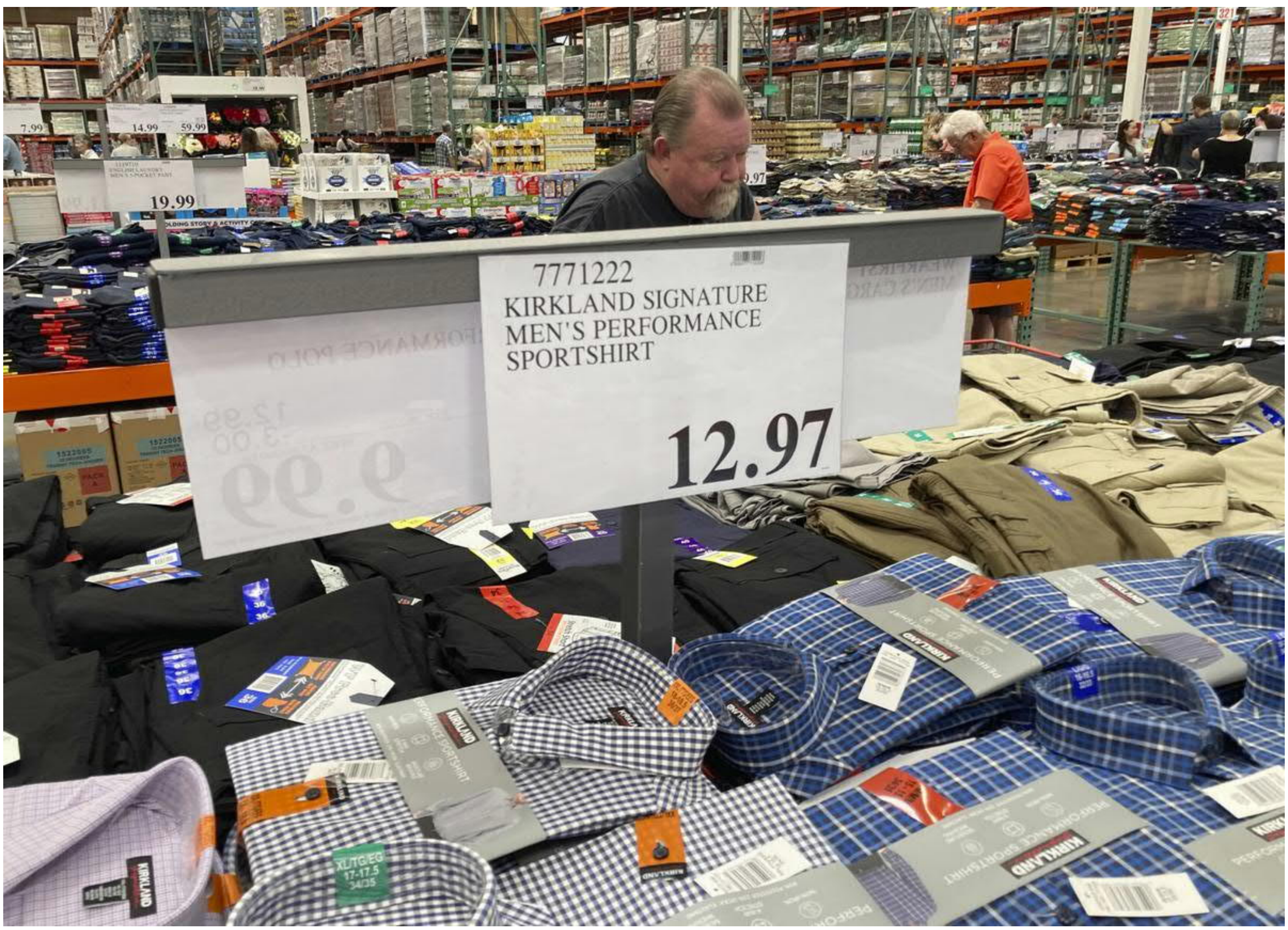
C. The Department Head shall prepare Personnel Action Forms to affect all salary changes. After all signatures are affixed to the Personnel Action Form, and the Finance Director receives a copy, all salary changes shall be entered into the payroll system. Department Heads shall be responsible for informing their respective employees of increases to be received. Additionally, the Finance Director shall prepare statements for each employee affected by either the minimum salary adjustment or the conversion onto the annual review cycle.

https://www.stltoday.com/news/national/us-consumer-prices-jumped-5-4-in-past-12-months-most-since-2008/article_b990cc71-2341-591e-aafd-ef87044e9b63.html

BREAKING

US consumer prices jumped 5.4% in past 12 months, most since 2008

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, AP Economics Writer
Jul 13, 2021



A sign displays the price for shirts as a shopper peruses the offerings at a Costco warehouse on Thursday, June 17, 2021, in Lone Tree, Colo. American consumers faced a third straight monthly surge in princes in June, the latest sign that a rapid reopening of the economy is fueling a pent-up demand for goods and services that in many cases remain in short supply. (AP Photo/David Zalubowski)

David Zalubowski

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER, AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — American consumers faced a third straight monthly surge i prices in June, the latest evidence that a rapid reopening of the economy is fueling pent-up spending for goods and services that in many cases remain in short supply.

