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# State of Idaho

## Workforce Information Grant

### Annual Performance Report

#### Program Year 2022

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The Idaho Department of Labor's Communications and Research 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 the requirement of the Workforce Information Grant (WIG) and provides a broad range of services leveraged with WIG funds to make information and insight, critical to the decision making by Idaho's policy makers, 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 as per the guidance and requirements stated for the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 1-22 published by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) on July 1, 2022. The details of this fulfillment are in the following sections.

### Industry and occupational projections

Following guidelines of the WIG, the department develops and publishes short-term and long-term projections for Idaho industries and occupations using the methodology, software tools and guidelines laid out by the consortium of states that are part of the Projections Managing Partnership and the Projections Workgroup.

#### Short-term projections

For the 2022 program year, Idaho delivered short-term industry and occupational projections covering the period from Q1 2022 to Q1 2024. The projections were produced December 2022 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 the report [graphs](#), with explanation, are available to the public on the department's website.

Present and anticipated levels of funding do 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 [2020 to 2030 projections](#) were completed ahead of schedule and made available to the public on [the department's website](#) by the third quarter of 2021. The appropriate data was successfully delivered to the ETA. The next long-term projections, covering the 2022 to 2032 period, will be completed early 2024 and within PY2023 deadline requirements.

The department also completes and publicizes its long-term projections during the same timeframe the ETA deliverable is due. The importance of the projections for department stakeholders has grown in the past few years and especially post-pandemic. 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 as soon as possible so customers can access the most current labor market information available. These tables drive the core information dissemination platform for data customers at [Idaho's Labor Market Information \(LMI\) website](#).

### **Idaho's annual economic report**

The department's [2022 Idaho Labor Market and Economic Report](#) summarizing the previous year's economy, is available to the public. To keep the information fresh 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 team effort consisting of the department's labor economists, BLS program staff and the communications team. It also fulfills the TEGE requirement for producing an annual economic report.

### **Insight dissemination and research activities**

There is a high demand for labor market information by Idaho stakeholders, and 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 major 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 stakeholder needs for workforce information within all industries, occupations and business sectors.

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

[LMI.IDAHO.GOV](http://LMI.IDAHO.GOV)

The department’s labor market information website provides access to data department stakeholders and research customers need. This data helps people make informed strategic decisions about careers, business strategy and government policy.

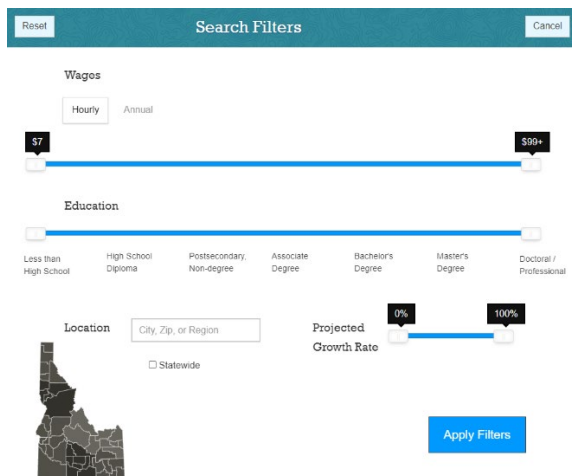
During this past program year, the department made substantial modifications and updates to its LMI website. The department’s entire website infrastructure was updated from a Dot-Net-Nuke platform to WordPress. As the LMI.Idaho.gov website underwent this process, the Public Affairs team took advantage of the opportunity, refreshed the visual set up and substantially reorganized the 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. WIG funds, in support of this project, were a component.

The information is developed, maintained and accessible at [LMI.Idaho.gov](http://LMI.Idaho.gov). WIG funds also contribute to:

[JobScope](#)

Launched in 2016 and developed with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, JobScope 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. An enhancement allows veterans to use military titles and codes to connect their military skills with civilian job openings.

WIG funds finance the upkeep and modifications to JobScope to keep the data current and the system functional for customers. A filtration option - fueled directly by data in the WIDb - takes users to a screen that enables them to view the results by wage, education attainment, projected growth rate and region of the state.



The department leverages 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 full of regional labor market information. Whenever possible, the WIDb is used as the data source for keeping dashboards updated with current data as soon as it is available through the following web pages:

**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 & losses](#)
- [Population, demographic and Local Employment Dynamics Data](#)
- [Regional information for Idaho](#)

During PY2022, the department's LMI website received more than 57,139 page views, and the [homepage](#) received 18,044 views. Among program or specific data pages, the top sites viewed include:

- [Occupations, Employment and Wages Statistics \(OEWS\)](#) – 13,167 views
- [Regional information page](#) – 7,630
- [Occupations in demand](#) – 5,016
- [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) – 2,757
- [Unemployment insurance reports](#) – 2,676
- [Consumer Price Index](#) – 2,641
- [Census](#) – 2,243
- [Industry and Occupational Projections](#) – 1,680
- [Weekly Unemployment Claims](#) – 1,287

**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 and housed on the [regional information webpage](#) at [lmi.idaho.gov](http://lmi.idaho.gov). 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 employment situation report release.

### [Idaho's annual economic outlook](#)

Compiled and presented to the 2023 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 a 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, 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 labor market information website.

