



Idaho at a Glance

Facts and Figures
about living and working in Idaho



STATE OF
IDAHO
U.S.A.

For demographic and economic information pertaining to specific counties and communities, please contact:
Idaho Department of Commerce 700 W. State Street P.O. Box 83720 Boise, Idaho 83720-0093 (208) 334-2470
Upon request, information in this pamphlet will be provided in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.

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commerce.idaho.gov

IDAHO AT A GLANCE

Idaho's 82,413 square miles varies geographically from high desert in the south to beautiful forests and rugged mountains in the north. There's something here for everyone, and we're pleased to have the opportunity to share these facts and figures about living and working in our beautiful state.



EMPLOYMENT

Idaho has a strong and diversified economy. While the traditional resource-based industries of agriculture, forest products, and mining continue to contribute to the economy, high-tech, tourism, retail trade, health services, renewable energy, recreation technology, business to business and information-oriented services are among the growth sectors.

Until late 2008 Idaho's economy was among the best in the nation, which influenced growth from in-migration. Idaho's labor force grew 16.5 percent from 1998 to 2008. The states average annual unemployment rate has been below the national level since 2002. By 2007 the unemployment rate had fallen to a record low 2.8 percent. The current recession has taken a heavy toll on Idaho's labor force. Total employment dropped by over 15,000 from the record high in 2008.

Nonfarm jobs increased 4.4. percent in 2006 and 2.7 percent in 2007 before falling in 2008 – the first annual decline since 1986. Information, education, health care and government were the only major sectors to report increases.

For employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors, visit www.labor.idaho.gov or contact the Idaho Department of Labor at 317 W. Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735. They have 24 job service offices throughout the state to assist you. Idaho's larger communities are also served by excellent private firms that match job seekers with employment opportunities in the private sector.

COVERED EMPLOYMENT & AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGES PER JOB FOR 2008

	Avg. Employment	Avg. Wages
Total Covered Wages	653,388	\$33,889
Agriculture	22,141	\$27,510
Mining	2,759	\$58,895
Construction	45,281	\$37,546
Manufacturing	63,107	\$46,671
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	130,242	\$30,573
Information	11,736	\$38,808
Financial Activities	29,711	\$40,617
Professional & Business Services	80,461	\$40,616
Educational and Health Services	74,634	\$34,279
Leisure and Hospitality	63,131	\$13,227
Other Services	16,283	\$23,989
Government	113,902	\$35,375

Occupational Wages

Starting Wage

Retail Salesperson	\$6.90
Cashiers	\$6.15
Office Clerk	\$8.12
General Manager	\$15.03
Truck Drivers, Heavy	\$9.67
Registered Nurse	\$18.38
Customer Service Rep.	\$8.49
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	\$7.36
Exec Sec & Admin's	\$10.75
Food Prep & Server	\$6.02
Janitor & Cleaner	\$6.84
Laborer & Material Handler	\$6.66
Elementary School Teacher <small>(annual)</small>	\$40,563
Secondary School Teacher <small>(annual)</small>	\$41,314
Construction Labors	\$8.60

POPULATION

From 2000 to 2008, Idaho consistently ranked among the fastest growing states with the population increasing by 18 percent or nearly 230,000.

From 2007 to 2008, growth slowed to 1.8 percent, for a total of 1,523,816, while the U.S. population grew by less than 1 percent. Idaho remains as the 39th most populous state but ranked 18th in net immigration from other states and countries from mid-2007 to mid-2008.

STATE OF IDAHO: (2008) 1,523,816

Largest Cities	2008	% Change 06-08
Boise City	205,314	3.36%
Nampa	80,362	4.93%
Meridian	66,916	11.84%
Pocatello	54,901	1.80%
Idaho Falls	54,334	2.93%
Coeur d'Alene	43,360	4.92%
Twin Falls	42,197	4.50%
Caldwell	42,331	14.24%
Lewiston	31,764	1.51%
Rexburg	28,028	5.14%
Post Falls	26,460	7.93%
Moscow	22,798	2.01%
Eagle	19,471	5.71%
Hayden	12,873	4.24%
Ammon	13,646	13.10%
Mountain Home	12,382	6.23%
Kuna	13,354	16.02%
Garden City	11,713	3.17%
Blackfoot	11,012	0.45%
Chubbuck	11,828	8.90%

Idaho is one of five states poised to lead the U.S. out of the recession.
—CNBC 2009

COST OF LIVING

On the basis of average housing costs, utilities, healthcare, transportation, groceries, and other services, Idaho's cost of living is the lowest of the eleven western states. The chart at the right provides a comparison of the relative cost of living in the western states averaged over four consecutive quarters for the participating cities within those states.