Tuesday's report from the Labor Department showed that consumer prices in June rose 0.9% from May and 5.4% over the past year — the sharpest 12-month inflation spike since June 2008. Excluding volatile oil and gas prices, so-called core inflation rose 4.5% in the past year, the largest increase since November 1991.

The pickup in inflation, which largely stems from the economy's rapid recovery from the pandemic recession, has heightened concerns that the Federal Reserve might feel compelled to begin withdrawing its low-interest rate policies earlier than expected.

Keep scrolling to see how our state's economic recovery compares to other states

If so, that would risk weakening the economy and potentially derailing the recovery. Fed officials have repeatedly said, though, that they regard the surge in inflation as a temporary response to supply shortages and other short-term disruptions as the economy quickly bounces back.

The economy's reopening has led consumers to increasingly travel, dine out and shop after avoiding crowds for a year. That burst of spending has forced up prices for restaurant meals, clothes, and airplane tickets. A shortage of semiconductors has made new and used cars much more expensive, and rental car prices have soared.

So far, investors have largely accepted the Fed's belief that higher inflation will be short-lived, with bond yields signaling that inflation concerns on Wall Street are fading. Bond investors now expect inflation to average 2.4% over the next five years, down from 2.7% in mid-May.

Americans' longer-term views on inflation have also leveled off. A survey by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, released Monday, found that consumers expect inflation to remain near 5% a year from now. But they expect inflation to be 3.5% three years from now, down slightly from last month. Consumers typically overestimate future inflation.

The public's expectations of inflation are important, because they can be self-fulfilling. If consumers foresee higher prices, they are likely to demand higher pay, and businesses will try to charge more to offset their higher costs.

The Fed is aiming for inflation to exceed its target of 2% for some time to make up for the fact that inflation fell below that level for most of the past decade. The Fed wants inflation to average 2% over time to prevent Americans' inflation expectations from falling too low.

***

States where the economy has recovered the most from COVID-19

States where the economy has recovered the most from COVID-19

While the full economic impact of the coronavirus can only be revealed in the months and years ahead, one thing is fairly likely: Rebuilding the nation will depend largely on how well America can continue to contain the spread of COVID-19. As of June 2021, nearly 50% of Americans have received at least one dose of the **vaccine**, which has allowed states and businesses to more fully reopen, increasing spending and revenue. But even as many states have returned to some semblance of normalcy, most statewide economies will need more time before they've returned to pre-pandemic levels.

The pace of economic recovery can take on many forms. For some economies, it will take on a **V-shape**, indicating a sharp decline and equally sharp recovery. Other will be K-shaped, meaning that certain sectors of the economy are recovering faster than others. States that depend on tourism, entertainment, and leisure as a crucial source of their economy are tending to recover more slowly, since those sectors have often been the hardest hit by the coronavirus in many states.

Credible analyzed economic data to create a weighted index that shows which states recovered the most from the coronavirus. To determine which state economies are recovering the most, Credible looked at four key metrics: change in unemployment rates, change in the number of jobs in the state, change in gross domestic product, and change in home values. Each metric and then the weighted average of all four metrics was graded on a 100-point scale, so an index score of 100 represents the highest economic recovery between 2020 and 2021.

April 2021 unemployment rates are from the **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**. The House Price Index scores are from the **Federal Housing Finance Agency**, and measures housing price changes in single-family homes. Job growth statistics also come from the **Bureau of Labor Statistics**. The real GDP amounts for every state are from the **U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis**. All statistics in this story are the most recent available as of June 10, 2021.

Read on to see which states have recovered the most, and the least, from the economic toll that the coronavirus has had on communities, industries, and local governments.

Canva

#51. Washington D.C.

- Index score: 0

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 7.5% (3.6% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 620.2 (10.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 737,000 (2.2% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $145.8 billion (current dollars, 5.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

In the U.S. capital, June 11, 2021 marked a turning point in the city's fight against the coronavirus: It was the day that all capacity limits were eased and the city was **100% reopened**. Specifically, bars, sporting arenas, and other entertainment venues were able to fully reopen for the first time since the pandemic, whereas capacity limits for schools, offices, museums, and other categories were lifted on May 21, 2021. And while the city's cautiousness in reopening is likely correlating to the city's low rate of COVID-19 transmission in addition to the high rate of vaccination, it was **slower** to ease restrictions than other nearby major cities like New York and nearby states like Virginia. Projections show that a full economic **recovery** is expected to happen in 2022.

