

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REGION 3 Northeast

Covering the following counties:

Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca,
Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis

2023 REGIONAL PROFILE

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DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION CHANGE

Northeast Minnesota, also known as the Arrowhead region or Economic Development Region 3, includes a total of 7 counties. According to population data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), Northeast Minnesota was home to 326,062 people in 2022, accounting for 5.7% of the state’s total population. Despite its large geographic size, the Northeast Minnesota planning region is the least populated of the six planning regions in the state and has lost population since 2010 with a small decrease of 163 people. Meanwhile, the state of Minnesota has grown by 7.8% with an increase of over 413,000 people (Table 1).

Area	2010 Population	2022 Population	2010-2022 Change	
			Number	Percentage
Northeast Minnesota	326,225	326,062	-163	-0.0%
Aitkin Co.	16,202	16,126	-76	-0.5%
Carlton Co.	35,386	36,708	+1,322	+3.7%
Cook Co.	5,176	5,708	+532	+10.3%
Itasca Co.	45,058	45,205	+147	+0.3%
Koochiching Co.	13,311	11,844	-1,467	-11.0%
Lake Co.	10,866	10,939	+73	+0.7%
St. Louis Co.	200,226	199,532	-694	-0.3%
City of Duluth	86,265	86,372	+107	+0.1%
State of Minnesota	5,303,925	5,717,184	+413,259	+7.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, 2022 Pop. Estimates

Three of the 7 counties in the region lost population from 2010 to 2022 with Koochiching County losing 1,467 people, a 11% decline, making it the fastest declining county in the state. Aitkin and St. Louis Counties saw slight declines in the past decade while Itasca and Lake counties increased in population by 147 and 73 people each. Carlton County gained the most people, 1,322 since 2010 which equated to a 3.7% increase. Cook County increased its population by 10.3%, the 11th fastest growing county in the state and the only county in the region to see population growth above the statewide average from 2010-2022 (Table 1).

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE

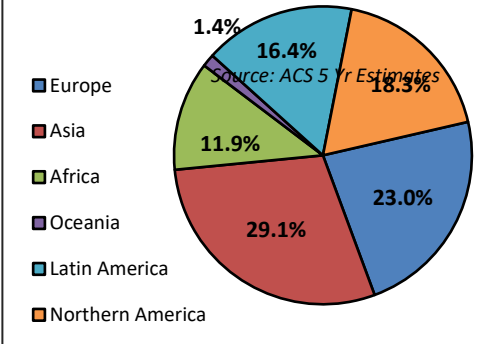
A recent population increase over the past two years in the Northeast region was fueled primarily by increased in-migration. People moved into the region both from elsewhere in the country (2,890) as well as abroad (211) (Table 2). Positive net migration offset a negative natural increase (more deaths than births) of nearly 3,000 people. The trend of positive domestic in-migration to Northeast Minnesota also countered the statewide losses to other states in the U.S that accelerated in the pandemic period.

	Total Change	Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	Inter-national	Domestic
Northeast	+349	-2,925	6,453	9,378	+3,101	+211	+2,890
Minnesota	+10,680	+26,917	144,350	117,433	-17,365	+20,012	-37,377