Source: ACCRA

Cost of Living Index 2009

NAT'L:	103.0
IDAHO:	95.2
UTAH:	98.5
NEW MEXICO:	102.3
MONTANA:	100.2
WYOMING:	102.6
COLORADO:	101.3
WASHINGTON:	105.0
ARIZONA:	107.6
NEVADA:	109.3
OREGON:	113.3
CALIFORNIA:	137.6

TAXES

The combined total of state and local taxes on income, property, sales, and autos for a family of three with a \$25,000 annual income in Boise is lower than that in the largest city of 37 other states, including the District of Columbia. For a family with an income level of \$50,000, the total tax is lower than that in the largest city of 36 other states. For a family with an income level of \$75,000, it is lower than that in the largest city of 31 other states. For a family with an income level of \$100,000, it is lower than that in the largest city of 25 other states.

Source: District of Columbia Government, Office of Revenue Analysis, 2007

In Fiscal Year 2006, 32 of the 50 states and the District of Columbia had higher overall taxes per \$1,000 of total personal income than Idaho. Only 5 states had lower overall taxes per capita.

Source: ISTC State and Local Tax Burden Analysis



Property Taxes

Below are 2008 typical property tax rates within the following communities:

City	2008 Property Tax Rate %
Boise	1.3162
Coeur d'Alene	0.9402
Idaho Falls	1.7182
Lewiston	1.8278
Nampa	1.6007
Pocatello	2.0027
Twin Falls	1.4929
Moscow	1.6689
Mountain Home	1.6640
Rexburg	1.3298
Burley	1.4901
Blackfoot	2.2518

CRIME RATE

Idaho's crime rate is the lowest in the Western United States. In fact, according to FBI data, the rate of serious crime here is 30 percent less than the national average.

Because of the homeowner's exemption, these rates are applied to 50 percent of the first \$208,942 of market value of owner-occupied primary homes, including the home site. In 2010, the homeowner's exemption will decrease to 50 percent of the first \$202,306 of the market value of such primary homes, including the home site.

Source: Alan Dornfest, Property Tax Policy Supervisor, Idaho State Tax Commission, Oct. 2009

Individual Income Tax

Idaho's income tax base closely parallels the definition used by the federal government. In general, the same income is taxed and the same deductions are allowed. The Idaho tax rates range from 1.6 percent to 7.8 percent of taxable income. The maximum rate begins at \$26,418 for single filers and \$52,836 for married couples and heads of households. Idaho income tax brackets are indexed for inflation each year. Contact: Idaho State Tax Commission, P.O. Box 36, Boise, Idaho 83722, 1-800-972-7660. www.tax.idaho.gov

HOUSING

Since property values vary tremendously from community to community and even within a community, we suggest you contact a real estate broker in your locality who is a member of a national relocation network. As a free service, the broker can put you in touch with qualified real estate professionals in specific Idaho communities. Idaho's housing costs are moderate and affordable, and homes are available from modest cottages to executive estates. The following table portrays the average house value in geographically representative Idaho communities:

AVERAGE SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING COST

Community (County)	Average Value
Blackfoot (Bingham)**	\$169,935
Boise (Ada)*	\$234,904
Burley (Cassia)*	\$128,738
Coeur d'Alene (Kootenai)**	\$222,923
Idaho Falls (Bonneville)**	\$177,447
Ketchum/Sun Valley (Blaine)*	\$346,429
Lewiston (Nez Perce)**	\$163,080
Moscow (Latah)**	\$211,300
Mountain Home (Elmore)*	\$164,449
Nampa/Caldwell (Canyon)*	\$155,740
Pocatello (Bannock)**	\$156,082
Rexburg (Madison)**	\$192,126
Sandpoint (Bonner)**	\$267,977
Twin Falls (Twin Falls)*	\$155,741

Source: *intermountainmls.com **realtytrac.com



RESIDENTIAL ENERGY COSTS

Idaho provides a substantial energy cost advantage over much of the nation. Natural gas rates are competitive and residential electric rates are among the lowest in the country. Rates vary regionally as the following data demonstrate:

REGION

NATURAL GAS

ELECTRICITY

Southwestern Idaho	\$62.00/mo (65 therms/mo)	*\$70.73/mo (1,000 KWH/mo)
Northern Idaho	\$69.88/mo (65 therms/mo)	*\$79.92/mo (1,000 KWH/mo)
Southeastern Idaho	\$62.09/mo (65 therms/mo)	*\$75.04/mo (1,000 KWH/mo)

Estimates for natural gas reflect rates for December through March 2009. Estimates for electricity reflect annual average rates for 2006-07 as reported by the three major utility companies.

