

State of Idaho

Workforce Information Grant

Annual performance report; program year (PY) 2023

The Idaho Department of Labor's Research and Communications Division is the state's official source for reliable labor market data and demographic insights for stakeholders. As such, the department holds a responsibility to fulfill requirements lined out in the Workforce Information Grant (WIG) and provide a broad range of services leveraged through WIG funds. This, in turn, will make information and insight, critical to decision making by Idaho policy makers, more widely available and accessible to the public.

These services include:

- The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics federal-state cooperative programs.
- Unemployment insurance research and reports.
- Economic and labor market research.
- Local employment and wage information.
- Communications and web delivery.
- Public affairs and Idaho's team of labor economists.

Idaho has fulfilled the requirements and intent of the WIG per the guidance and requirements stated within the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 20-22 published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) on June 2, 2023. The details of this fulfillment are in the following sections.

Industry and occupational projections

Following the guidelines of the WIG, the department developed and published [short-term and long-term projections](#) for Idaho industries and occupations using the methodology, software tools and guidelines specified by the state consortium that makeup the Projections Managing Partnership and the Projections Workgroup.

Short-term projections

For program year 2023, Idaho delivered short-term industry and occupational projections covering the period from quarter one (Q1) 2023 to Q1 2025. The projections were produced December 2023 and transmitted to ETA by the deliverable deadline. The projection results were also incorporated into a preparatory briefing and presentation to the Idaho Economic Outlook and Revenue Assessment Committee. The industry expectations developed from these projections are one component of the kind of information Idaho policy makers use for strategic funding decisions regarding the state's revenue projections. All report [graphs](#), with explanations, are available to the public on the department's website.

Present and anticipated levels of funding did not provide the financial means necessary to develop short-term projections for Idaho's sub-state areas.

Long-term projections

Long-term, 10-year industry and occupation projections for Idaho are developed every other year as required by ETA. The [2022-2032 projections](#) were completed ahead of schedule and

made available to the public on [the department's website](#) by the third quarter of 2024. The appropriate data was successfully delivered to the ETA.

The importance of projections for department stakeholders has remained strong. Even as the ultimate purpose is to help job seekers make smart choices, industry and occupation projections are an important tool for many. This tool is a means for detecting changes necessary for strategic planning by industry, higher education and other agencies.

Workforce Information Database (WIDb)

Idaho follows the Workforce Information Database protocols as required by ETA that ensure data platforms are uniform and allow for valid state-to-state comparisons. The department maintains a current version of the Workforce Information Database, WIDb 2.8, and populates all tables designated as core tables in accordance with guidelines issued by the Analyst Resource Center (ARC). Database content is updated in a timely manner and is current with the state's most recent publications and data releases.

Idaho updates its WIDb monthly and quarterly so customers can access the most current labor market information available. These tables comprise the core information dissemination platform for data customers at [Idaho's Labor Market Information \(LMI\) website](#).

Idaho's annual economic report

The department's [2023 Idaho Labor Market and Economic Report](#) summarizing the previous year's economy, is available to the public. To keep information current and relevant for customers, the publication is updated annually after substate benchmark data is released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). This report is a collaborative effort among the department's labor economists, BLS program staff and communications team. It also fulfills the Training and Employment Guidance Letter requirement to produce said report.

Insight dissemination and research activities

There is a high demand for labor market information by Idaho stakeholders. To achieve this, the state's labor economists provide easy-to-access data and insight to a wide variety of customers through web-based tools.

The department's research needs are currently staffed by a research supervisor, six [labor economists](#) and additional research staff in the Boise central office. Together, this team serves as a primary conduit for local political, civic, academic, business and labor leaders. The labor economists meet regularly with various associations, colleagues, economic development professionals and other business customers in their regions to analyze needs for workforce information within all industries, occupations and business sectors.

The most contemporary and cost-effective method for delivering data on Idaho's workforce to the public is through the department's LMI website.

LMI.IDAHO.GOV

The department's [LMI website](#) provides access to necessary data for stakeholders and researchers. This data helps people make informed strategic decisions about careers, business strategies and government policies.

During this past program year, the department made substantial modifications and updates to its LMI website. The department's entire website infrastructure was updated from a Dot-Net-Nuke platform to WordPress. As the [lmi.idaho.gov](#) website underwent this process, the Public Affairs team took advantage of the opportunity, renewing and reorganizing the site's interface. The new format provides users with top-line statistics, along with important dates and news in an easy-to-read manner. It also includes an interactive and dynamic user dashboard for viewing labor market statistics by county. The information is developed, maintained and accessible at [lmi.idaho.gov](#).