Canva

#50. New Mexico

- Index score: 17.7

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 8.2% (3.1% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 298.5 (10.7% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 790,200 (4.2% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $102.6 billion (current dollars, 9.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

As of May 2021, the national unemployment rate was 5.5%, so New Mexico's unemployment is higher than the national average. However, the state's unemployment rate tends to be higher than the national average anyway. While New Mexico is making some strides toward the coronavirus recovery, the state is expected to recover more slowly, economically, than other states. Adding to this is the fact that New Mexico has kept up extended unemployment benefits for longer than many other states.

melissamn // Shutterstock

#49. Wyoming

- Index score: 18.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 5.4% (3.8% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 402.2 (7.5% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 275,100 (4.7% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $37.1 billion (current dollars, 11.5% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Wyoming's relatively slow recovery can be attributed, at least in part, to the loss of jobs in one of the state's core job sectors: oil and gas. The state lost around 18,000 jobs by the end of 2021, and almost one third of those jobs lost were in the oil and gas industry. Moreover, the loss from those jobs trickled into losses in other related **industries**, such as transportation and manufacturing.

Canva

#48. North Dakota

- Index score: 25

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.2% (4.3% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 345.2 (5.9% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 417,500 (8.2% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $55.8 billion (current dollars, 11.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

There is some relatively good news in terms of the coronavirus recovery in North Dakota. Mainly, that GDP is increasing, the labor force is growing, and taxes are steadying. However, there are some concerns when it comes to the labor market, in that the unemployment rate is expected to be around **6.5%** by the end of the fiscal year, with salaries and wages projected to decrease as well.

Lost_in_the_Midwest // Shutterstock

#47. Louisiana

- Index score: 25.7

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 7.3% (7.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 310 (5.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,837,000 (7.5% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $248.3 billion (current dollars, 10.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

When many think of Louisiana, the vibrant tourism industry—especially in New Orleans—comes to mind. Louisiana is the eighth most reliant state in the nation on tourism, and its struggle to recover in the wake of the coronavirus is in part a reflection of that. Of all workers in Louisiana, 10.5% are employed in the dining or hospitality industry, two industries that are ineluctably intertwined with **tourism**.

Canva

#46. Arkansas

- Index score: 29.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.4% (5.8% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 257.2 (8.8% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,261,600 (8.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $133 billion (current dollars, 10.1% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Tourism and hospitality are the second-largest sources of revenue for the state, especially for its capital, **Little Rock**. Understandably, those industries took a hit as a result of the coronavirus, with many Americans reluctant to travel. On Feb. 11, 2021, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock received a $900,000 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act **grant** to aid with workforce training to help local industries and businesses recover from the economic fallout of the coronavirus.

shuttersv // Shutterstock

#45. Virginia

- Index score: 29.3

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.7% (5.9% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 309.5 (11.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 3,889,700 (7.7% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $566.4 billion (current dollars, 8.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Rural counties in Virginia are thought to have a slower economic recovery than major metropolitan areas in 2021 and beyond. In part, this is because more rural areas are expected to struggle with attracting top remote workers to these areas. As of May 2021, Virginia has not yet initiated a job-creating tax credit for projects developed in these areas, but is working to attract more manufacturing and software development talent to rural Virginia.

Eli Wilson // Shutterstock

#44. Iowa

- Index score: 30

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.8% (6.4% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 279.7 (7% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,517,400 (7.4% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $199.9 billion (current dollars, 11.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

A state's dependence on tourism is one of the factors that predicts just how deeply it will suffer to recover economically, with states that depend on tourism suffering a bit more than those that do not. However, while Iowa did not suffer economically as some other states during the height of the pandemic, it's still recovering very slowly. One of the biggest reasons is that a significant percentage of workers in the state left the workforce entirely during the coronavirus. Around 87,000 have left Iowa since February 2020, a 5% decrease in the state's total **workforce**. This figure is more than double the percent of Americans that dropped out overall.

Canva

#42. Minnesota (tie)

- Index score: 30.4

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.1% (4% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 341.9 (9.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,815,300 (9.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $385.5 billion (current dollars, 10.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Minnesota received a pandemic relief package of $1.9 trillion in March 2021. Of the money that will flow to **Minnesota governments and communities**, around $3 billion will go to supporting agriculture production and food supply chains, and $25 to $28 billion is expected to support local restaurants. Tribal communities are expected to receive $20 billion in aid, and $53 million is expected to go toward helping local businesses recover. Funding is also expected to go toward infrastructure and helping hospitals recoup financially.

Michele M Vogel // Shutterstock

#42. Oklahoma (tie)

- Index score: 30.3

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.3% (9.4% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 283.1 (7.8% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,625,400 (5.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $190.8 billion (current dollars, 10.2% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

In March of 2020, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber partnered up with the City of Oklahoma City and the Alliance for Economic Development to establish the **Small Business Community Program**. This program has included a technical assistance program, small business loans, and funding for employment retention. As in much of the country, the pandemic has created a labor shortage. **Trucking**, in particular, has suffered in the state, and the American Trucking Association said that 1.1 million new employees are expected to be needed over the coming decade to keep up pace with demand.

