



Kansas Legislative Research Department

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December 16, 2021

To: Unemployment Compensation Modernization and Improvement Council

From: Edward Penner, Senior Economist

Re: Labor Force and Job Openings

This memorandum updates and expands information initially prepared in response to a presentation concerning economic indicators at the August 31, 2021, meeting of the Legislative Budget Committee. In addition to other information, Committee members requested additional information concerning the Kansas labor force and job openings in Kansas, which is provided in this memorandum .

Employment in Kansas

Employment is broadly measured using two surveys, one of which requests information of employers and one of which requests information of households. Surveys of employers show the Kansas employment level to be lagging pre-pandemic levels in both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data sets.

**Kansas – Seasonally Adjusted Employees (Establishment Data)
(Thousands)**

	2019	2020	2021
January	1419.1	1431.1	1363.5
February	1418.3	1428.8	1360.2
March	1418.8	1421.9	1373.8
April	1426.8	1270.8	1371.5
May	1423.6	1301.7	1370.2
June	1424.5	1326.9	1376.2
July	1422.5	1345.9	1382.4
August	1426.7	1358.6	1385.1
September	1425.1	1354.8	1387.6
October	1425.5	1357.8	1388.7
November	1426.3	1356.1	
December	1427.0	1354.7	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, State and Area Employment, Hours, and Earnings

**Kansas – Not Seasonally Adjusted Employees (Establishment Data)
(Thousands)**

	2019	2020	2021
January	1399.3	1413.3	1345.6
February	1410.0	1418.7	1347.7
March	1411.9	1414.6	1369.1
April	1431.5	1277.9	1376.5
May	1433.9	1311.3	1380.5
June	1424.7	1326.7	1383.9
July	1403.1	1327.6	1365.2
August	1417.1	1348.9	1376.1
September	1426.8	1355.9	1392.7
October	1439.2	1372.9	1401.5
November	1444.9	1369.6	
December	1443.7	1365.3	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, State and Area Employment, Hours, and Earnings

Surveys of households show that employment exceeded pre-pandemic levels throughout much of the summer of 2021 and now approximately equals pre-pandemic levels.

Kansas – Seasonally Adjusted Employment (Household Data)

	2019	2020	2021
January	1,439,031	1,453,029	1,450,464
February	1,439,945	1,450,486	1,451,324
March	1,440,776	1,448,406	1,453,986
April	1,441,764	1,298,910	1,455,771
May	1,443,000	1,354,666	1,456,990
June	1,444,540	1,377,977	1,456,073
July	1,446,400	1,398,770	1,456,754
August	1,448,506	1,415,790	1,457,261
September	1,450,972	1,382,202	1,455,745
October	1,453,350	1,437,158	1,509,740
November	1,454,798	1,442,525	
December	1,454,675	1,446,860	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Kansas - Not Seasonally Adjusted Employment (Household Data)

	2019	2020	2021
January	1,427,245	1,444,907	1,435,055
February	1,439,347	1,455,483	1,442,083
March	1,434,283	1,435,116	1,448,708
April	1,438,678	1,291,632	1,448,063
May	1,438,328	1,346,318	1,448,006
June	1,453,332	1,387,575	1,455,218
July	1,455,431	1,407,326	1,465,920
August	1,437,293	1,412,266	1,449,136
September	1,454,413	1,385,010	1,451,746
October	1,459,703	1,444,313	1,453,967
November	1,462,780	1,452,175	
December	1,456,538	1,445,823	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Kansas Labor Force

While the number of individuals participating in the Kansas labor force dropped in the spring and summer of 2020, in both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data sets, the labor force has exceeded pre-pandemic levels for the entirety of 2021.

Kansas – Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force

	2019	2020	2021
January	1,488,175	1,500,177	1,502,248
February	1,488,377	1,498,044	1,508,461
March	1,488,364	1,495,882	1,510,302
April	1,488,596	1,485,985	1,508,524
May	1,489,343	1,488,938	1,509,721
June	1,490,822	1,481,232	1,512,091
July	1,493,014	1,497,429	1,514,491
August	1,495,521	1,509,706	1,515,213
September	1,498,108	1,472,356	1,514,736
October	1,500,323	1,508,097	1,511,879
November	1,501,501	1,513,503	
December	1,501,433	1,518,416	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Kansas – Not Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force

	2019	2020	2021
January	1,481,498	1,493,578	1,515,813
February	1,491,592	1,505,032	1,500,139
March	1,484,320	1,487,454	1,506,301
April	1,480,300	1,476,015	1,498,651
May	1,483,165	1,484,126	1,503,486
June	1,501,595	1,488,976	1,522,209
July	1,514,111	1,518,534	1,538,271
August	1,488,103	1,508,539	1,509,740
September	1,494,416	1,471,196	1,504,432
October	1,501,891	1,506,390	1,503,338
November	1,505,125	1,515,460	
December	1,497,874	1,508,734	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Job Openings

Job openings, which dropped in the spring of 2020, have rebounded and now exceed pre-pandemic levels. Job orders with KansasWorks.com, administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce, are at all-time highs, and the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, administered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, shows increased openings in the nation and the Midwest Region.

Total Number of KansasWorks.Com Job Orders by Month

	2020	2021
January	23,629	23,253
February	22,178	23,876
March	19,857	31,053
April	13,033	35,269
May	12,697	36,414
June	17,748	52,247
July	19,507	52,123
August	21,558	57,443
September	20,974	61,818
October	26,808	63,340
November	22,056	63,996
December	23,722	65,943

**Seasonally Adjusted Total Nonfarm Job Openings – United States
(Thousands)**

	2019	2020	2021
January	7,478	7,154	7,099
February	7,058	7,012	7,526
March	7,332	5,769	8,288
April	7,257	4,630	9,193
May	7,279	5,447	9,483
June	7,165	6,112	10,185
July	7,137	6,717	11,098
August	7,150	6,451	10,629
September	7,100	6,611	10,602
October	7,340	6,873	11,033
November	6,915	6,766	
December	6,730	6,752	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey

**Seasonally Adjusted Total Nonfarm Job Openings - Midwest Region
(Thousands)**

	2019	2020	2021
January	1,755	1,545	1,520
February	1,616	1,524	1,593
March	1,666	1,205	1,783
April	1,718	977	2,069
May	1,645	1,138	2,064
June	1,654	1,360	2,227
July	1,653	1,562	2,394
August	1,536	1,387	2,239
September	1,543	1,408	2,364
October	1,638	1,463	2,484
November	1,503	1,455	
December	1,419	1,465	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey