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Smith 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 Smith County, Texas was 238,014 per American Community Survey data for 2019-2023. The region has a civilian labor force of 114,273 with a participation rate of 61.2%. Of individuals 25 to 64 in Smith County, Texas, 27.4% have a bachelor's degree or higher which compares with 36.5% in the nation. The median household income in Smith County, Texas is \$71,923 and the median house value is \$220,800.

Summary¹

	Percent			Value		
	Smith County, Texas	Texas	USA	Smith County, Texas	Texas	USA
Demographics						
Population (ACS)	—	—	—	238,014	29,640,343	332,387,540
Male	48.5%	49.9%	49.5%	115,366	14,789,987	164,545,087
Female	51.5%	50.1%	50.5%	122,648	14,850,356	167,842,453
Median Age ²	—	—	—	37.4	35.5	38.7
Under 18 Years	24.3%	25.2%	22.2%	57,909	7,482,530	73,645,238
18 to 24 Years	9.5%	9.7%	9.1%	22,627	2,863,182	30,307,641
25 to 34 Years	13.4%	14.4%	13.7%	31,951	4,278,912	45,497,632
35 to 44 Years	12.4%	14.0%	13.1%	29,523	4,141,445	43,492,887
45 to 54 Years	11.3%	12.3%	12.3%	26,919	3,645,897	40,847,713
55 to 64 Years	11.9%	11.2%	12.8%	28,266	3,322,832	42,626,382
65 to 74 Years	10.0%	8.1%	10.0%	23,752	2,399,654	33,293,127
75 Years and Over	7.2%	5.1%	6.8%	17,067	1,505,891	22,676,920
Race: White	69.0%	53.9%	63.4%	164,335	15,984,990	210,875,446
Race: Black or African American	16.7%	12.2%	12.4%	39,645	3,626,137	41,070,890
Race: American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%	0.6%	0.9%	967	190,706	2,924,996
Race: Asian	1.6%	5.3%	5.8%	3,925	1,581,798	19,352,659
Race: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	194	29,841	629,292
Race: Some Other Race	3.5%	8.6%	6.6%	8,288	2,540,808	21,940,536
Race: Two or More Races	8.7%	19.2%	10.7%	20,660	5,686,063	35,593,721
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	20.6%	39.5%	19.0%	49,012	11,697,134	63,131,589
Population Growth						
Population (Pop Estimates) ⁴	—	—	—	249,091	31,290,831	340,110,988
Population Annual Average Growth ⁴	1.3%	1.5%	0.7%	2,941	432,774	2,172,466
People per Square Mile ⁴	—	—	—	270.3	119.8	96.3
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	61.2%	65.1%	63.3%	114,273	14,906,660	168,567,852
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	80.1%	81.8%	83.0%	70,679	9,805,842	107,055,165
Work from Home	8.9%	12.8%	13.5%	9,575	1,796,441	21,267,373
Armed Forces Labor Force	0.1%	0.5%	0.5%	155	118,359	1,287,774
Veterans, Age 18-64	3.5%	4.6%	4.2%	4,864	832,188	8,410,268
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	84.0%	78.8%	77.0%	4,086	655,396	6,478,181
Median Household Income ²	—	—	—	\$71,923	\$76,292	\$78,538
Per Capita Income	—	—	—	\$34,785	\$39,446	\$43,289
Mean Commute Time (minutes)	—	—	—	23.3	26.7	26.6
Commute via Public Transportation	0.3%	1.0%	3.5%	371	133,038	5,528,841
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	12.2%	13.5%	10.0%	14,176	2,072,973	17,176,172
High School Graduate	24.9%	24.0%	25.0%	29,008	3,691,942	43,057,491