4kclips // Shutterstock

#41. Maryland

- Index score: 33.3

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.2% (3.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 293.5 (12.9% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,631,600 (10.6% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $432.9 billion (current dollars, 8.6% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

The live entertainment industry has been hit hard by the coronavirus. In an effort to help many struggling clubs, music venues, movie theaters, and sporting arenas, Gov. Larry Hogan **announced** in January 2021 that he would be awarding $30 million to 90 of these venues throughout Maryland. Also in January, Hogan introduced the RELIEF Act of 2021, which is providing $1 billion in tax relief as well as stimulus aid for small businesses and families across the state. Another reason why Maryland ranks toward the bottom of states' economic recovery could be attributed, at least in small part, to the public school system's commitment to distance learning, particularly in the spring and fall semesters of 2020.

grandbrothers // Shutterstock

#40. Nebraska

- Index score: 33.7

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 2.8% (5.5% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 318.2 (10.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,007,400 (7.5% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $133.1 billion (current dollars, 11.2% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Interestingly, at least one aspect of Nebraska's economy thrived during the coronavirus: agriculture. Farming **revenue** rose by 37% in 2020, and it's expected to continue rising over the next few years. And in non-farming related news, some lawmakers are considering increasing the maximum **lifetime credit** for microbusinesses—businesses with five or fewer full-time employees—in the wake of the coronavirus. In fact, 86% of businesses in the state, or 145,000 of them, are **microbusinesses**.

Aspects and Angles // Shutterstock

#39. Illinois

- Index score: 35.7

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 7.1% (9.3% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 229.9 (9.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 5,727,000 (7.7% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $886.6 billion (current dollars, 9.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

A lot of people **moved out** of Illinois during 2020. The Prairie State ranked as the third state with the most people leaving during the year, faring just slighter better than #2 New Jersey and #1 New York, based on a study from **United Van Lines**—66% of vans were leaving Illinois with only 34% coming into the state. This is actually an uptick from 2019, however, when Illinois ranked #2 as the state with the most people moving out of it. The other Midwestern states tend to have a more even split of people moving in and out.

Canva

#37. Missouri (tie)

- Index score: 37.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.1% (5.6% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 288.5 (10.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,815,000 (9.6% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $331.6 billion (current dollars, 10.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

The Kansas City COVID-19 Relief Loan Fund was **announced** in March of 2020. Set up by AltCap, the $5 million relief fund provides relief to small businesses. To meet eligibility, businesses had to be based in one of these counties: Platte, Clay, Jackson, Cass, Wyandotte, Leavenworth, or Johnson. Businesses in the arts, hospitality, food service, and retail, among others, are prioritized. Additionally, they have to have no more than 20 employees or exceed $2.5 million in yearly revenue.

Canva

#37. Kansas (tie)

- Index score: 37.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.5% (7.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 293.7 (10.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,372,400 (8% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $178.3 billion (current dollars, 10.5% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

In June 2021, Gov. Laura Kelly **announced** the members of a bipartisan committee that will be overseeing how the federal CARES Act funds will be distributed. Called the Strengthening People and and Revitalizing Kansas Taskforce, it will determine where the $1 billion in CARES Act funding will be allocated. The members are: House Speaker Ron Ryckman, Lt. Governor David Toland, Senate President Ty Masterson, as well as appointees Greg Orman, Bill Pickert, Jon Rolph, and Secretary of Administration DeAngela Burns-Wallace.

Andriy Blokhin // Shutterstock

#36. Connecticut

- Index score: 38.6

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 8.1% (0.2% greater than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 209.3 (15.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,580,600 (12.6% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $288.9 billion (current dollars, 10% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

During March 2020, 300,000 **jobs** were lost in the state. As of March 2021, 58% of those jobs have come back, a figure that hasn't changed all too much since September 2020. However, workers who made an income of $60,000 or more were able to recover jobs lost more easily than those whose salaries were less than $60,000. For those earning less, the unemployment rate was down by 28% as of February 2021.

GREG PATTON // Shutterstock

#35. Hawaii

- Index score: 38.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 8.5% (13.8% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 287.8 (4.8% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 562,100 (10.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $90.8 billion (current dollars, 8.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

As of May 2021, Hawaii is experiencing a surge in visitors from the U.S. mainland, many of whom are probably seeking a beach vacation. As more and more Americans are travelling in general, coupled with increased rates of vaccination, travel and tourism to Hawaii are not expected to slow down. The University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization anticipates that **travel** to Hawaii will surpass pre-pandemic levels by a whopping 70% by the end of the summer 2021. However, even though demand for tourism is rising, Hawaii is falling short in terms of hiring, likely due to health and safety concerns and many residents leaving the state due to the coronavirus.

Canva

#34. Colorado

- Index score: 39.3

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.4% (4.9% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 560.4 (13% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,690,900 (10.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $401.1 billion (current dollars, 9.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Colorado hasn’t fully recovered economically, but all signs point to a full recovery by 2022. The state is expected to add 90,000 jobs in 2021, and may **reach** “a new employment peak in 2022.” In part, this could be because 44,740 new business entities filed initial documents during the first quarter of 2021, a 29.2% growth. Optimism is also building from the growing rate of statewide vaccinations as well as the easing of business restrictions, similar to many other states.