*Edison Electric Institute, Winter 2009

AUTO REGISTRATION, TITLE AND DRIVER'S LICENSING

Automobile licensing, title transfer, and registration are decentralized in Idaho. The rates vary by jurisdiction, but are modest compared to those of most states.

Service

Registration and Title Transfer
Driver's Licenses

Agency

County Assessor
County Sheriff



RECREATION

Idaho is world-famous for outdoor recreation and its landscape is bursting with variety. Mountains soar above 12,000 feet and canyons plunge to form the deepest river gorge in North America, Hells Canyon.

With over one million acres of wilderness area, Idaho has more wilderness than any other state in the lower 48. Thirteen national forests are great for fishing, hiking and hunting, and the backcountry is filled with mountain trails for backpacking and exploring wildlife.

The Salmon River, internationally known, bisects the rugged Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness and provides some of the best whitewater, kayaking and rafting in the world.

Northern Idaho features the greatest concentration of lakes in the West and evergreen forests abound. The "crown jewel" mountain bicycle trail, Route of the Hiawatha, winds through 10 tunnels and 7 high trestles and was selected by *Forbes Traveler* as one of the top 10 Great American Bike Trails.

Winter is ideal for skiing powdery slopes at one of the 18 ski resorts, including legendary Sun Valley. Snowmobiling is boundless along thousands of miles of trails. Idaho is one big playground!

Contact: Idaho Tourism Division, 700 West State Street,
P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0093, 800-714-3246.
www.visitidaho.org

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, Idaho,
83707, 800-ASK-FISH. www.fishandgame.idaho.gov

HISTORY

8,000 to 14,000 years ago Paleo-Indian big game hunters lived in what is now Idaho. In 1805 Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark entered the area that would become Idaho at Lemhi Pass. Soon after, the first non-native establishment in the northwest was built near Lake Pend Oreille. From wagon trains on the Oregon Trail, to the loggers, trappers, miners, and residents like Ernest Hemingway – Idaho has a rich and colorful history.

Contact: Idaho State Historical Society, 210 Main Street,
Boise, Idaho 83702, (208) 334-2682 or visit www.idahohistory.net



HOSPITALS

Idaho has 48 licensed hospitals. All but two Idaho communities with a population of more than 2,500 are within 13 miles of a hospital. The other two communities are within 16 miles of a hospital.

WATER & AIR QUALITY

Much of Idaho's surface water flows out of the high mountains and is generally of high quality. People swim and fish in the center of Boise, the state's largest city, and water-based sports are enjoyed throughout the state. In addition, high-quality groundwater is pumped extensively for agriculture, industrial, and residential use from the Snake River Plain aquifer across southern Idaho and from the Rathdrum Prairie aquifer in the northern panhandle.

Overall Idaho's air quality is good throughout the year. A few locations experience winter temperature inversions, and in some localities pollen affects people with allergies.

Contact: Department of Environmental Quality, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, Idaho 83706, (208) 373-0502.
www.deq.idaho.gov

COMMUTING TIME

The average commuting time from home to work in Idaho is 20 minutes.

CULTURE

Culture comes in many forms throughout the state: jazz and bluegrass music, symphony orchestra, classical ballet, professional contemporary theater and opera, big-name stars, nationally recognized music festivals, rodeos, county fairs, professional sports, community theatre and a nationally celebrated Shakespeare festival. We have always been proud of the health and quality of our arts community. With our inviting cities and great outdoors, there's always something to do in Idaho!

Contact: www.visitidaho.org or Idaho Tourism Division, 700 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0093, (800)714-3246.