About This Report

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Summary¹

	Percent			Value		
	Smith County, Texas	Texas	USA	Smith County, Texas	Texas	USA
Some College, No Degree	25.0%	20.4%	19.3%	29,112	3,139,587	33,315,654
Associate's Degree	10.6%	8.1%	9.2%	12,354	1,242,119	15,894,085
Bachelor's Degree	18.5%	22.1%	22.8%	21,633	3,405,293	39,256,774
Postgraduate Degree	8.9%	11.9%	13.8%	10,376	1,837,172	23,764,438
Housing						
Total Housing Units	—	—	—	98,672	11,890,808	142,332,876
Median House Value (of owner-occupied units) ^{2,5}	—	—	—	\$220,800	\$260,400	\$303,400
Homeowner Vacancy	0.7%	1.1%	1.0%	403	75,671	850,724
Rental Vacancy	17.8%	7.4%	5.5%	5,488	326,361	2,605,688
Renter-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	30.7%	37.4%	35.0%	25,074	4,023,511	44,590,828
Owner-Occupied Housing Units (% of Occupied Units)	69.3%	62.6%	65.0%	56,616	6,723,729	82,892,037
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available (% of Occupied Units)	4.5%	5.3%	8.3%	3,643	571,578	10,602,826
Social						
Poverty Level (of all people)	12.2%	13.8%	12.4%	28,262	4,005,417	40,390,045
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	9.1%	11.4%	11.8%	7,452	1,227,194	15,004,950
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.1%	1.4%	1.3%	2,665	428,613	4,405,676
Disconnected Youth ³	1.8%	2.9%	2.4%	250	49,544	420,352
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	27.8%	33.9%	34.0%	15,092	2,416,209	23,701,745
Uninsured	16.7%	17.4%	8.6%	39,383	5,061,251	28,000,876
With a Disability, Age 18-64	10.7%	10.0%	10.7%	14,674	1,783,307	21,269,700
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	46.3%	51.7%	47.0%	6,794	921,178	10,001,264
Foreign Born	8.6%	17.2%	13.9%	20,498	5,095,888	46,108,901
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	7.5%	12.8%	8.4%	16,760	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.

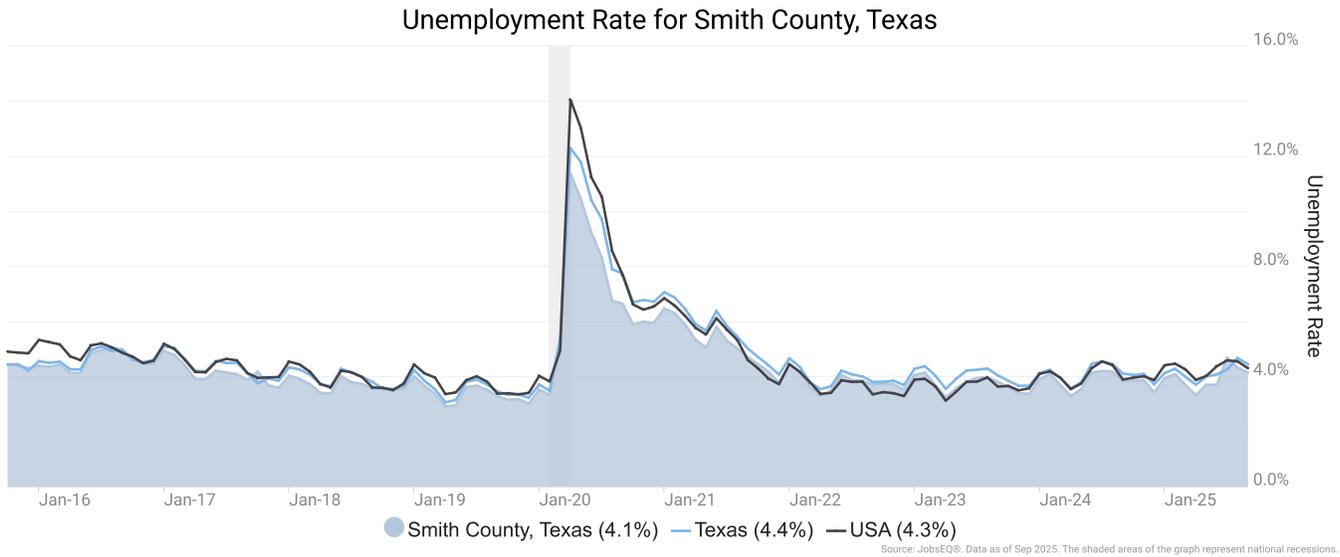
5. The Census's method for calculating median house values changed with the 2022 data set, so pre-2022 values are not directly comparable with later data.