Canva

#32. California (tie)

- Index score: 40

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 8.3% (7.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 342.2 (13.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 16,248,200 (8.7% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $3.2 trillion (current dollars, 9.4% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

There are a few factors that are aiding California's **recovery**, as of June 2021. For one, the state had put in place strict health and safety precautions, which included waiting until June 15 to fully reopen—with proof of vaccination needed for large indoor events, robust distance learning, and strict mask mandates. But the state also benefits from being home to a host of highly skilled technology jobs, as well as experiencing a housing boom. However, jobs in the tourist sectors are lagging behind in June 2021.

Kevin Avina // Shutterstock

#32. Texas (tie)

- Index score: 40

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.7% (6.1% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 342.1 (10.6% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 12,524,500 (8.7% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $1.8 trillion (current dollars, 11.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Like in many other state economies, the unemployment rate in Texas often depends on the county, with more rural areas tending to be hit the hardest. The unemployment rate is the highest in South Texas, where many work in the oil fields. However, there are some promising trends, even in the areas hardest hit. Southern counties such as Hidalgo, Starr, Cameron and Willacy had **employment rates** that were trending upward in April 2021 compared to the previous month.

Canva

#31. New York

- Index score: 40.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 8.2% (6.3% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 292.4 (10.9% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 8,882,200 (13.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $1.7 trillion (current dollars, 8.6% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

New York City was once the epicenter of the coronavirus. It is recovering, albeit slowly. In April 2020, New York **lost** 1.9 jobs in the private sector. And in February 2021, the city had 1 million fewer jobs than it did in February 2020. Plus, jobs lost in the service industry—with some that may never come back—and the decline in tourism has further hindered recovery.

CHOONGKY // Shutterstock

#30. Florida

- Index score: 40.5

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.8% (8.1% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 376.6 (11.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 8,568,900 (9.8% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $1.1 trillion (current dollars, 9.5% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Florida is benefiting from a strong wave of people moving from states like New York and New Jersey to the Sunshine State. As of May 2021, around 900 people are **moving** to Florida each day. In part, this could be due to lower income taxes than states like New York, as well as part of strong migratory patterns to Southern and Southwestern states. However, Florida has been steadily attracting new residents long before the coronavirus. The population grew by 2.7 million between 2010 and 2020, which is double the rate of population growth in America.

Felix Mizioznikov // Shutterstock

#28. Alaska (tie)

- Index score: 40.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.7% (6.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 295.6 (8.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 306,900 (7.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $52.1 billion (current dollars, 14.1% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Alaska was ahead of the curve in terms of lifting age requirements for COVID-19 vaccines. As of March 2021, Alaska **announced** that anyone 16 and older was eligible for the vaccine. As of June 20, 2021, 41.7% of Alaskans are fully vaccinated. While the usual cruise tourism has yet to pick back up, other tourist-related industries are experiencing the pleasant surprise of a **busier-than-expected summer season**, as visitors from the lower 48 seek out the state's majestic nature after a year in quarantine.

Canva

#28. Alabama (tie)

- Index score: 40.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.6% (9.3% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 266.7 (9.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,011,100 (9.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $231.7 billion (current dollars, 10.4% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

In June 2021, Gov. Kay Ivey **allocated** $2.6 million to six state counties, including Clarke, Houston, Lee, and Pike counties. These funds are to be spent on recovery efforts. All of these counties, plus Etowah, also received CARES Act funding from the federal government. In terms of the breakdown of the funding from the governor, Lee County, for example, received $500,000 to go toward food distribution and rental assistance; Coffee County will construct an emergency operations center with the $500,000 it received; and Pike County will buy additional ambulances for its fire department with the $400,000 Gov. Ivey provided.

George Dodd III // Shutterstock

#27. Arizona

- Index score: 41.9

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.7% (5.9% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 416.4 (14.7% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,898,300 (8.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $383.9 billion (current dollars, 9.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Areas in Southern Arizona were hit especially hard during the coronavirus, largely due to their dependence on tourism. In 2020, around 295,000 jobs were **lost** in the region, which equates to a 10% decrease. Tucson saw a loss of revenue when the Tucson Gem Show—a convention for the selling of intricate gems, minerals, and fossils that's typically held each year—was canceled in 2020 and again in 2021. The show alone typically equates to $30 million in spending per year.

Canva

#26. South Carolina

- Index score: 42.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 5% (7.1% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 293.6 (9% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,113,300 (11.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $248.8 billion (current dollars, 10.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Republican Gov. Henry McMaster has been **criticized** for his handling of South Carolina's response to the coronavirus. The governor, for example, never enforced a statewide mask mandate or placed a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions. However, the governor's focus on the business climate of the state has meant that many South Carolina businesses were able to reopen more quickly than other states that had more safety precautions in place and were able to avoid some budget cuts. As of April 2021, there could be a surplus in the following year's budget, with **$550 million** potentially saved up in case of future economic fallout.

Joseph Creamer // Shutterstock

#25. Georgia

- Index score: 42.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.3% (7.6% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 296.2 (11.9% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 4,473,600 (10.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $637.2 billion (current dollars, 9.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Homes are selling pretty fast in Georgia, as of 2021. This is especially true in Atlanta, where the **average home** is selling for $390,000, which is up 17% where it was in 2020. And the Atlanta housing market was already doing well in 2020. Atlanta homes are experiencing a growth rate of 6.7%, above the national growth rate of 5.7%.

