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Lamar County Economic Overview 2026

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*Note This report was originally produced by Chmura Economics & Analytics Economics, an economic consulting company contracted by the Hibbs Institute.

Demographic Profile

The population in Lamar County, Texas was 50,421 per American Community Survey data for 2019-2023. The region has a civilian labor force of 23,982 with a participation rate of 60.6%. Of individuals 25 to 64 in Lamar County, Texas, 19.6% have a bachelor's degree or higher which compares with 36.5% in the nation. The median household income in Lamar County, Texas is \$61,122 and the median house value is \$175,500.

Summary¹

Demographics	Percent			Value		
	Lamar County, Texas	Texas	USA	Lamar County, Texas	Texas	USA
Population (ACS)	—	—	—	50,421	29,640,343	332,387,540
Male	49.1%	49.9%	49.5%	24,743	14,789,987	164,545,087
Female	50.9%	50.1%	50.5%	25,678	14,850,356	167,842,453
Median Age ²	—	—	—	40.0	35.5	38.7
Under 18 Years	24.2%	25.2%	22.2%	12,185	7,482,530	73,645,238
18 to 24 Years	7.7%	9.7%	9.1%	3,897	2,863,182	30,307,641
25 to 34 Years	12.9%	14.4%	13.7%	6,498	4,278,912	45,497,632
35 to 44 Years	10.9%	14.0%	13.1%	5,479	4,141,445	43,492,887
45 to 54 Years	12.4%	12.3%	12.3%	6,238	3,645,897	40,847,713
55 to 64 Years	12.6%	11.2%	12.8%	6,376	3,322,832	42,626,382
65 to 74 Years	11.5%	8.1%	10.0%	5,818	2,399,654	33,293,127
75 Years and Over	7.8%	5.1%	6.8%	3,930	1,505,891	22,676,920
Race: White	77.1%	53.9%	63.4%	38,898	15,984,990	210,875,446
Race: Black or African American	12.4%	12.2%	12.4%	6,254	3,626,137	41,070,890
Race: American Indian and Alaska Native	0.8%	0.6%	0.9%	389	190,706	2,924,996
Race: Asian	0.9%	5.3%	5.8%	453	1,581,798	19,352,659
Race: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	117	29,841	629,292
Race: Some Other Race	1.8%	8.6%	6.6%	889	2,540,808	21,940,536
Race: Two or More Races	6.8%	19.2%	10.7%	3,421	5,686,063	35,593,721
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9.2%	39.5%	19.0%	4,659	11,697,134	63,131,589
Population Growth						
Population (Pop Estimates) ⁴	—	—	—	51,249	31,290,831	340,110,988
Population Annual Average Growth ⁴	0.4%	1.5%	0.7%	181	432,774	2,172,466
People per Square Mile ⁴	—	—	—	56.5	119.8	96.3
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	60.6%	65.1%	63.3%	23,982	14,906,660	168,567,852
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	82.0%	81.8%	83.0%	14,941	9,805,842	107,055,165
Work from Home	7.5%	12.8%	13.5%	1,714	1,796,441	21,267,373
Armed Forces Labor Force	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0	118,359	1,287,774
Veterans, Age 18-64	4.5%	4.6%	4.2%	1,284	832,188	8,410,268
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	74.6%	78.8%	77.0%	958	655,396	6,478,181
Median Household Income ²	—	—	—	\$61,122	\$76,292	\$78,538
Per Capita Income	—	—	—	\$31,430	\$39,446	\$43,289
Mean Commute Time (minutes)	—	—	—	19.5	26.7	26.6
Commute via Public Transportation	0.0%	1.0%	3.5%	7	133,038	5,528,841
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	11.0%	13.5%	10.0%	2,713	2,072,973	17,176,172
High School Graduate	33.6%	24.0%	25.0%	8,264	3,691,942	43,057,491