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Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate for Smith County, Texas was 4.1% as of September 2025. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 4.3%. One year earlier, in September 2024, the unemployment rate in Smith County, Texas was 3.8%.



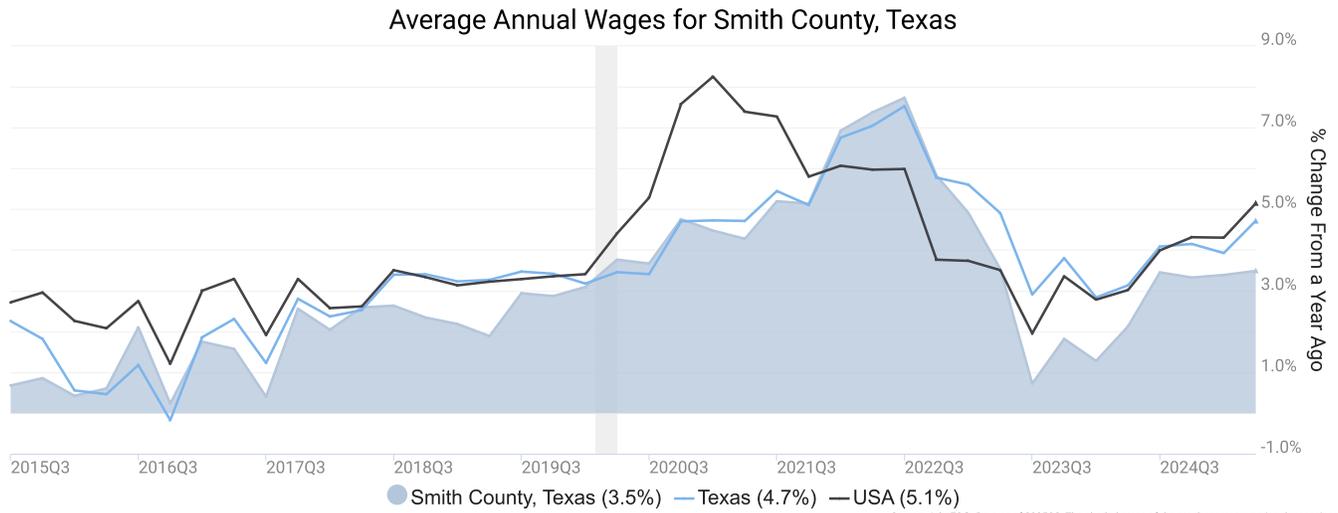
Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through September 2025.

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Wage Trends

The average worker in Smith County, Texas earned annual wages of \$56,963 as of 2025Q2. Average annual wages per worker increased 3.5% 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 6.9% lower in Smith County, Texas than the U.S. average.

Cost of Living Information

	Annual Average Salary	Cost of Living Index (Base US)	US Purchasing Power
Smith County, Texas	\$56,963	93.1	\$61,185
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 Smith County, Texas is Office and Administrative Support Occupations, employing 13,704 workers. The next-largest occupation groups in the region are Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (11,498 workers) and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (11,485). 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 Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (LQ = 1.51), Healthcare Support Occupations (1.45), and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (1.07).

Occupation groups in Smith County, Texas with the highest average wages per worker are Management Occupations (\$116,600), Legal Occupations (\$95,000), and Architecture and Engineering Occupations (\$92,900). The unemployment rate in the region varied among the major groups from 1.4% among Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations to 7.3% among Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations.

