

Workforce Supply

- Jefferson County has an 83,163-strong available labor pool that includes 64,423 underemployed workers who are looking for better jobs and 18,740 unemployed residents.

The underemployed are willing to commute longer times for a better job but for shorter distances than all employees. For the one-way commute, 30.0 percent are prepared to travel for 20 or more minutes longer and 23.3 percent will go 20 or more extra miles.

Labor force	310,378
Employed	291,638
Underemployment rate	22.1%
Number of underemployed workers	64,423
Unemployed	18,740
Available labor pool	83,163

Note: Based on March 2016 labor force data.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and Alabama Department of Labor.

- Congestion worsened in the county as both commute time and distance were up in 2015 from the previous year. As the county economy recovers and in-commuting rises to meet job growth demands, congestion will continue being an issue.

Continuous maintenance and development of the county's transportation infrastructure and systems is essential because impeding the mobility of workers and the flow of goods can slow economic development.

- Jefferson County has better educational attainment than the state but the population shrunk in the last decade and is growing slowly now.

	Jefferson County	AL
Population growth, 2010-2015	0.3%	1.7%
<i>Educational attainment, age 25 and over</i>		
High School or higher	87.7%	83.7%
Bachelor's or higher degree	30.3%	23.1%

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and U.S. Census Bureau.

Workforce Demand

- Job growth is projected to be faster than the labor force and population growth.
- By sector the five largest employers in the county provided 181,824 jobs (52.0 percent of the region's 349,635 total) in the first quarter of 2015.

Industry	Employment	Share
Health Care and Social Assistance	56,757	16.2%
Retail Trade	42,720	12.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	29,846	8.5%
Educational Services	27,533	7.9%
Manufacturing	24,968	7.1%

Source: Alabama Department of Labor and U.S. Census Bureau.

- On average 15,863 jobs were created per quarter from second quarter 2001 to first quarter 2015; quarterly net job flows averaged 1,002.

Job creation is the number of new jobs that are created either by new businesses or through expansion of existing firms. Net job flows reflect the difference between current and previous employment at all businesses.

- The 50 highest earning occupations are mostly in the fields of in health, management, business, and engineering and have a minimum salary of \$89,399. Five of these do not require a bachelor's or higher degree. Seven of the top 10 are health occupations and two are management.

- The top five high-demand occupations are:
Registered Nurses
Home Health Aides
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
Personal Care Aides
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary

- The top five fast-growing occupations are:
Personal Care Aides
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary
Physical Therapist Assistants
Skincare Specialists
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers

- Ten jobs are high-earning and in high-demand:
Management Analysts
Construction Managers
Pharmacists
Medical and Health Services Managers
Computer and Information Systems Managers
Personal Financial Advisors
Software Developers, Systems Software
Nurse Anesthetists
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists
Surgeons

- The county has 12 jobs that are both fast-growing and in high-demand:
Home Health Aides
Personal Care Aides
Biological Science Teachers, Postsecondary
Medical Secretaries
Physical Therapists
Physical Therapist Assistants
Personal Financial Advisors
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
Logisticians
Physician Assistants
Medical Equipment Repairers

- Only one occupation belongs to all three categories:

Personal Financial Advisors

Implications for Workforce Development

- **Worker shortfalls of about 54,400 and 110,400 are estimated by 2022 and 2030, respectively, due to low labor force and population growth rates.**

Change from 2012	2022	2030
Total population growth	1.3	2.2
Age 20-64 population growth	-4.3	-7.1
Job growth	10.6	23.1
Worker shortfall (percent)	14.9	30.3
Worker shortfall (number)	54,381	110,368

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

This is likely to increase in-commuting and worsen congestion. A focus on both worker skills and shortfalls, especially for critical occupations, must be a top priority.

- **Strategies to address skill needs and worker shortfalls should aim at increasing labor force participation, encouraging in-migration, and raising worker productivity.**

Such strategies might include:

1. Improving education and educational funding
2. Continuing and enhancing programs to assess, retrain, and place dislocated workers
3. Focusing on hard-to-serve populations (e.g. out-of-school youth)
4. Using economic opportunities to attract new and younger residents
5. Facilitating in-commuting
6. Encouraging older worker participation

- **Investment in education/training and skills development is crucial.**

Improving education is important because: (a) a highly educated and productive workforce is a critical economic development asset, (b) productivity rises with additional education, (c) more educated people are more likely to work, and (d) education yields high private and social rates of return on investment.

Publicizing both private and public returns to education can encourage individuals to raise their own educational attainment levels and promote public and legislative support for education.

Higher incomes that come with improved educational attainment and work skills would help increase personal income for the county as well as raise additional local (county and city) tax revenues. This is important, especially for a county that has low or declining population and labor force growth rates.

Of the county's 723 single occupations, 64 are expected to decline over the 2012 to 2022 period. Twenty occupations are expected to see a sharp decline of at least 12.0 percent, with each losing a minimum of 10 jobs. Education and training for declining occupations should slow accordingly.

- **Skill and education requirements keep rising. In the future, more jobs will require postsecondary education and training at a minimum.**

The importance of basic skills generally and for high-demand, high-growth, and high-earning jobs indicates a strong need for training in these skills.

The pace of training needs to increase for systems, complex problem solving, and social skills while the scale of training needs to be raised for basic and social skills.

Ideally, all high school graduates should possess basic skills so that postsecondary and higher education can focus on other and more complex skills.

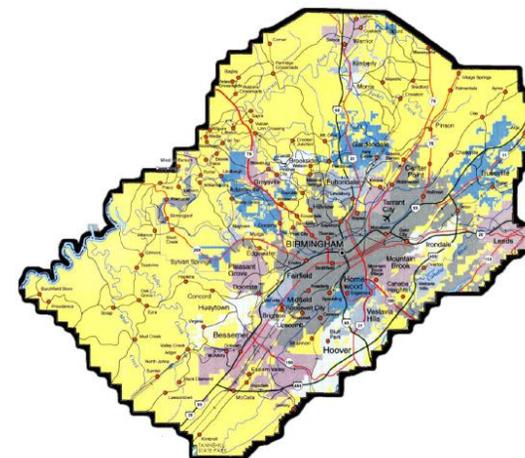
Employers should be an integral part of planning for training as they can help identify future skill needs and any existing gaps.

- **Economic development should target high-earning industries and workforce development should ensure availability of workers for such industries.**

Economic development should aim to diversify and strengthen the Jefferson County economy by retaining, expanding, and attracting more high-wage providing industries. This is necessary given that only two large employment sectors are paying higher than average wages.

- **Workforce development and economic development can together build a strong and well-diversified Jefferson County economy. Indeed, one cannot achieve success without the other.**

State of the Workforce Report X: Jefferson County 2015 Summary



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