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program

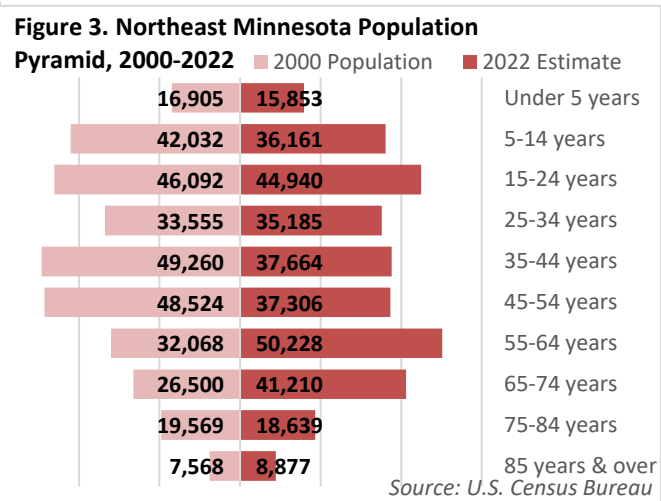
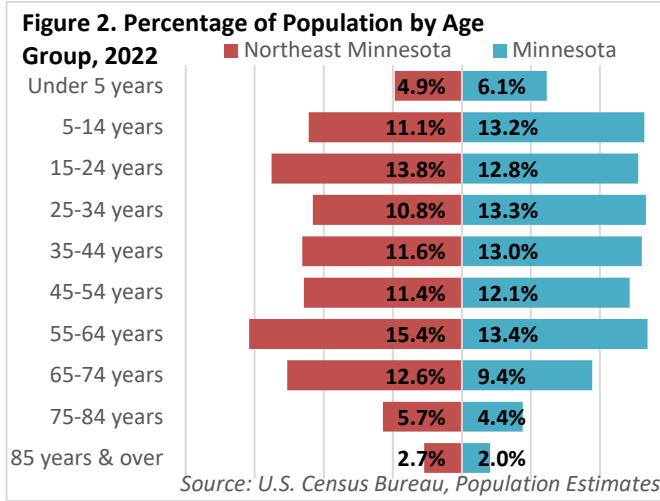
With in-migration, Northeast Minnesota was now home to 6,056 foreign born residents, or 1.9% of the total population. The largest number of immigrants in the region came from Asia, Europe, Canada, or Latin America (Figure 1). However, the fastest increase in immigrants came from Africa or Oceania. The number of people born in Africa living the region more than doubled since 2010. Based on year of entry, Northeast Minnesota’s foreign-born population was “older” than the rest of the state. About 37% of the region’s immigrants entered the U.S. before 1990, compared to just 19.8% statewide. Compared to the total population, the foreign born population has both a larger share of its population between the ages of 25 and 54 (47.5% to 33.5%), considered the prime working ages. While a higher percentage of foreign-born residents had a bachelor’s degree or higher than native born, immigrants were more than twice as likely to have less than a high school diploma.

Figure 1. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population in Northeast MN, 2021



POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

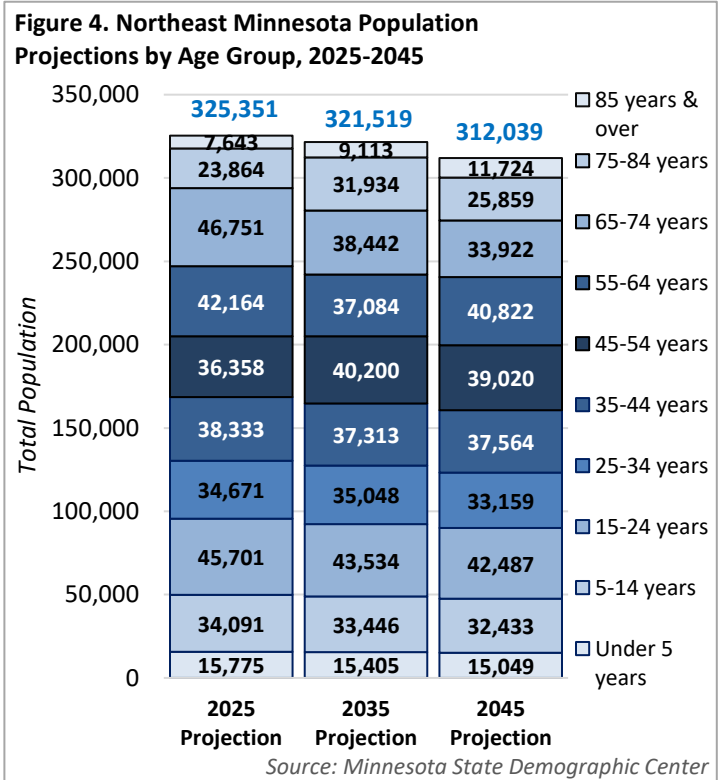
Northeast Minnesota has a much older population than the rest of the state, with 21.1% of residents aged 65 years and over, compared to 15.8% statewide. Consequently, the Arrowhead had a lower percentage of people in the 25- to 54-year-old age group, typically considered the “prime working years,” as well as a smaller percent of school-aged children. However, having several postsecondary institutions in the region led to a slightly higher percentage of people aged 15 to 24. Over a quarter of the region’s population is a part of the Baby Boom generation (people born between 1946 and 1964) which is creating a significant shift in the population over time. The only age group under 55 years that grew was the 25-34 which expanded by 1,630 in 22 years. While the number of younger and middle-aged residents held steady or declined, the number of residents aged 55 years and over increased by over 33,000 individuals (Figures 2 and 3).



POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP

Population projections indicate an accelerating decline over the next two decades. According to population projections from the [State Demographic Center](#), Northeast Minnesota is expected to lose more than 13,300 residents from 2025 to 2045, a 4.1% decline (Figure 4). In comparison, the state of Minnesota is projected to grow 7.4% from 2025 to 2045, closing in on 6.3 million residents.

However, the Arrowhead is expected to add nearly 6,100 people aged 75 years and over, a 19.3% jump. The region is also projected to see a smaller gain in 45-to-54-year-olds (+7.3%). In contrast, the region is expected to lose school-aged children and young adults, as well as people from 55 to 74 years as the current Baby Boom generation ages. The 55-74 age group is expected to shrink by over 14,000 people.



POPULATION BY RACE

Northeast Minnesota’s population is less diverse than the state’s but is becoming more diverse over time. In 2021, about 91.1% of the region’s residents reported White alone as their race, compared to 80.7% of residents statewide. The region had much smaller

Table 3. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2021	Northeast Minnesota			Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Change from 2011-2021	Percent	Change from 2011-2021
Total	325,784	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	+7.4%
White	296,770	91.1%	-2.2%	80.7%	+0.4%
Black or African American	4,427	1.4%	+22.7%	6.6%	+42.2%
American Indian & Alaska Native	7,695	2.4%	-15.1%	0.9%	-8.0%
Asian & Other Pac. Islander	2,663	0.8%	+7.5%	5.0%	+35.8%
Some Other Race	1,549	0.5%	+46.5%	2.1%	+66.5%
Two or More Races	12,680	3.9%	+105.1%	4.6%	+121.8%
Hispanic or Latino origin	5,817	1.8%	+48.9%	5.6%	+31.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey

percentages of Black or African American residents, Asian or Other Pacific Islanders, and people of Hispanic or Latino origin. However, at 2.4%, Northeast Minnesota had a higher share of people reporting as American Indian or Alaska Native than the state, and only a slightly smaller share of people of Two or More Races (Table 3).

Cook County had the most diverse populace in the region, with 14.5% of residents reporting as people of color, including 7.9% of Cook residents that identified as American Indian or Alaska Native. In contrast, Aitkin and Lake Counties had 6.5% and 3.5% of their respective populations reporting a race other than white.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

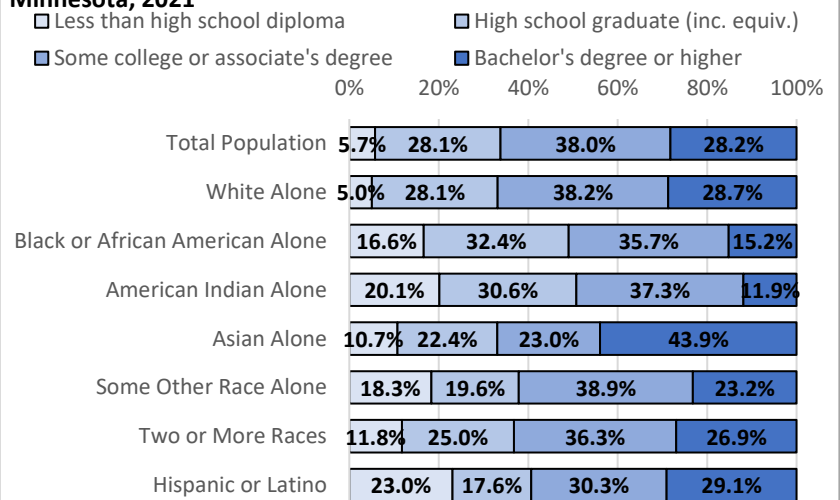
With 38.6% of adults aged 18 years and over holding a college degree, Northeast Minnesota had lower educational attainment than the state in 2021, where 46% of adults have an associate, bachelor’s, or advanced degree. In contrast, the region had a higher share of people with some college but no degree, an associate degree, or a high school diploma. (Table 4).