About This Report

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Summary¹

	Percent			Value		
	Lamar County, Texas	Texas	USA	Lamar County, Texas	Texas	USA
Some College, No Degree	24.7%	20.4%	19.3%	6,063	3,139,587	33,315,654
Associate's Degree	11.1%	8.1%	9.2%	2,738	1,242,119	15,894,085
Bachelor's Degree	14.0%	22.1%	22.8%	3,442	3,405,293	39,256,774
Postgraduate Degree	5.6%	11.9%	13.8%	1,371	1,837,172	23,764,438
Housing						
Total Housing Units	—	—	—	22,744	11,890,808	142,332,876
Median House Value (of owner-occupied units) ^{2,5}	—	—	—	\$175,500	\$260,400	\$303,400
Homeowner Vacancy	0.7%	1.1%	1.0%	98	75,671	850,724
Rental Vacancy	6.8%	7.4%	5.5%	512	326,361	2,605,688
Renter-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	34.2%	37.4%	35.0%	6,854	4,023,511	44,590,828
Owner-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	65.8%	62.6%	65.0%	13,202	6,723,729	82,892,037
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available (% of Occupied Units)	7.2%	5.3%	8.3%	1,444	571,578	10,602,826
Social						
Poverty Level (of all people)	18.7%	13.8%	12.4%	9,301	4,005,417	40,390,045
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	12.7%	11.4%	11.8%	2,548	1,227,194	15,004,950
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%	649	428,613	4,405,676
Disconnected Youth ³	1.2%	2.9%	2.4%	29	49,544	420,352
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	47.8%	33.9%	34.0%	5,600	2,416,209	23,701,745
Uninsured	19.0%	17.4%	8.6%	9,498	5,061,251	28,000,876
With a Disability, Age 18-64	15.3%	10.0%	10.7%	4,342	1,783,307	21,269,700
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	48.1%	51.7%	47.0%	2,088	921,178	10,001,264
Foreign Born	4.4%	17.2%	13.9%	2,217	5,095,888	46,108,901
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	2.7%	12.8%	8.4%	1,287	3,559,545	26,299,012

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

1. American Community Survey 2019-2023, unless noted otherwise

2. Median values for certain aggregate regions (such as MSAs) may be estimated as the weighted averages of the median values from the composing counties.

3. Disconnected Youth are 16-19 year olds who are (1) not in school, (2) not high school graduates, and (3) either unemployed or not in the labor force.

4. Census Population Estimate for 2024, annual average growth rate since 2014.

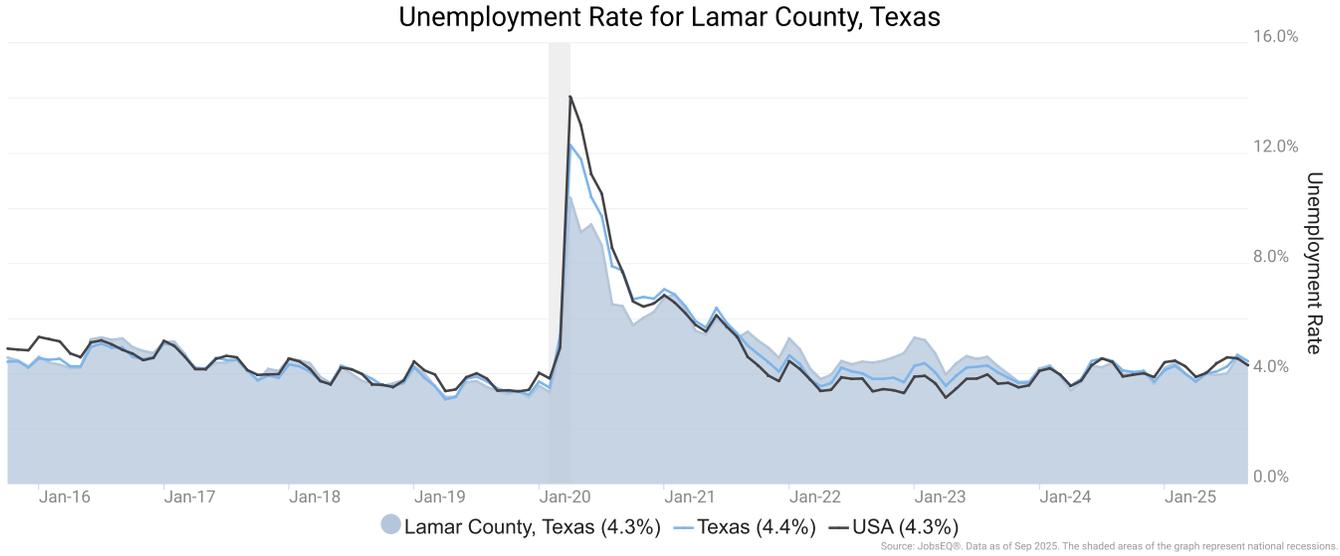
5. The Census's method for calculating median house values changed with the 2022 data set, so pre-2022 values are not directly comparable with later data.