Over the next 1 year, the fastest growing occupation group in Smith County, Texas is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a +1.8% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Healthcare Support Occupations (+157 jobs) and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (+146). 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 (2,139 jobs) and Office and Administrative Support Occupations (1,509).

Smith 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
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	13,704	\$44,700	0.96	459	3.2%	253	56	0.1%	1,538	713	796	29	0.2%
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	11,498	\$43,700	1.07	625	5.7%	382	1,381	2.6%	1,572	621	836	114	1.0%
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	11,485	\$90,700	1.51	148	1.4%	1,773	1,814	3.5%	790	345	299	146	1.3%
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related	11,130	\$29,800	1.07	652	6.2%	541	1,482	2.9%	2,239	955	1,184	99	0.9%
41-0000	Sales and Related	11,130	\$44,600	1.02	547	5.0%	649	357	0.7%	1,500	674	785	40	0.4%
11-0000	Management	10,497	\$116,600	1.06	192	1.9%	397	1,795	3.8%	962	316	523	123	1.2%
31-0000	Healthcare Support	8,786	\$32,200	1.45	283	3.6%	332	1,203	3.0%	1,387	594	635	157	1.8%
25-0000	Educational Instruction and Library	6,766	\$52,400	0.99	170	2.6%	150	358	1.1%	652	299	306	47	0.7%
51-0000	Production	5,840	\$44,400	0.87	259	4.6%	101	305	1.1%	713	272	405	36	0.6%
47-0000	Construction and Extraction	5,713	\$50,600	1.00	303	5.3%	66	172	0.6%	533	186	285	62	1.1%
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations	5,664	\$78,000	0.69	183	3.0%	174	981	3.9%	518	174	282	62	1.1%
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	5,116	\$53,700	1.06	141	2.8%	209	527	2.2%	517	201	263	53	1.0%
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	4,273	\$34,400	1.03	204	5.1%	174	-42	-0.2%	629	282	312	35	0.8%
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	2,549	\$32,400	0.78	139	5.2%	94	184	1.5%	448	176	247	25	1.0%
21-0000	Community and Social Service	2,294	\$55,200	0.97	55	2.5%	148	83	0.7%	248	103	117	28	1.2%

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Smith 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	2,254	\$91,800	0.56	85	3.1%	68	452	4.6%	153	50	76	27	1.2%
33-0000	Protective Service	1,810	\$59,300	0.65	67	3.4%	60	239	2.9%	207	81	115	11	0.6%
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1,631	\$53,900	0.74	80	4.4%	50	117	1.5%	165	66	87	12	0.8%
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering	1,391	\$92,900	0.70	41	2.6%	43	30	0.4%	110	38	57	15	1.0%
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science	903	\$73,900	0.78	30	3.2%	30	139	3.4%	85	18	56	10	1.1%
23-0000	Legal	850	\$95,000	0.81	14	1.6%	15	-61	-1.4%	57	20	30	8	0.9%
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	538	\$35,700	0.74	40	7.3%	5	-156	-5.0%	81	36	43	2	0.4%
Total - All Occupations		125,820	\$56,900	1.00	4,718	3.8%	5,711	11,415	1.9%	15,112	6,221	7,738	1,153	0.9%

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.

