

2019 Topeka Employment Forecast

May 2019

The Topeka metropolitan area's¹ total nonfarm employment grew by 0.3 percent in 2018, adding 300 new workers to the local economy. From 2012 to 2016, the Topeka area grew by an average of 0.8 percent annually, followed by a decline of 0.7 percent in 2017. In 2018, the unemployment rate for Topeka declined to 3.4 percent, its lowest level since 1999.

For 2019, Topeka employment is projected to grow 0.6 percent and add more than 600 new workers, with growth largely concentrated in the service sector.

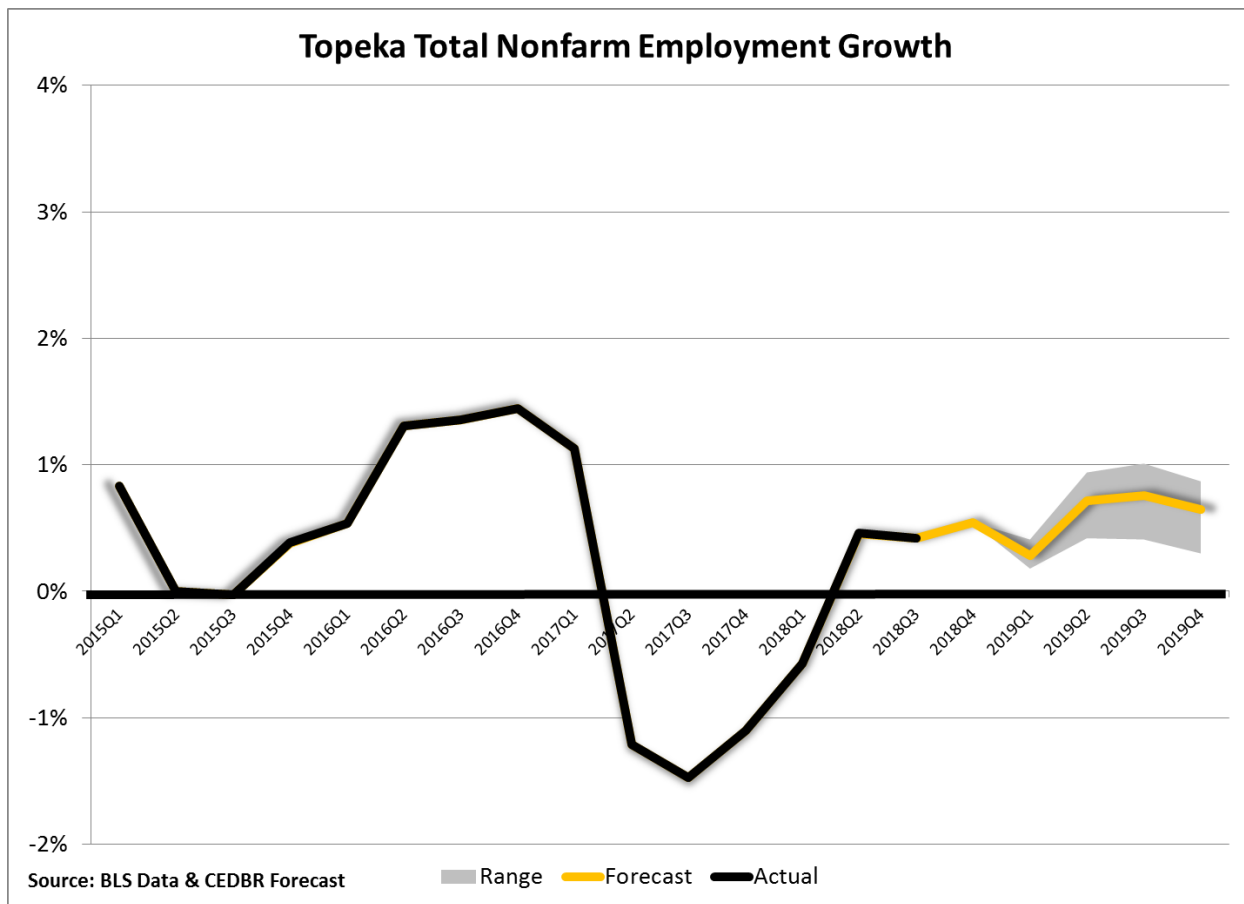
- The production sectors are expected to grow 0.2 percent, adding fewer than 100 jobs to the Topeka economy. The manufacturing sector is forecast to lead growth with more than 100 jobs added, while being largely offset by approximately 100 job losses in the construction sector. The manufacturing sector has been one of Topeka's fastest growing sectors, with 500 jobs added in 2017 and 2018.
- Trade, transportation, and utilities sector employment is projected to remain approximately flat in 2019. Since 2009, the sector has declined in employment by 1,100 jobs, largely concentrated in the transportation and wholesale trade sectors. Taxable retail sales are projected to decline 2 percent on an inflation adjusted basis in 2019; taxable retail sales declined 2.6 and 1.9 percent, respectively in 2017 and 2018.
- The service sector is forecast to lead growth in the Topeka area, growing 1.1 percent and adding almost 600 jobs. Growth is projected to be primarily focused in the education and health services sector, which added 300 jobs in 2018 and is expected to add more than 400 in 2019. Overall, Topeka's service sector returned to growth in 2018 after declining by approximately 200 jobs in 2017.
- Government employment is projected to grow 0.3 percent, adding fewer than 100 jobs in 2019. Federal, state and local government are each projected to grow modestly in 2019. If they do, it would mark the first year for all three governmental sectors to increase together in the Topeka area since 2010.

¹ The Topeka metropolitan area consists of Jackson, Jefferson, Osage, Shawnee, and Wabaunsee counties in Kansas.

Nationally, real GDP grew 2.9 percent in 2018, with the fastest growth in private investment, which grew 5.9 percent, and personal goods consumption, which grew 3.7 percent. National employment increased by 1.7 percent in 2018, following 1.6 percent growth in 2017.

Topeka Employment by Industry Summary*					2018-2019	2018-2019
	2017 (a)	2018 (e)	2019 (f)	Level Change	Percent Change	
Total Nonfarm	112,035	112,271	112,948	676	0.6%	
Production Sectors	13,070	13,419	13,448	29	0.2%	
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	17,285	17,224	17,211	-14	-0.1%	
Service Sectors	54,991	55,022	55,615	593	1.1%	
Government	26,689	26,607	26,674	67	0.3%	

*Annual values are derived from average quarterly observations and projections.
(a) actual (e) estimated (f) forecasted
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics data & Wichita State University CEDBR forecast



The Center for Economic Development and Business Research can provide detailed industry, wage, retail, and other customized forecasts upon request. Contact Jeremy Hill at 316-213-3673 for costs and availability.