WIG funds, in support of this project, were a component, also contributing to the following:

JobScape

Launched in 2016 and developed with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, [JobScape](#) is one of Idaho's most effective and straightforward career search tools. State residents can leverage Idaho's core LMI deliverables by viewing a snapshot of occupations. This snapshot includes an occupational description, hourly and annual wages, demand for workers, current employment numbers and annual job openings by region. Additionally, veterans can use military titles and codes to connect their military skills with civilian job openings.

WIG funds finance the maintenance and modifications to JobScape to keep data current and the system functional for customers. A filtering option – fueled directly by WIDb's data – takes users to a screen that enables them to view their results by wage, education attainment, projected growth rate and state region.

The screenshot shows the 'Search Filters' interface for JobScape. At the top, there are 'Reset' and 'Cancel' buttons. The main section is titled 'Search Filters' and contains several filter categories:

- Wages:** Includes radio buttons for 'Hourly' and 'Annual'. Below is a range slider from '\$7' to '\$99+'.
- Education:** Includes a range slider and a list of education levels: 'Less than High School', 'High School Diploma', 'Postsecondary Non-degree', 'Associate Degree', 'Bachelor's Degree', 'Master's Degree', and 'Doctoral / Professional'.
- Location:** Includes a text input field for 'City, Zip, or Region' and a checkbox for 'Statewide'. Below the input field is a map of Idaho with county boundaries.
- Projected Growth Rate:** Includes a range slider from '0%' to '100%'.

At the bottom right, there is a blue 'Apply Filters' button.

The department uses free resources and WIG funds to finance this page by providing links for easy access to job opportunities via [IdahoWorks](#) and career information via [NextSteps Idaho](#).

WIG funds were also invested into the development and implementation of dynamic Tableau dashboards, offering regional labor market information. Whenever possible, WIDb is used as the data source for keeping dashboards updated with current data as soon as it is available through the following webpages:

Bureau of Labor Statistics federal-state programs

- [Current Employment Statistics.](#)
- [Local Area Unemployment Statistics.](#)
- [Occupational and Employment Statistics.](#)
- [Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.](#)

Other resources

- [Business listings.](#)
- [Career and professional licensing information.](#)
- [Consumer Price Index.](#)
- [Farm employment in Idaho.](#)
- [Idaho industry and occupation projections.](#)
- [Idaho's population forecast developed by the Idaho Department of Labor.](#)
- [Job gains and losses.](#)
- [Population, demographic and local employment dynamics data.](#)
- [Regional information for Idaho.](#)

During PY2023, the department's LMI website received more than 63,600 views, with the [homepage](#) alone receiving 13,900. Among program or specific data pages, the top sites viewed include:

- [Occupations, Employment and Wages Statistics \(OEWS\)](#) – 12,200.
- [Occupations in demand](#) – 9,900.
- [Regional information](#) – 4,300.
- [Consumer Price Index](#) – 2,300.
- [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) – 2,200.
- [Census](#) – 1,900.
- [Unemployment insurance reports](#) – 1,600.
- [Industry and occupational projections](#) – 1,600.
- [Weekly unemployment claims](#) – 900.

Other research, publications, resources and outreach efforts

[Idaho regional profiles](#)

A recent upgrade modernized the look and usefulness of Idaho's regional labor market profiles, which are available for download on LMI's regional information webpage. Reports are available for the entire state, including data for all six regions and every county in Idaho. The profiles contain a variety of labor market and demographic information pulled from multiple sources. These reports are updated monthly, coinciding with the monthly release of the employment situation report.

[Idaho's annual economic outlook](#)

Compiled and presented to the 2024 Idaho Legislature in early January, Idaho's annual economic outlook features workforce information data from the BLS Cooperative Agreement, unemployment insurance data, and industry and occupational projections developed with funding from the WIG. Along with other finance and economic experts, department officials are invited to present information about Idaho's labor market outlook to the Idaho Legislature's Economic Outlook and Revenue Assessment Committee each year. This report provides customers and stakeholders with an unbiased analysis and statistically valid outlook for Idaho's workforce. Short-term and long-term projections are front and center in this effort every year and serve as a foundation for the department's economic report to the legislature.

[Idaho economic roundup](#)

A monthly digest of economic events is gathered from a variety of information sources but primarily local, regional, and national news and media. This digest is published as a service to the department's stakeholders and serves as an archived summary of events happening in each region.

[Idaho economic situation report](#)

The department produces and publishes the most recent employment figures concurrent with each monthly release of labor force and nonfarm statistics on the agency's LMI website.