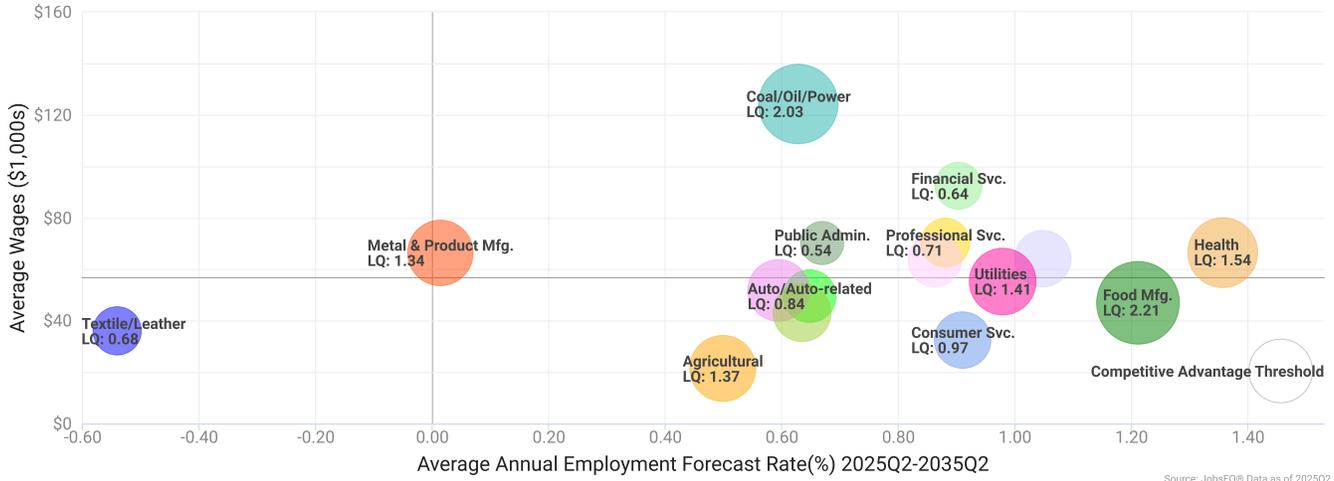
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Industry Clusters

A cluster is a geographic concentration of interrelated industries or occupations. The industry cluster in Smith County, Texas with the highest relative concentration is Food Mfg. with a location quotient of 2.21. This cluster employs 3,360 workers in the region with an average wage of \$47,047. Employment in the Food Mfg. cluster is projected to expand in the region about 1.2% per year over the next ten years.

Industry Clusters for Smith County, Texas 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.

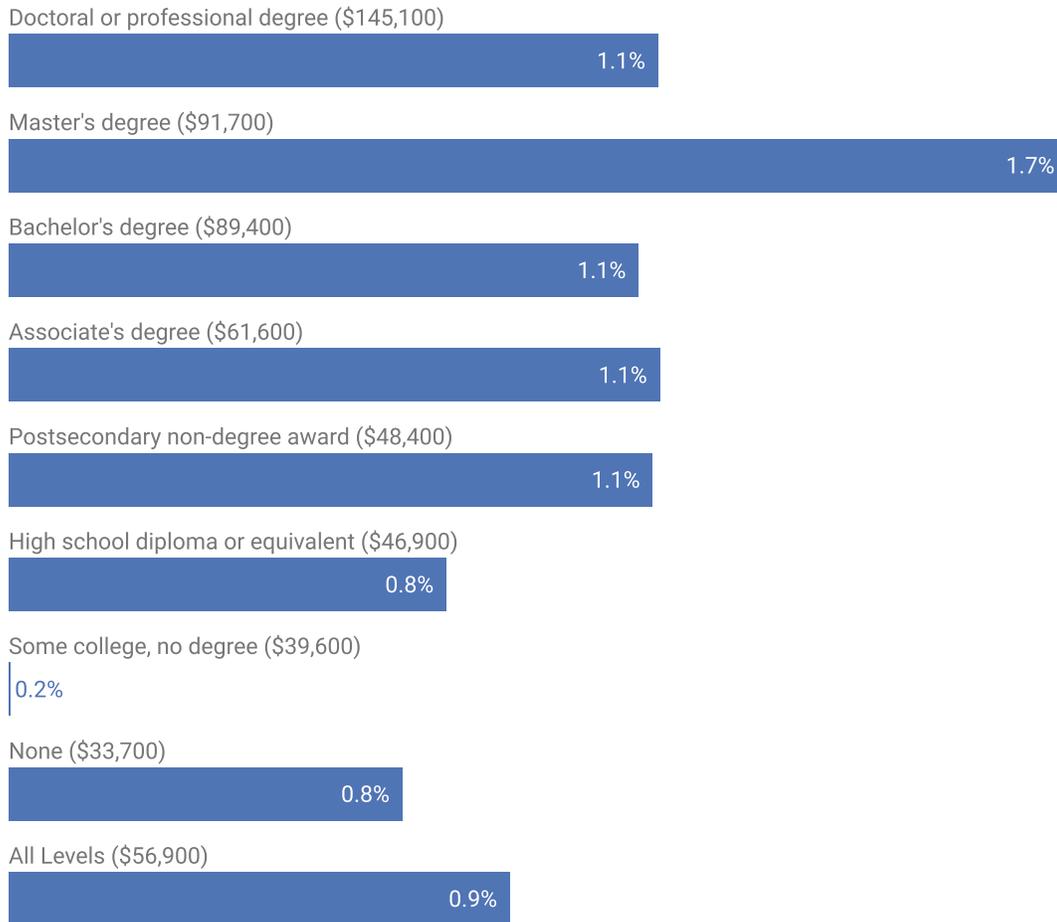
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Education Levels