WorldTraveler_1 // Shutterstock

#23. Delaware (tie)

- Index score: 43.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.4% (7.9% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 251 (12.6% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 444,300 (11.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $77.7 billion (current dollars, 8.5% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Delaware's economic recovery has been helped—and is expected to continue being aided in the future—by a projected budget surplus. At the start of the coronavirus, Delaware had a **budget surplus**, which it exhausted fighting the pandemic in 2020. This meant that the state didn't have to raise taxes. As of February 2021, another projected budget surplus of $495 million is thought to provide an extra budget cushion for the rest of 2021 and through 2022.

Jon Bilous // Shutterstock

#23. North Carolina (tie)

- Index score: 43.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 5% (7.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 298.3 (11.8% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 4,459,800 (10.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $603 billion (current dollars, 10.3% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

In April 2021, Gov. Roy Cooper announced the Community Economic Recovery and Resiliency Initiative, an initiative that's expected to help local North Carolina communities recover economically. The plan aims to support small businesses in the area while also providing guidance on how they can grow for the future. It will also zero in on **asset mapping** of local infrastructure and reviewing commercial district regulation. Additionally, North Carolina's recovery has likely been aided by its strong population growth, which **accelerated** during the pandemic and has been steadily growing. As a result of the latest Census, the state received its 14th seat in **Congress**.

Wiley doc // Shutterstock

#21. Oregon (tie)

- Index score: 44.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6% (8.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 522.2 (13% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,842,300 (9.2% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $256.5 billion (current dollars, 9.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Gov. Kate Brown announced the 10-Point Recovery Plan in March 2021 in an effort to help local businesses and communities in Oregon, in particular communities of color, affected by the coronavirus. The plan will **address** recovery efforts and "existing disparities that were exacerbated by the pandemic." In addition to the devastation caused by the coronavirus, 4,000 homes were lost due to wildfires that burned near Mount Hood in July 2020.

Michael Warwick // Shutterstock

#21. Mississippi (tie)

- Index score: 44.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.2% (9.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 236.6 (7.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,121,300 (10.8% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $118.1 billion (current dollars, 11.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Mississippi did not fare as poorly as many other states, however some sectors were hit quite hard. Economic output **declined** by 2.8% in 2020, but the arts, dining, hospitality and entertainment industries suffered serious damages—at a 20.2% loss—as might be expected. On the flip side, the utilities industry grew by 13.4%.

Agent-007 // Shutterstock

#20. Maine

- Index score: 47.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.8% (5.8% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 317.2 (13.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 610,800 (12% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $67.8 billion (current dollars, 10.3% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Gov. Janet Mills revealed the Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan in May 2021. Part of the **plan** will focus on spending $150 million improving residents' access to the internet, a broadband expansion that is likely to be crucial as more and more jobs are becoming remote. Additionally, $105 million will be directed toward education and child care programs. To help decrease the cost of health insurance for their workers, $39 million will go to small businesses.

Canva

#19. Wisconsin

- Index score: 47.4

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.9% (10.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 314.2 (9.5% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 2,857,300 (10.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $348.2 billion (current dollars, 10.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

As Wisconsin public health professionals were still working tirelessly to get shots in arms to health care workers, people over 65, and assisted living workers and residents in January and February of 2021, the eligibility guidelines offered vaccines to small and lesser-discussed Wisconsin communities: **mink farmers**. COVID-19 outbreaks at mink farms, which have been documented in Wisconsin and Utah as well as in Denmark, could pose a serious health risk. This is because COVID-19 spreads from farmers to the animals, who not only could become seriously sick themselves, but they could also spread disease to other wildlife populations. And potentially, minks could also infect people.

Checubus // Shutterstock

#18. South Dakota

- Index score: 47.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 2.8% (7.4% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 361.2 (11.7% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 435,600 (9.3% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $57.1 billion (current dollars, 12.2% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

South Dakota did not implement stringent health and safety precautions like stay-at-home orders and mask mandates. It managed to keep the unemployment rate relatively low and the economy fairly steady, even though tourism did decline. However, despite low population density and coupled with the relative lack of safety precautions, the state experienced the eighth highest **death toll** in the country, based on per capita population, as of March 2021.

Sopotnicki // Shutterstock

#17. Washington

- Index score: 48.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 5.5% (9.9% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 466 (13.9% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 3,343,200 (7.8% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $638 billion (current dollars, 10.1% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Some sectors appear to be **growing** in Washington in 2021, including information technology and e-commerce, at levels higher than the U.S. at large. And construction in the state is at pre-pandemic levels. Manufacturing, however, has been the hardest hit due to a decline in aerospace engineering.

oksana.perkins // Shutterstock

#16. West Virginia

- Index score: 49.3

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 5.8% (9.4% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 246.1 (9.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 685,300 (10.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $76 billion (current dollars, 11.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

West Virginia lost 94,000 **jobs** as a result of the coronavirus. The state is slowly getting those jobs back, but West Virginians won't be seeing a full recovery just yet. The economy gained 57,000 of those lost jobs, but the remaining 37,000 might not return until the end of 2021. Unsurprisingly, dining and leisure were hard hit, as was the state's coal mining industry, which experienced a sharp decline in demand—much more than other power sources. The coal mining industry is expected to experience a decline in demand until 2025.