[Idaho Employment newsletter](#)

Funds from the WIG directly support the transformation of complex BLS data into a format that is understandable and useful to department labor market customers and stakeholders. *Idaho Employment* is a monthly newsletter with nearly 3,000 subscribers featuring articles about regional labor market conditions. This newsletter is customized to the needs of local partners and customers by culling data from department programs and applications that staff deliver by region. The articles are written by the department's labor economists, available at the department's blog [Idaho@work](#), and are distributed to readers through email and social media. The social media channels these articles are shared through include Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and X, formally known as Twitter. The blog also features articles relevant to other business and job seeker service activities performed by other divisions or bureaus.

[Idaho Occupations in Demand – Help Wanted Online job posting data](#)

By collaborating on resources with the Idaho Workforce Development Council (IWDC) and the Idaho STEM Action Center, a new and improved Tableau dashboard now provides annual and monthly summary statistics on job postings for the state and its regions, with a focus on STEM occupations.

[Idaho business finder and lists](#)

Idaho leverages its WIG funds with other resources to support, develop and maintain a listing of state businesses. This furthers the department's commitment to generating quality jobs and maintaining a skilled and educated workforce.

Highlighting Idaho's top private and public businesses, this list contains only businesses that proactively provide a signed release authorizing the agency to share limited information with the public.

In addition to Idaho's business listings, the U.S. Department of Labor offers a [CareerOneStop business finder](#) available on LMI's website.

With the internet serving as a primary outreach and dissemination tool for Idaho's workforce information products, the state is committed to keeping its system current. Emerging standards ensure data and insight delivery are utilized to their maximum potential for remaining relevant to stakeholder needs.

Customer service

Idaho Workforce Development Council

The [Idaho Workforce Development Council](#) is an independent office under the governor. Idaho's research and communications staff work closely with the council as it guides research efforts that best serve the state's customers and stakeholders. Team members share research findings at each Workforce Development Council meeting and seek direction on future research affecting the state and its local communities.

Labor economists

Idaho's team of [labor economists](#) deliver multiple presentations, answer data requests and write research briefs for numerous customers and stakeholders each year. These economists serve as a link and labor market resource for local chambers, business associations, policymakers, planners, customers and other stakeholders. Their credibility adds relevance and weight to the department's efforts to disseminate regional labor market information throughout the state.

Idaho Gov. Brad Little visits small towns each year through a program called Idaho Capital for a Day. These visits are designed to bring the Governor's Office and various state agencies to remote areas of Idaho, affording residents an opportunity to voice concerns directly to the governor or perhaps be addressed by the appropriate agency director. Each labor economist supports these visits by providing the Governor's Office and department directors with briefs on the local economy in preparation for the visit.

The following examples represent just a few of the informational products the regional labor economists, labor market information director and research staff provide to Idaho communities.

Webinar series

In December 2022, the Research and Communications Division launched a [series of webinars](#) hosted and presented by the labor economist team. These webinars are held every second Tuesday of the month and focus on various topics related to the labor market or Idaho's economy. Department service experts relay information to job seekers and employers. These webinars are recorded and are uploaded to the [department's YouTube channel](#) as an archived record. Topics previously covered include "Generations in the workforce," "Seasonality of data," Apprenticeships" and "Idaho veterans." The webinars are well attended. During the ten webinars held during PY2023, there were 52.9 average attendees per session, and 916 views of posted recordings.

Other labor economist blog articles and reports published during PY2023 utilizing WIG funds:

- [Idaho's resilient tourism sector and the increasing costs of travel.](#)
- [Winter wages boost transportation career opportunities.](#)
- [Labor economists expect Idaho job growth to increase annually through 2025.](#)
- [Women ages 25-34 are driving Idaho's labor force growth.](#)
- [Job gains in Idaho's manufacturing sector outpace national growth rates.](#)

- [Idaho projected to create 120,000 jobs by 2032.](#)
- [Idaho's startup growth decreases slightly in 2023 while business applications rise.](#)
- [Idaho's 2023 average hourly wage increased 8.3% from 2022.](#)
- [Idaho sets record lows in claim duration and unemployment rates.](#)
- [Economic opportunities remain steady in rural Idaho.](#)
- [Alternative measures of underemployment in Idaho.](#)
- [Idaho's agricultural evolution: Insights from the U.S. Census.](#)
- [Airport worker fatalities have increased in Idaho.](#)
- [A symbiotic relationship: hunting, angling, wildlife recreation and Idaho's labor market.](#)
- [How rising temperatures impact Idaho workers.](#)
- [Low supply keeps Idaho home prices high.](#)

Data requests:

- Economic impact assessment of a given regional investment.
- Labor availability for prospective businesses.
- Labor market information profiles for various occupations.
- Labor force analysis for a given region.
- Wage data for occupations and industries.