Table 4. Educational Attainment for the Adult Population, 2021	Northeast MN		Minnesota
	Number	Percent	Percent
Total, 18 years & over	262,352	100.0%	100.0%
Less than high school	16,457	6.3%	7.1%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	73,863	28.2%	24.5%
Some college, no degree	70,602	26.9%	22.4%
Associate degree	33,418	12.7%	11.1%
Bachelor's degree	45,439	17.3%	23.3%
Advanced degree	22,573	8.6%	11.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey

Educational attainment varied significantly by race and ethnicity in Northeast Minnesota. More than 16% of Black or African American, American Indian, Hispanic or Latino, and residents of Some Other Race had less than a high school diploma, compared to just 5.0% of White residents. The shares of Black or African Americans and American Indians with some college or associate degrees were similar to White residents. 43.9% of Asian and 29.1% of Hispanic or Latino residents had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Both shares were greater than the White population (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Northeast Minnesota Educational Attainment for the 25 & over population by Race or Origin in Northeast Minnesota, 2021

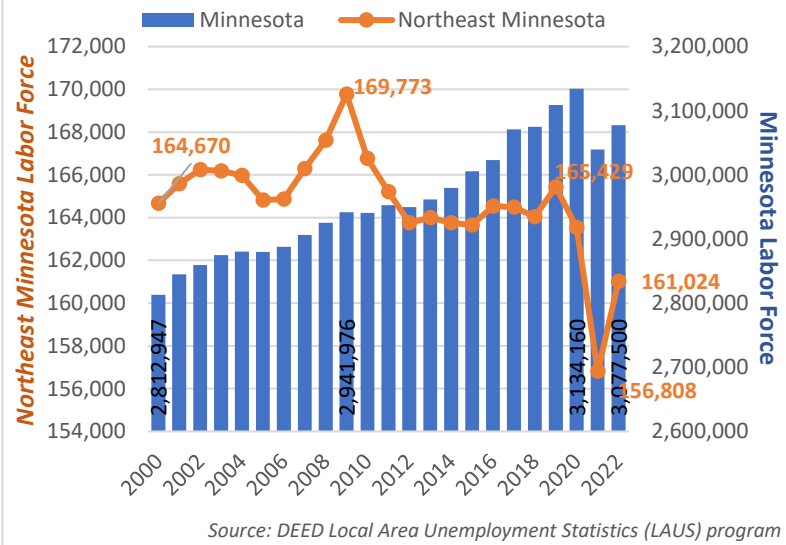


LABOR FORCE

LABOR FORCE CHANGE

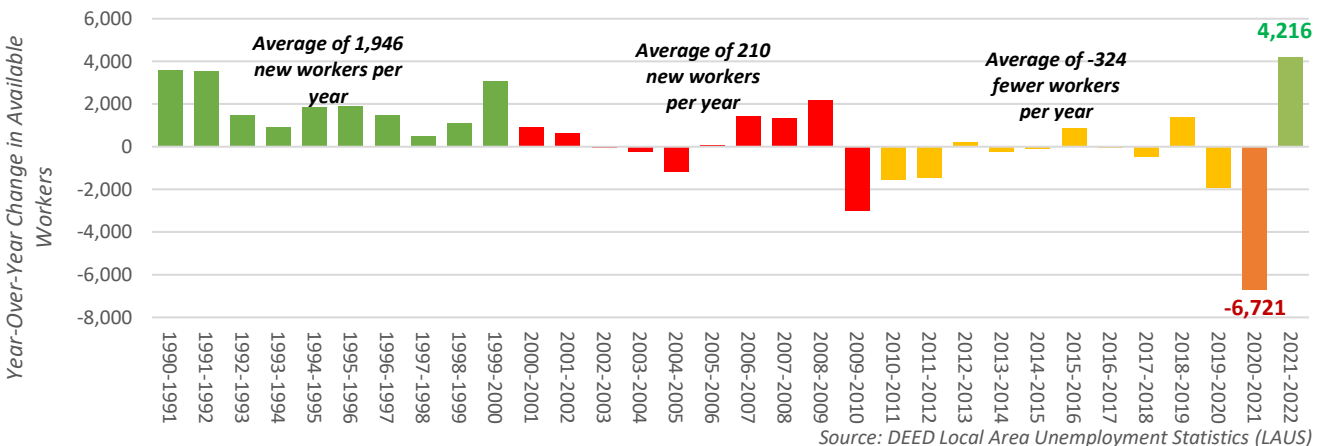
According to data from DEED’s [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) program, Northeast had an average of 161,024 workers in 2022. In the depths of the Great Recession in 2009, the region’s labor force reached its peak with nearly 170,000 workers, but then declined as the economy recovered, before increasing again from 2018-2019. Even though the region’s population declined only slightly over the past decade, the labor force lost 4,344 workers from 2009-2019, a trend that accelerated in 2020 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 6). From 2019 through 2020, 1,900 workers left the labor force followed by an additional 6,721 the following year. Northeast is one of two regions to see its labor force shrink since 2009 with a relative loss (-7.6%) more than a percentage point greater than that of Southwest Minnesota (-6.3%). In contrast, the steady gains that the state made from 2009-2019 were larger than the losses seen the subsequent two years (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Annual Labor Force Estimates