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Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate for Lamar County, Texas was 4.3% as of September 2025. The regional unemployment rate was the same as the national rate of 4.3%. One year earlier, in September 2024, the unemployment rate in Lamar County, Texas was 4.0%.



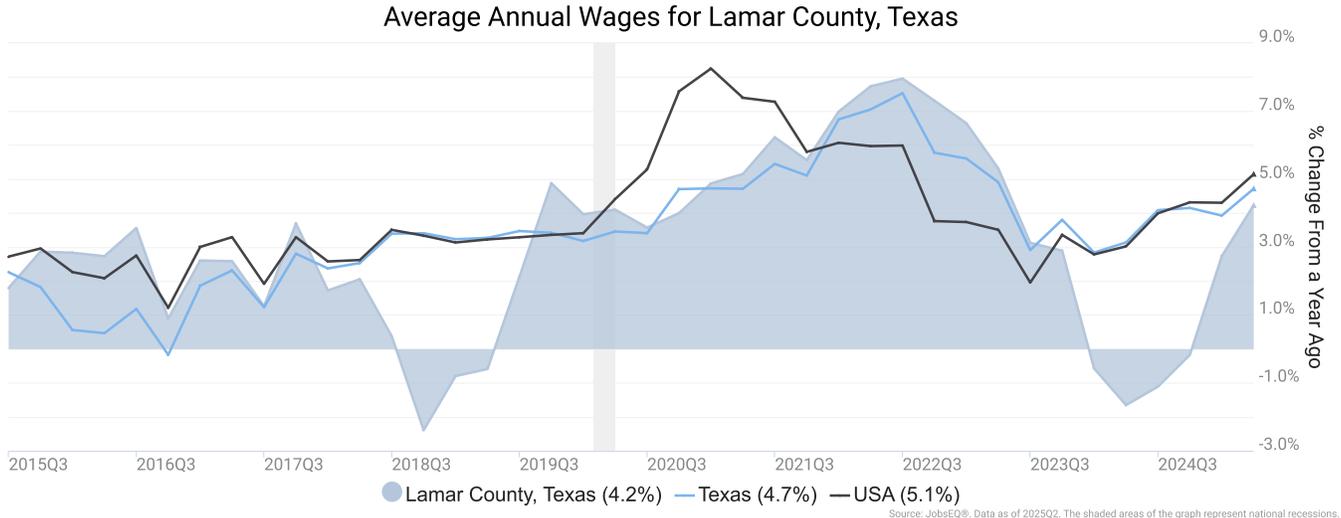
Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through September 2025.

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Wage Trends

The average worker in Lamar County, Texas earned annual wages of \$51,815 as of 2025Q2. Average annual wages per worker increased 4.2% in the region over the preceding four quarters. For comparison purposes, annual average wages were \$75,686 in the nation as of 2025Q2.



Annual average wages per worker data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2025Q1 with preliminary estimates updated to 2025Q2.

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Cost of Living Index

The Cost of Living Index estimates the relative price levels for consumer goods and services. When applied to wages and salaries, the result is a measure of relative purchasing power. The cost of living is 8.3% lower in Lamar County, Texas than the U.S. average.

Cost of Living Information

	Annual Average Salary	Cost of Living Index (Base US)	US Purchasing Power
Lamar County, Texas	\$51,815	91.7	\$56,526
Texas	\$74,720	93.1	\$80,256
USA	\$75,686	100.0	\$75,686

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Data as of 2025Q2

Cost of Living per [COLI](#), data as of 2025Q2, imputed by Chmura where necessary.

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Occupation Snapshot

The largest major occupation group in Lamar County, Texas is Production Occupations, employing 3,406 workers. The next-largest occupation groups in the region are Office and Administrative Support Occupations (2,474 workers) and Management Occupations (2,253). High location quotients (LQs) indicate occupation groups in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The major groups with the largest LQs in the region are Production Occupations (LQ = 2.56), Healthcare Support Occupations (1.31), and Construction and Extraction Occupations (1.19).