### [Idaho Employment newsletter](#)

Funds from the WIG directly support the transformation of complex BLS data into a form that is understandable and useful for the department's labor market customers and stakeholders. *Idaho Employment* is a monthly newsletter with nearly 3,000 subscribers featuring articles about labor market conditions in each of the state's six regions. 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, live on the department's blog [Idaho@work](#), and are distributed to its readers through email and social media. The social media channels these articles are shared through include Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter (X). 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 leveraging collaborative 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 Directory and business lists](#)

Idaho leverages its WIG funds with other resources to support, develop and maintain the Idaho Business Directory and associated business lists. This furthers the department's commitment to generating quality jobs and maintaining a skilled and educated workforce.

A list of Idaho's top private and public businesses is available to stakeholders on the Idaho Business Directory [webpage](#). The list contains only businesses that proactively provide a signed release authorizing the agency to share a limited amount of information with the public.

In addition to a directory of Idaho businesses, a secondary source developed by the U.S. Department of Labor is available to stakeholders directly on this [webpage](#) via a direct [search widget](#) and link to the [CareerOneStop Business Finder](#).

With the internet serving as the 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 leveraged to their maximum potential for remaining relevant for stakeholder needs.

## Customer service

### [Idaho Workforce Development Council](#)

The Idaho Workforce Development Council is an independent office under the governor. Idaho's communications and research 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 to inform the state and its local communities efficiently.

### [Labor economists](#)

Idaho's team of labor economists deliver multiple presentations, answer data requests and write research briefs for thousands of customers and stakeholders each year. These economists serve as a link and a 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 the heads of various state agencies to remote areas of Idaho, affording residents an opportunity to voice concerns directly to the governor and perhaps be addressed by the appropriate agency director. Each labor economist supports these visits by providing background briefs on the local economy to the Governor's Office and the department director in preparation for the visit.

The following examples represent just a few of the information products the state's regional labor economists, labor market information director and research staff provide to Idaho and its stakeholders.

### [Labor economist webinar series](#)

In December 2022, the Communications and Research Division launched a new program 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 the Idaho 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 covered include "Generations in the Workforce," "Seasonality of Data," Apprenticeships" and "Idaho Veterans" – to name a few. The webinars are well attended with an average of 44 attendees per session, and the posted recordings have an average of 135 views.

**Other labor economist blog articles and reports published during PY2022 utilizing WIG funds:**

- [Idaho's small employer establishments continue to grow](#)
- [Irish connections in Idaho](#)
- [Housing in Idaho](#)
- [Ada County in 2020: Out-migration surpassed in-migration within Idaho](#)
- [Idaho's short-term employment growth is expected to continue through 2024](#)
- [The post-COVID outlook for Idaho health care workers](#)
- [Winter's arrival and why employment is seasonally adjusted](#)
- [Idaho's construction industry on the rise](#)
- [Three factors give cause for optimism about American manufacturing](#)
- [Idaho paid top median wages for 11 occupations in 2022](#)
- [Idaho's private establishment growth exceed the national average in 2022](#)
- [US Census reports most Idaho cities growing despite losing some residents](#)
- [Idaho's 2022 average hourly wage increases to \\$24.69](#)
- [The future of broadband in Idaho](#)
- [Critical and rare earth mining in Idaho](#)

**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:**

Staff turnover reduced the capacity to undertake comprehensive research projects during this past program year, causing a study of the pandemic on the health care industry to be launched in the second quarter of 2022 and published during the fourth quarter of PY2022. The report provides insight into how burnout and other issues stemming from the pandemic affected turnover and future staffing levels for health care occupations in Idaho.

**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 trainings were conducted at least once during PY2022 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 on-the-fly training on the 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

**Lightcast.IO**

The department continues to maintain a usage license with Lightcast.IO., formerly EMSI. This license grants staff access to a web-based analytics application that integrates 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 Idaho's 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 being 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.

**HWOL (Help Wanted Online)**

This online tool allows real-time listings of job openings and is an integral part of the department's job vacancy data. It also provides labor economists with job listings provided by employers 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 the economic analysis tool chest and the department's use of this system is licensed through The Conference Board.

Idaho continues to use portions of the WIG to leverage 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, leveraging our grant dollars through partnerships and collaborations is critical for maintaining the current level of insight provided by labor market information to stakeholders.

## The WIG's value and underfunding

Like all states, the economic shocks caused by the global pandemic stretched the limitations of Idaho's workforce information tools and programs. Outside of black swan events, the increased demand for labor market information is steady as private and public entities make strides to adapt in a rapidly evolving economy - whether it's growing a limited supply of skilled workers or general labor. The demands on these



programs to produce relevant information before, during and after the pandemic is critical to understanding the evolving nature of the economy and remains equally important as the economy rebounds and struggles against the effects stemming from continued disruptions.

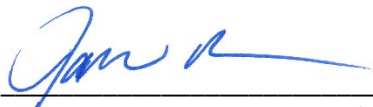
WIG deliverables and value-added efforts are assets that provide individuals, businesses and governments the ability to make informed choices about careers and future investments. These programs and services contribute to wage increases, business expansion and long-term decision-making, which is especially important given the stream of economic disruptions since 2020.

Despite importance, public investment funding for these efforts is not keeping pace with its increasing importance or inflation. Since 2014, Idaho's allocation for funding through the WIG source increased by 4.3%, or 0.4% on an annualized basis. During this time Idaho's civilian population increased by 21.5% over 10 years, or 2% annually, and its labor force has increased by 23.1%, annualized to 2.1%. Grant funding constraints limit the effectiveness of the department's ability to deliver labor market information services and the staffing levels necessary to meet the demand of Idaho, which has consistently been one of the nation's fastest-growing and resilient states for nearly a decade.

Idaho continues to contribute to the 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 USDOL 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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Jani Revier

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