Averaging a net gain of about 1,950 additional labor force participants per year between 1990 and 2000, Northeast Minnesota employers were able to tap into a large and growing pool of talented workers. However, from 2001 to 2019, Northeast Minnesota’s labor force ceased expanding, losing 155 workers (see Figure 7). This small decrease was then overshadowed by the sizable losses of 2020 and 2021. The region dropped to 156,808 workers in 2021, the lowest number since 1995, before rebounding to over 161,000 in 2022. Prior to the pandemic, an increasingly tight labor market and a growing scarcity of workers was recognized as one of Northeast Minnesota’s most significant barriers to future economic growth. After some pandemic-induced uncertainty, tight labor market conditions returned rapidly. In the face of these increasing constraints, it has become more evident than at any point in recent memory that a more diverse workforce in terms of age, gender, race, ethnicity, disability status, and immigration has been and will continue to be a vital source of the workers that employers need to succeed. As the White, native-born workforce continues to age, younger workers of different races or from different countries will comprise the fastest growing segments of the labor force.

Figure 7. Annual Change in Labor Force in Northeast Minnesota, 1990-2022



LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS

If Northeast Minnesota’s population changes at the projected rates shown in Figure 4 above, the region would be expected to also see a decline in the labor force over the next decade. Applying current labor force participation rates to future population projections by age group creates labor force projections for the region, which indicate a -1.6% drop in workforce numbers by 2035. In addition to the overall decline, the labor force will also see the impacts of aging and retirements. The number of workers aged 75 years and over will expand rapidly against large declines in the number of workers aged 55 to 74 years. The region is also expected to lose many of the youngest workers in the next decade. However, the region is expected to see a large gain in the number of 45-to-54-year-olds. (Table 5).

	2025 Labor Force Projection	2035 Labor Force Projection	2025-2035 Change	
			Numeric	Percent
16 to 19 years	9,068	8,135	-932	-10.3%
20 to 24 years	18,784	18,871	+88	+0.5%
25 to 44 years	62,015	61,469	-546	-0.9%
45 to 54 years	30,264	33,462	+3,198	+10.6%
55 to 64 years	25,842	22,728	-3,113	-12.0%
65 to 74 years	9,145	7,520	-1,625	-17.8%
75 years & over	1,505	1,960	+456	+30.3%
Total Labor Force	156,622	154,146	-2,476	-1.6%

Source: calculated from Minnesota State Demographic Center population projections and 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

With just 59.5% of the population over 16 years of age in the labor force, Northeast Minnesota has much lower labor force participation than the state. Each Northeast age group had lower participation rates than those statewide (Table 6).