Occupation groups in Lamar County, Texas with the highest average wages per worker are Management Occupations (\$99,200), Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (\$97,100), and Legal Occupations (\$96,400). The unemployment rate in the region varied among the major groups from 1.4% among Legal Occupations to 6.6% among Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations.

Over the next 1 year, the fastest growing occupation group in Lamar County, Texas is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a +1.7% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Healthcare Support Occupations (+27 jobs) and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (+17). Over the same period, the highest separation demand (occupation demand due to retirements and workers moving from one occupation to another) is expected in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (408 jobs) and Production Occupations (373).

Lamar County, Texas, 2025Q2¹

SOC	Occupation	Current					5-Year History			1-Year Forecast				
		Empl	Mean Ann Wages ²	LQ	Unempl	Unempl Rate	Online Job Ads ³	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
51-0000	Production	3,406	\$45,800	2.56	131	4.5%	21	10	0.1%	378	143	230	5	0.1%
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	2,474	\$42,700	0.88	98	3.6%	35	-239	-1.8%	266	126	142	-2	-0.1%
11-0000	Management	2,253	\$99,200	1.15	37	1.8%	51	163	1.5%	204	86	104	15	0.7%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	2,150	\$40,800	1.01	124	5.9%	60	195	1.9%	283	115	154	14	0.7%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	2,111	\$28,200	1.03	130	6.4%	84	393	4.2%	422	183	225	14	0.7%
41-0000	Sales and Related	1,875	\$44,200	0.87	102	5.3%	105	-1	0.0%	249	115	132	2	0.1%
31-0000	Healthcare Support	1,574	\$30,700	1.31	58	3.8%	74	95	1.3%	246	108	112	27	1.7%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	1,379	\$97,100	0.92	19	1.5%	258	52	0.8%	95	42	36	17	1.2%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	1,343	\$49,200	1.19	60	4.8%	23	29	0.4%	121	44	65	12	0.9%
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	1,298	\$50,700	0.96	33	2.9%	9	23	0.4%	119	56	58	5	0.4%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	1,139	\$54,000	1.19	34	2.9%	34	72	1.3%	114	45	58	11	1.0%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	955	\$74,600	0.59	27	2.9%	18	97	2.2%	85	29	48	8	0.8%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	766	\$33,300	0.94	34	4.8%	17	104	3.0%	110	50	55	4	0.5%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	421	\$32,600	0.66	26	5.6%	8	7	0.3%	72	29	40	3	0.7%
21-0000	Community and Social Service	334	\$57,100	0.71	8	2.9%	17	-8	-0.5%	35	14	17	4	1.2%
33-0000	Protective Service	317	\$54,300	0.58	11	3.3%	5	17	1.1%	34	13	19	1	0.4%

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Lamar County, Texas, 2025Q2¹

SOC	Occupation	Current				5-Year History				1-Year Forecast				
		Empl	Mean Ann Wages ²	LQ	Unempl	Unempl Rate	Online Job Ads ³	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	296	\$92,500	0.37	10	3.1%	4	18	1.3%	19	6	10	2	0.8%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	280	\$88,400	0.72	6	2.1%	6	15	1.1%	20	7	11	2	0.8%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	210	\$54,400	0.48	6	3.4%	5	-16	-1.5%	21	9	11	1	0.5%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	117	\$36,900	0.82	7	6.6%	1	-8	-1.2%	17	8	9	0	0.0%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	114	\$68,900	0.50	2	2.9%	2	11	2.0%	11	2	8	1	1.0%
23-0000	Legal	66	\$96,400	0.32	1	1.4%	n/a	-4	-1.2%	4	1	2	0	0.7%
Total - All Occupations		24,877	\$53,100	1.00	966	4.0%	837	1,023	0.8%	2,928	1,231	1,547	150	0.6%

Source: [JobsEQ®](#)

Data as of 2025Q2 unless noted otherwise

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.

1. Data based on a four-quarter moving average unless noted otherwise.

2. Wage data represent the average for all Covered Employment

3. Data represent found online ads active within the last thirty days in the selected region. Due to alternative county-assignment algorithms, ad counts in this analytic may not match that shown in RTI (nor in the popup window ad list). Ad counts for ZCTA-based regions are estimates.

