

2022 Topeka Employment Forecast

In 2021, unemployment in Topeka fell dramatically, from an estimated 6.1% down to 3.9%. Indicative of continuing labor market adaptation and recovery from the ongoing novel Coronavirus pandemic, these trends are expected to continue throughout 2022 and 2023, halving the number of Topekans left unemployed as in 2020. There remains a degree of uncertainty as mutations of the virus such as the Delta and Omicron variants continue to place strain on the population, workforce, and economy through surges in infection rates. Still, this strain is dampened by continually increasing access to and availability of vaccines and treatments, and the outlook appears increasingly optimistic.

Topeka				
Year	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2020(a)	120,449	113,559	6,890	6.1%
2021(e)	121,536	116,995	4,541	3.9%
2022(f)	120,516	116,817	3,699	3.2%
2023(f)	121,541	118,171	3,371	2.9%

(a) actual (e) estimated (f) forecasted
Source: CEDBR, BLS - LAUS

Personal income grew 2.5% in 2021, and growth is forecasted to continue throughout 2022, 2023, and 2024. This same trend is observed in personal income per-capita, which saw 2.2% growth in 2021 with higher rates forecasted for coming years. It is expected to exceed \$52,000 in 2022.

Topeka, KS (Metropolitan Statistical Area)				
Year	Personal Income (\$billions)	Personal Income Growth	Per-Capita Personal Income (\$)	Per-Capita Income Growth
2021	11.95	2.5%	\$51,569	2.2%
2022	12.25	2.5%	\$52,655	2.1%
2023	12.55	2.4%	\$53,733	2.0%
2024	12.84	2.4%	\$54,803	2.0%

Source: CEDBR, BLS - LAUS

By sectors, employment growth is expected to be felt unevenly. Trade occupation employment in Topeka grew by 4.6% in 2021, is expected to decline in 2022 by 0.4%, and remain neutral in 2023. The service sector, the largest component of Topeka's labor market, shrank by 0.4% in 2021, a loss of 200 jobs, but is expected to grow up through 2023, a net addition of 600 jobs since 2020.

The most significant component of job growth in the service sector comes from leisure and hospitality occupations, which have rebounded dramatically in 2021 (4.8% growth from 2020) alongside increasing vaccine availability and an ever-adapting labor force and job market. Concurrent with the recovery and expansion of leisure and hospitality, retail sales similarly bounced back in 2021, growing 7.7% relative to 2020, and are forecasted to continue growing even after adjusting for inflation. As a result, retail sales in 2022 and 2023 are both expected to exceed \$280 million.

Inflation-Adjusted Taxable Retail Sales Growth				
Kansas			Topeka MSA	
Year	Sales(\$Billions)*	Growth Rate	Sales(Billions)*	Growth Rate
2019(a)	3.578		0.254	
2020(a)	3.529	-1.4%	0.257	1.0%
2021(e)	3.898	8.0%	0.276	7.7%
2022(f)	4.158	3.7%	0.286	3.5%
2023(f)	4.261	0.9%	0.288	0.7%

*Annual values, in billions are derived from monthly observations and projections.
(a) actual (e) estimated (f) forecasted
Source: CEDBR, KSDOR

Production sector employment grew by 115 jobs in 2021. The sector is expected to shrink in 2022 and then increase by 1.8% in 2023, with a net addition of 300 jobs. The government sector gained 200 jobs in 2021, and is expected to grow in 2022 by 2%. In 2023, government is expected to decline by 0.5%, leaving a net increase of 600 jobs since 2020.

Topeka Employment by Industry*							
	2020 (a)	2021 (e)	2022 (f)	2023 (f)	2021	2022	2023
Production	13,300	13,415	13,363	13,600	0.9%	-0.4%	1.8%
Nat. Resources, Mining & Cons.	5,350	5,263	5,077	5,110	-1.6%	-3.5%	0.6%
Manufacturing	7,950	8,152	8,286	8,490	2.5%	1.6%	2.5%
Trade	16,725	17,498	17,426	17,424	4.6%	-0.4%	0.0%
Services	51,125	50,912	51,377	51,715	-0.4%	0.9%	0.7%
Information	1,183	1,101	1,186	1,145	-7.0%	7.8%	-3.5%
Financial Activities	6,992	6,774	6,679	6,673	-3.1%	-1.4%	-0.1%
Professional & Business Services	12,250	12,595	12,308	12,461	2.8%	-2.3%	1.2%
Education & Health Services	18,733	18,116	17,959	18,130	-3.3%	-0.9%	1.0%
Leisure & Hospitality	7,383	7,734	8,635	8,682	4.8%	11.6%	0.5%
Other	4,583	4,592	4,610	4,624	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%
Government	25,975	26,198	26,716	26,573	0.9%	2.0%	-0.5%
Total	107,125	108,023	108,882	109,313	0.8%	0.8%	0.4%

*Annual values are derived from average quarterly observations and projections.

(a) actual (e) estimated (f) forecasted

Source: CEDBR, BLS - CES