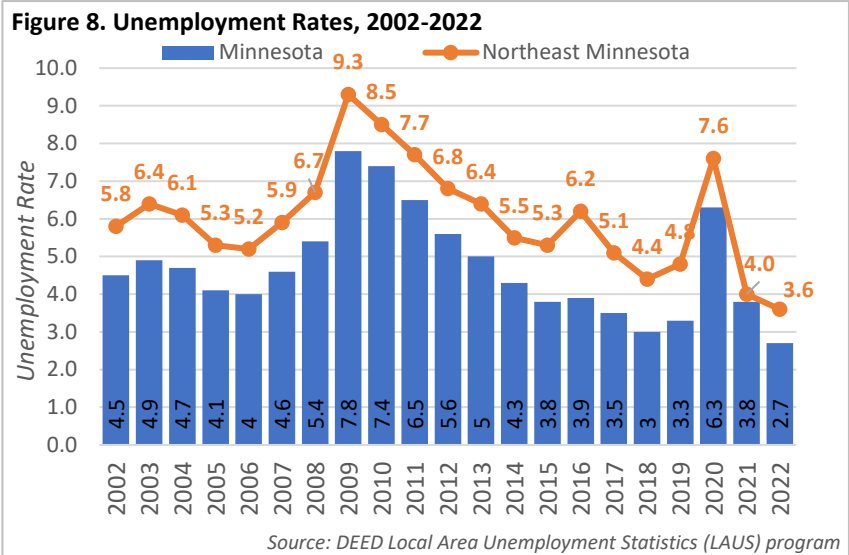
The region also had lower labor force participation rates than the state for every racial or ethnic group; and also had large unemployment rate disparities for workers of color. Unemployment rates for Black or African Americans and American Indians were more than triple the White rate. The region also had 6,628 veterans and 10,702 workers with disabilities in the labor force. Workers with disabilities had much lower participation rates while veterans exhibited higher labor force participation. Labor force participation was highest for prime age, Asian, and most educated workers. Unemployment rates were highest for youth, people of color, workers with disabilities, and those with the lowest education levels. Unemployment rates were higher than across the state for most groups.

Age Group	Northeast Minnesota			Minnesota	
	Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
Total Labor Force	160,909	59.5%	5.1%	69.2%	4.0%
16 to 19 years	9,129	51.2%	9.0%	52.3%	10.7%
20 to 24 years	18,749	79.7%	7.1%	83.3%	6.7%
25 to 44 years	61,831	84.9%	5.1%	88.8%	3.6%
45 to 54 years	31,026	83.2%	4.1%	87.6%	3.0%
55 to 64 years	30,757	61.3%	3.5%	73.1%	3.2%
65 to 74 years	8,054	19.6%	4.0%	28.0%	3.2%
75 years & over	1,313	4.8%	7.2%	6.6%	2.9%
Employment Characteristics by Gender					
Male	84,086	61.5%	5.7%	72.7%	4.4%
Female	76,776	57.5%	4.3%	65.6%	3.6%
Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin					
White alone	148,858	59.7%	4.7%	68.5%	3.4%
Black or African American	1,490	43.0%	19.9%	71.9%	8.6%
American Indian & Alaska Native	3,170	53.4%	15.0%	57.4%	12.9%
Asian or Other Pacific Islanders	1,495	67.2%	3.4%	72.7%	4.1%
Some Other Race	780	64.1%	2.0%	75.8%	6.2%
Two or More Races	5,021	61.6%	7.2%	74.1%	7.3%
Hispanic or Latino	2,471	63.1%	7.8%	77.0%	6.6%
Employment Characteristics by Veteran Status					
Military Veteran	6,628	71.2%	5.7%	80.6%	3.9%
Employment Characteristics by Disability					
With Any Disability	10,702	44.9%	9.2%	53.6%	9.9%
Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment					
Population 25 to 64 years	123,660	77.2%	4.5%	84.4%	3.4%
Less than H.S. Diploma	4,304	52.6%	6.2%	66.6%	4.6%
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	26,974	67.1%	3.1%	77.3%	2.5%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	51,341	78.8%	4.4%	85.1%	3.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	41,011	87.8%	2.1%	90.3%	2.1%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

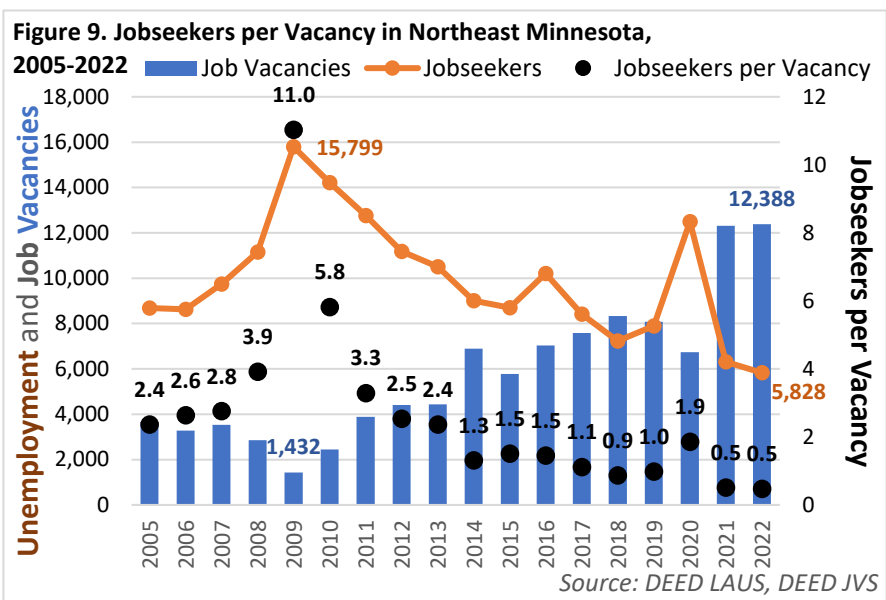
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Northeast has consistently reported higher unemployment rates than Minnesota, typically at least one percentage point above the state rate. [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) show that the unemployment rate reached its peak in 2009 at 9.3%, then declined to an annual rate of 4.4% in 2018 and landed at 4.8% in 2019. Since then, a steep climb early in the pandemic was erased as rates rapidly fell to a record low 3.6% in 2022 (see Figure 8).