Occupation employment data are estimated via industry employment data and the estimated industry/occupation mix. Industry employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and currently updated through 2025Q1, imputed where necessary with preliminary estimates updated to 2025Q2. Wages by occupation are as of 2025 provided by the BLS and imputed where necessary. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

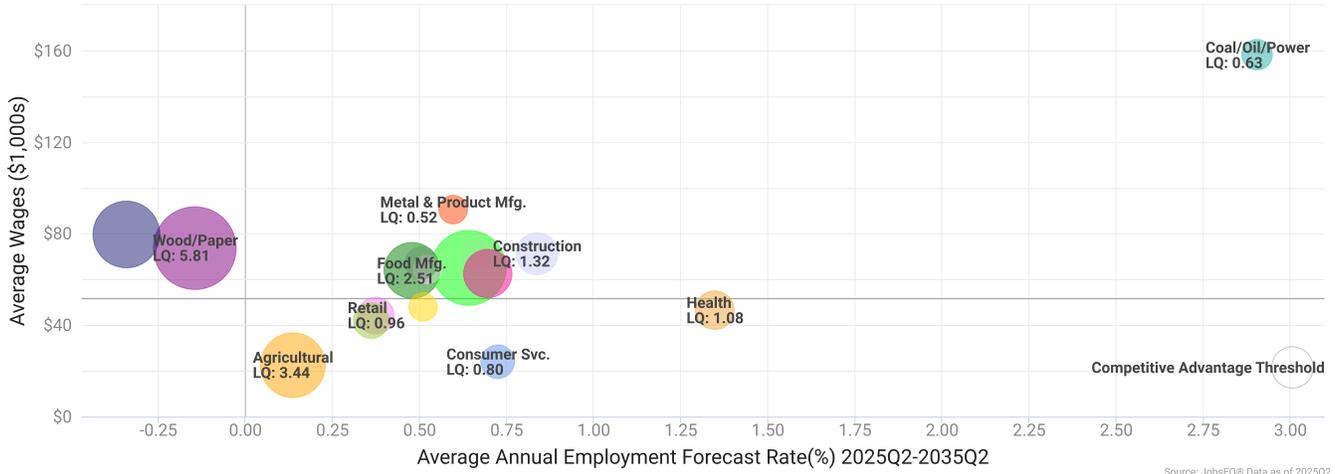
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Industry Clusters

A cluster is a geographic concentration of interrelated industries or occupations. The industry cluster in Lamar County, Texas with the highest relative concentration is Wood/Paper with a location quotient of 5.81. This cluster employs 1,042 workers in the region with an average wage of \$73,784. Employment in the Wood/Paper cluster is projected to contract in the region about 0.1% per year over the next ten years.

Industry Clusters for Lamar County, Texas as of 2025Q2



Source: JobsEQ® Data as of 2025Q2

Location quotient and average wage data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, imputed where necessary, and updated through 2025Q1 with preliminary estimates updated to 2025Q2. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

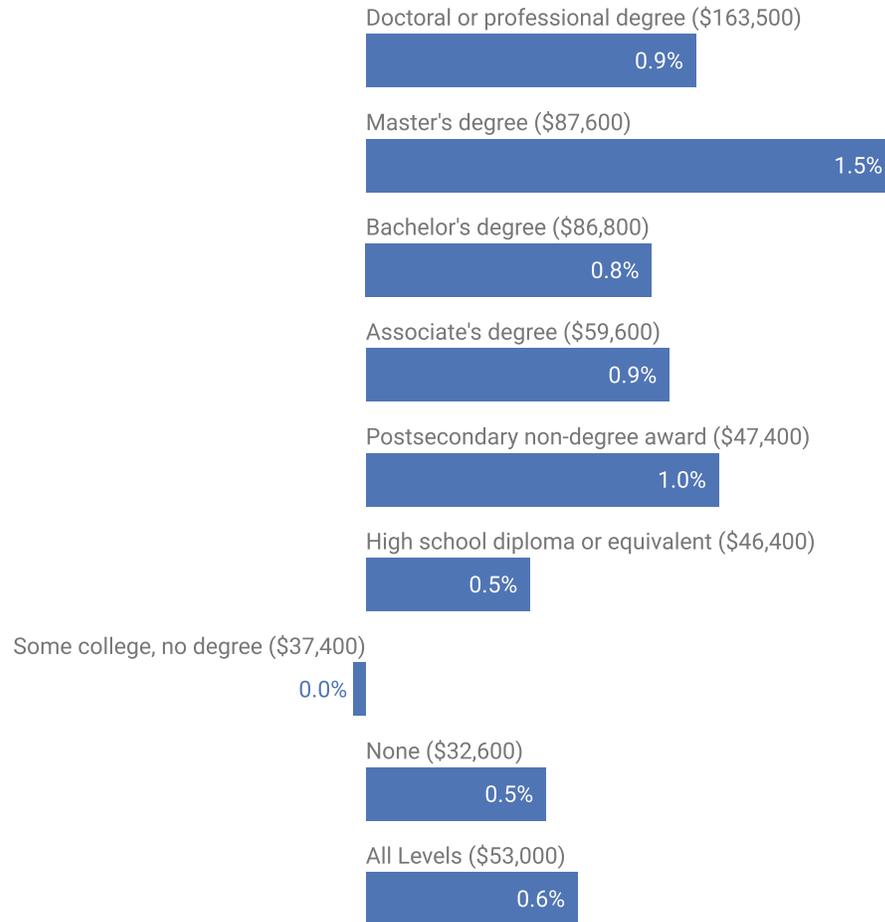
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Education Levels