Research projects:

- 2023 Business Climate Survey.
- 2024 Business Climate Survey.

Presentations:

- Information about labor market conditions, including labor force data, industry, occupations, wages, education, opportunities, the state's economic outlook and challenges are provided to a multitude of stakeholders. These stakeholders include business groups, schools, civic organizations and government entities.

Training:

- Labor market information training was conducted at least once during PY2023 for each of the regional one-stop centers in Idaho.
- When time and workload permit, stakeholders who call or email with labor market information questions are provided impromptu trainings of available data sources.

Media:

- State and regional economists engage in media interviews when Idaho's unemployment rate is released.
- Various interviews on specialty topics with state and regional news outlets include the evolution of Idaho's workforce away from agriculture, the aging workforce, worker shortages by industry, the minimum wage, women in the workforce, wages and many more.

Leveraging WIG with private information sources and tools

Lightcast.IO

The department continues to maintain a usage license with Lightcast.IO., formerly EMSI. This license grants staff access to a web-based analytic applications that integrate the census, labor market and other economic data along with input/output models specifically designed for Idaho and its sub-

state regions. This product allows staff and labor economists to answer research questions concerning the impact of forecasted economic expansions and contractions on occupations, industries and other economic factors in real time. Lightcast's product strength is its research and insight into areas that would otherwise prohibit disclosure due to state and federal laws or statutes regarding confidential employment security data. Lightcast.IO uses alternative data sources to estimate areas for data that are suppressed or unavailable altogether.

Tableau web services

Idaho's new suite of data dashboards is created with the assistance of Tableau web services, a family of interactive data visualization products focused on business intelligence. Tableau is a global software company headquartered in Seattle, Washington.

The department was recognized by Tableau for a dashboard it developed to display data on unemployment insurance claims. A [release](#) was issued for this recognition and contains a link to the featured chart.

Help Wanted Online (HWOL)

This online tool allows actual listings of job openings and is an integral part of the department's job vacancy data. It also provides labor economists with employer provided job listings by job type, occupations and age of openings. The listings are for the state, its regions, counties and cities. HWOL is a valuable tool in economic analysis and the department's use is licensed through The Conference Board.

Idaho continues to use portions of WIG to capitalize on and partner with a wide variety of other state funding sources. These collaborations include working with Idaho Workforce Development Council funds to research occupations for Idaho's targeted industry clusters, and the Idaho STEM Action Center to focus on the need for promoting education and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

As federal, state and local funding sources continue to shrink, harnessing our grant dollars through partnerships and collaborations is critical for maintaining the current level of insight provided by labor market information.

WIG's importance

Like all states, the resources provided by WIG funding for Idaho's stakeholders is of great value. The information, tools and programs serve workers and employers with the knowledge they need to adapt to a continuously evolving economy. Labor market information is a critical resource for this effort, and informs strategic decision making about careers, business plans and policies. In Idaho, the use of projections and other data from the Bureau of Labor Statics is used in synthesis to guide program funding and career selection.

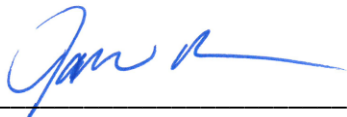
Idaho has consistently led the nation in population growth and economic resiliency for the greater part of the last decade. However, investment by the federal government in workforce information dissemination efforts has not kept pace with its increasing importance. Since 2009, Idaho's allocation for WIG funding has only increased by 4.7%, or 0.3% on an annualized basis. Meanwhile, the state's labor force increased 28%, or 1.6% annually. As these differences demonstrate, changes in grant funding have not remained consistent with changes in Idaho. These differences are

increasingly insufficient to maintain the grant's effectiveness, as well as Idaho's and the department's subsidizing efforts to deliver effective labor market information services demanded by stakeholders.

Idaho continues to contribute to wage record enhancement research, initiated by the federal Workforce Information Council, to measure and study how existing administrative records can be enriched within our own state's legislative landscapes.

ETA's continued support of the Local Employment and Wage Information System and other associated products provided by the Analyst Resource Center (ARC) provide analytical opportunities for leveraging data at sub-state and even community levels. The findings and products produced are supported by ARC and are often the most sought after by our workforce customers. In addition, efforts to support states with acquiring and funding other innovative tools will advance the effectiveness of that insight the grant is intended to provide.

The U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Agency's continued financial and intellectual contribution to the efforts of disseminating labor market information for the public good are encouraged and appreciated.



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