Sean Pavone // Shutterstock

#15. New Jersey

- Index score: 49.7

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 7.5% (7.8% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 287.4 (12.8% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 3,900,800 (11.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $634.9 billion (current dollars, 10.6% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

The **New Jersey Recovery Act of 2020** may be able to revitalize the local economy in the years following the coronavirus. It will focus on tax incentives that are anticipated to draw in new development projects. In northern New Jersey, $715 million is expected to go toward innovative building projects, and $385 million is slated to be allocated to southern New Jersey communities. Many of these programs can last until 2027, potentially galvanizing opportunities for more local jobs to be created in New Jersey for the next several years.

Big Blink Creative // Shutterstock

#14. Massachusetts

- Index score: 51

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.5% (8.6% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 347.7 (12.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 3,433,800 (12.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $598.6 billion (current dollars, 9.5% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito **announced** a plan to use around $2.815 billion of Massachusetts' federal aid money. The plan, as of June 2021, is set to focus on prioritizing communities that have been hit the hardest by the pandemic. In this plan, $300 million will be directed toward supporting home ownership and $200 million is set to go toward helping close the wealth gap for communities of color in areas of the state that have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus by promoting first-time home ownership. In addition, $240 million will go toward job training programs, and $50 million will support hospitals in areas that have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus.

Canva

#13. Pennsylvania

- Index score: 51.9

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 7.4% (7.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 270.4 (11.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 5,666,500 (14.2% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $799.4 billion (current dollars, 10.4% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

The Pennsylvanian economy is doing better than expected. The state's deficit, as of April 2021, hovers around $5 billion. However, the next round of **relief aid** is thought to be around $7.3 billion. So, with the extra funds perhaps lies opportunity. Gov. Tom Wolf has a few potential ideas. One is to replace the gas tax, which goes toward paying for construction and transportation, and replacing that tax with a driver's mileage fee. The governor also has considered raising the taxes of the state's highest income earners.

George Sheldon // Shutterstock

#12. Kentucky

- Index score: 54.3

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.7% (10.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 284.6 (9.5% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,858,900 (11.8% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $216.5 billion (current dollars, 11.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Kentucky is poised to end 2021 on a strong note economically. Gov. Andy Beshear's team has announced that the state is expected to close 2021 with a general fund surplus of $586 million. The governor **said** the surplus means that the state should have a "rainy day fund" of more than $1 billion, "the most money ever in a rainy day fund in Kentucky." In terms of spending, school construction, improving broadband, and projects related to clean-water are three major project goals for the state.

aceshot1 // Shutterstock

#11. Ohio

- Index score: 58.6

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.7% (12.1% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 248.8 (10.8% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 5,308,300 (12.4% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $694.1 billion (current dollars, 10.8% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Ohio has demonstrated an interest in supporting STEM education during the pandemic. The **Choose Ohio First scholarship** supports 3,400 students who are new to the program, as well as the 3,000 scholars that are already a part of the program. The scholarship is supported by 57 universities and colleges throughout Ohio, and could be a way of expanding Ohio's workforce in STEM fields. Throughout the next five years, $69,826,882 will be awarded in scholarship money.

Canva

#10. Utah

- Index score: 59

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 2.8% (6.9% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 550.5 (17.7% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,590,700 (11.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $202.8 billion (current dollars, 10.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Utah had a few things going for it that set the state up for relative economic success in terms of facing the pandemic. For one, it had a strong economy before the pandemic struck, and it also benefited from federal relief money. However, one thing that sets Utah apart from every other state—with the exception of Washington D.C.—is its residents' adaptation to **remote work**. Nearly half of all Utah homes have at least one person who has been telecommuting during the coronavirus.

Canva

#9. Tennessee

- Index score: 59

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 5% (9.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 330.4 (12.4% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 3,061,300 (10.4% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $376.2 billion (current dollars, 12.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Tennessee topped U-Haul’s **list** as the state where the most people moved to during 2020. The state showed growth before 2020, however the pandemic accelerated the trend, especially as more and more people are looking to live in the South and Southwest, and in smaller cities. The housing market in cities like Nashville and Knoxville, for example, are seeing extraordinary housing booms. Migration to Tennessee is likely to continue in the years ahead, especially because the state was already on an upward trend before the pandemic.

Canva

#8. Montana

- Index score: 62.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.7% (7.6% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 506.2 (16.3% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 480,600 (12.9% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $53 billion (current dollars, 11.1% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Some regions of Montana were more negatively affected by the health and economic crises caused by the coronavirus than other regions. More rural areas are faring better than more densely populated ones, particularly because there was less virus spread and also because these areas depended a lot less on tourism and travel. Flathead Valley, for example, a highly populated part of the state, had an **unemployment rate** higher than elsewhere in the state—16% versus 11% statewide. In regions like Butte-Silver Bow, retail decreased by 7.8%, and the food and hotel industries there declined by 14.2%. The housing market in that region, however, is trending upward, especially with the rise of remote work.