CLIMATE

Idaho's climate is diverse. It is influenced by Pacific weather patterns, which help moderate temperature extremes. Generally, the northern part of the state has greater precipitation than either southwestern or southeastern Idaho. The southern part of the state has warmer summer temperatures than the north and is drier throughout the year. Southeastern Idaho, however, tends to be cooler than the west and drier than the north. Idaho's growing season varies from about 200 days near the city of Lewiston to very brief at high altitudes. Idaho has no hurricanes. Tornadoes and hail storms are extremely rare. Winds may accompany cold fronts and thunderstorms. Geographically representative climate examples are:

	Elevation	Annual Mean Precipitation	Mean Snowfall	July Avg High Temp	Jan Avg Low Temp	July Avg Afternoon Humidity
Boise	2,840	12.1 in.	21.3 in.	90.2	21.6	22%
Coeur d'Alene	2,158	25.9 in.	52.2 in.	85.4	23.3	34%
Idaho Falls	4,730	10.9 in.	37.5 in.	86.0	10.0	25%
Lewiston	1,440	12.4 in.	19.8 in.	89.0	27.6	34%
Pocatello	4,450	12.1 in.	47.2 in.	88.1	14.4	38%
Twin Falls	3,670	10.4 in.	31.3 in.	85.0	18.6	27%

EDUCATION

Idaho has a highly educated populace. Among the 50 states, Idaho ranks 21st for percentage of adults aged 25 and older who have graduated from high school (87.3 percent). Sixty-three percent of the state's total general fund is allocated to education. Idaho students score well above the national average on the SAT. Nearly 97 percent of Idaho's school-age children attend public schools, demonstrating a high level of public confidence and ensuring a demographically balanced student population. The Idaho Education Network will connect each public high school to the high-speed education network.

Almost every city with a population over 20,000 has a college or university. Off-campus programs are available at convenient locations throughout the state. Idaho's universities and colleges bring training, research and technical assistance programs within reach via computer, telecommunications and video. University Place in Idaho Falls provides programs through the University of Idaho and Idaho State University.

There are six professional-technical training centers. These centers provide training at business facilities off-campus. In addition to Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls, professional-technical programs are offered through Boise State University, Idaho State University, College of Southern Idaho, North Idaho College, Lewis-Clark State College, and College of Western Idaho.

Primary and secondary school information: Superintendent of Public Instruction, Room 200, Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0027, (208) 332-6800. www.sde.idaho.gov

Colleges and universities: Office of the State Board of Education, Room 307, Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0037, (208) 334-2270. www.boardofed.idaho.gov

Professional-technical education programs and certificates: Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education, Room 324, Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0095, (208) 334-3216. www.pte.idaho.gov

2009 Full-Time Enrollment

Public Universities	Boise State University, Boise	18,829
	University of Idaho, Moscow	11,739
	Idaho State University, Pocatello	12,679
Public Four-Year College	Lewis-Clark State College, Lewiston	4,206
Public Community Colleges	North Idaho College, Coeur d'Alene	4,215
	College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls	6,987
	Eastern Idaho Technical College, Idaho Falls	762
	College of Western Idaho, Nampa	3,100
Private Universities	Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa	3,868
	BYU-Idaho, Rexburg	11,435
Private Four-Year Colleges	College of Idaho, Caldwell	810
	Boise Bible College, Boise	233

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Idaho Blue Book describes Idaho's history, government, economy, educational system, and recreational opportunities in detail. It can be obtained for \$10.00 payable to the Secretary of State, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0080. Sections of the book are also available online at www.sos.idaho.gov/elect/bluebook.htm

Starting A Business In Idaho provides entrepreneurs and new business with essential information. It is available by calling (208) 334-2470 or on-line as a flip book: www.commerce.idaho.gov>business>publications

New residents also will find the local newspapers useful. Below are the addresses of Idaho's largest daily newspapers.

Boise *The Idaho Statesman*

P.O. Box 40
Boise, Idaho 83707 (208) 377-6200
www.idahostatesman.com

Coeur d'Alene *The Coeur d'Alene Press*

P.O. Box 7000
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814 (208) 664-8176
www.cdapress.com

Idaho Falls *The Post Register*

P.O. Box 1800
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83403
(208) 522-1800
www.idahonews.com

Lewiston *The Lewiston Morning Tribune*

P.O. Box 957
Lewiston, Idaho 83501 (208) 743-9411
www.lmtribune.com

Moscow *The Moscow-Pullman Daily News*

P.O. Box 8187
Moscow, Idaho 83843 (208) 882-5561
www.dnews.com

Nampa *The IdahoPress-Tribune*

P.O. Box 9399
Nampa, Idaho 83652 (208) 467-9251
www.idahopress.com

Pocatello *The Idaho State Journal*

P.O. Box 431
Pocatello, Idaho 83204 (208) 232-4161
www.journalnet.com

Twin Falls *TheTimes-News*

P.O. Box 548
Twin Falls, Idaho 83303 (208) 733-0931
www.magicvalley.com