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in Smith County, Texas is projected to grow 0.9% over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 1.1% per year, those requiring a bachelor's degree are forecast to grow 1.1% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 1.1% per year.

Annual Average Projected Job Growth by Education Levels



Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2025Q2

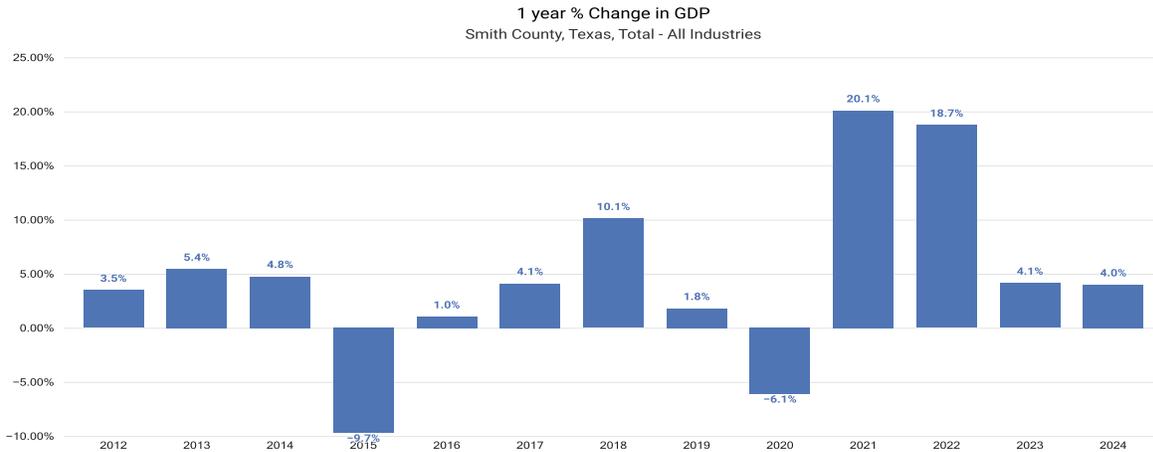
Employment by occupation data are estimates as of 2025Q2. Education levels of occupations are based on BLS assignments. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

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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 Smith County, Texas expanded 4.0%. This follows growth of 4.1% in 2023. As of 2024, total GDP in Smith County, Texas was \$17,368,544,000.



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

Of the sectors in Smith County, Texas, Health Care and Social Assistance contributed the largest portion of GDP in 2024, \$3,062,637,000. The next-largest contributions came from Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (\$2,357,947,000); Manufacturing (\$1,717,721,000); and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (\$1,582,878,000).

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GDP (in \$ millions)

Smith County, Texas, 2024

Health Care and Social Assistance (62)



Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (21)



Manufacturing (31)



Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (53)



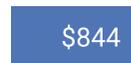
Retail Trade (44)



Wholesale Trade (42)



Construction (23)



Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (54)



Educational Services (61)



Transportation and Warehousing (48)



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

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