Jacob Boomsma // Shutterstock

#7. Indiana

- Index score: 67.9

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.9% (13% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 261.4 (11.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 3,027,900 (13.6% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $385.3 billion (current dollars, 12% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Manufacturing has done well in Indiana during the pandemic, particularly due to the state's fairly central location. But not all industries have fared as well. Leisure and transportation have lagged behind. However, spending in the state is expected to rise by 3% from 2022 to 2023. Employment levels are also predicted to return to pre-pandemic levels by 2022.

Eric Glenn // Shutterstock

#6. Vermont

- Index score: 71.6

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 2.9% (12.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 280.6 (11.2% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 291,400 (16.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $33.7 billion (current dollars, 11.7% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

The coronavirus has impacted one of Vermont’s biggest industries: skiing. Around 4 million skiers head to Vermont mountains and slopes each year, with around 75% of skiers typically being from **out-of-state**. The ski resorts have sustained $100 million in losses throughout the pandemic. However, these businesses have also received $5.3 million in funding so far, which will recoup at least a small portion of the losses.

Julie Deshaies // Shutterstock

#5. Rhode Island

- Index score: 72.2

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 6.3% (10.7% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 290.4 (16.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 467,600 (17.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $61.6 billion (current dollars, 9.4% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Economically, Rhode Island is a state that depends in large part on its tourism and retail markets, industries that have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic. Troublingly, the number of Rhode Islanders employed **dropped** to the lowest it's been in 20 years—540,918. Several organizations—the Providence Foundation, the City of Providence, the Downtown Improvement District, and the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau—have set up programs to help strengthen the local retail and hospitality industries.

Sean Pavone // Shutterstock

#4. New Hampshire

- Index score: 74.8

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 2.8% (13.5% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 317.3 (14.1% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 659,100 (15.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $87.3 billion (current dollars, 10.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

By the time that the coronavirus hit New Hampshire, another epidemic was also raging: opioid addiction, and substance abuse more generally. In 2019, **New Hampshire** had the ninth highest rate of opioid deaths in the country. Also troublingly, people struggling with substance abuse are at a heightened risk of both contracting COVID-19 as well as having worse health outcomes if contracted. By the seventh month into the pandemic, seven recovery houses shuttered, which further strained resources for those struggling with addiction in the state. Although, these businesses did eventually receive CARES Act funding that helped them reopen.

Canva

#3. Idaho

- Index score: 81.1

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 3.1% (8.4% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 481.3 (21.5% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 784,900 (13.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $87.4 billion (current dollars, 12.9% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Idaho has not only seen jobs recover to pre-pandemic levels, but it has actually seen the employment rate surpass what it was before the pandemic. There are a couple reasons why. There's low unemployment, for example, and lots of open space plus a growing construction sector and housing boom. However, as with many other states, there are **disparities** in terms of the workers most affected by unemployment in Idaho, with those who are making less than $16 per hour having to face more unemployment than those whose wages exceed that threshold.

Charles Knowles // Shutterstock

#2. Michigan

- Index score: 92.7

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 4.9% (17.8% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 277.7 (11.6% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 4,114,400 (21.1% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $528.2 billion (current dollars, 11.1% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer outlined a series of initiatives in January 2021 aimed at helping the Michigan economy recover. For example, some residents and businesses will be set to benefit from the **Business Accelerator and Resiliency Initiative**, which will offer grants to tech start-ups; the Michigan Mainstreet Initiative, which will provide grants to small restaurants and businesses; and the Michigan Microenterprise Support Initiative, which is designed to help businesses with less than nine employees. And the COVID Recovery Plan will permanently expand unemployment benefits to 26 weeks rather than 20 weeks. Plus, with support from Good Jobs for Michigan, Pfizer built a drug manufacturing plant in Portage, Michigan, from where the company shipped the first doses of their COVID-19 vaccine.

Canva

#1. Nevada

- Index score: 100

- Unemployment rate in April 2021: 8% (20.2% less than in April 2020)

- House Price Index score in Q1 of 2021: 314.8 (11.5% greater than in 2020)

- Jobs existing in April 2021: 1,308,600 (17.6% greater than in April 2020)

- Real GDP in Q4 of 2020: $178.4 billion (current dollars, 14.1% greater than in Q2 of 2020)

There was some good news during a Nevada economic forum in April 2021: The state's two-year **revenue** was predicted to be $586.2 million above what that same forum had predicted in December 2020. Gov. Steve Sisolak attributed much of Nevada's recovery to the state's high vaccination rate, which showed that 46% of people 16 or older have had at least one jab of a COVID-19 vaccine—and in June 2021, Sisolak announced a $5 million **cash prize** for a lucky vaccinated Nevada resident. The governor plans to allocate some of the surplus revenue toward fixing the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, which has been experiencing some issues in terms of unemployment payments during the pandemic.

This story was produced and distributed in partnership with Stacker Studio.

Jay Chung // Shutterstock