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in Lamar County, Texas is projected to grow 0.6% over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 0.9% per year, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow 0.8% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 0.9% per year.

Annual Average Projected Job Growth by Education Levels



Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2025Q2

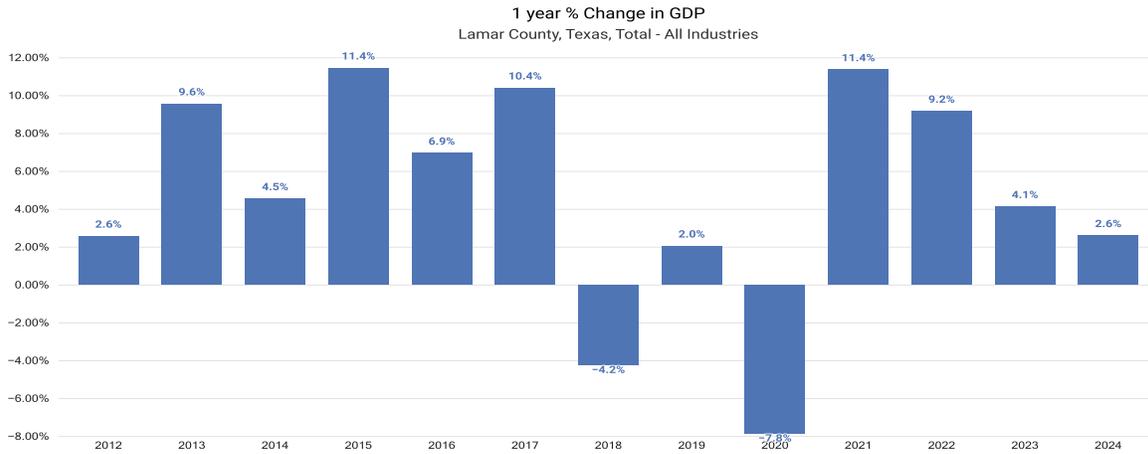
Employment by occupation data are estimates as of 2025Q2. Education levels of occupations are based on BLS assignments. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

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Gross Domestic Product

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total value of goods and services produced by a region. In 2024, nominal GDP in Lamar County, Texas expanded 2.6%. This follows growth of 4.1% in 2023. As of 2024, total GDP in Lamar County, Texas was \$2,890,864,000.



Gross Domestic Product data are provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, imputed by Chmura where necessary, updated through 2024.

Of the sectors in Lamar County, Texas, Manufacturing contributed the largest portion of GDP in 2024, \$1,023,627,000. The next-largest contributions came from Health Care and Social Assistance (\$286,735,000); Retail Trade (\$273,731,000); and Construction (\$220,840,000).

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GDP (in \$ millions)

Lamar County, Texas, 2024

Manufacturing (31)



Health Care and Social Assistance (62)



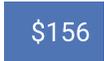
Retail Trade (44)



Construction (23)



Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (53)



Educational Services (61)



Wholesale Trade (42)



Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (56)



Utilities (22)



Accommodation and Food Services (72)



Gross Domestic Product data are provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, imputed by Chmura where necessary, updated through 2024.

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