JOBSEEKERS PER VACANCY

Prior to the coronavirus crisis, the labor market had already been tightening. One clear demonstration of this is the ratio of unemployed jobseekers per vacancy, which in 2019 stood at 1-to-1 in Northeast Minnesota; meaning there were roughly the same number of people looking for work as there were open jobs. After briefly rising to 1.9 in 2020, the ratio has since declined to an all-time low of 0.5 jobseekers per vacancy in 2021 and 2022. According to the most recent job vacancy survey results, there were 12,388 openings (2nd highest on record) reported by employers compared to 5,828 (lowest on record) unemployed jobseekers in the region. By comparison, the ratio climbed as high as 11.0 during the recession in 2009 (Figure 9).



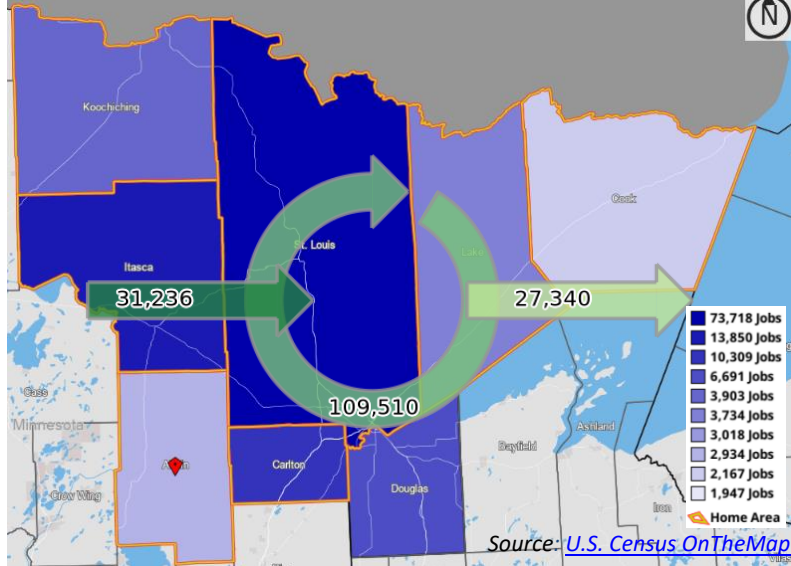
COMMUTE SHED AND LABOR SHED

According to data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the vast majority – about 80% – of workers who live in the region also work in the region. However, Northeast is a net importer of labor, having more jobs than available workers. Just over 109,500 workers both lived and worked in the region, while another 31,236 workers commuted into the region for work, compared to 27,340 who live in the region but commuted to other counties for work (Table 7 and Figure 10). Since 2010, the share of people employed in the region but living elsewhere grew fastest of the groups in table 7, expanding 16%.

	2020	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	140,746	100.0%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	31,236	22.2%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	109,510	77.8%
<hr/>		
Living in the Selection Area	136,850	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	27,340	20.0%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	109,510	80.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap

Figure 10. Northeast Minnesota Labor and Commute Shed, 2020



St. Louis County is the largest employment center in the region and the biggest draw for workers living in the region (73,718 jobs), followed by Itasca (13,850), Carlton (10,309), Hennepin (6,691) and Douglas (3,903) (WI) counties (Figure 10). Employers in the region draw workers from Douglas County (7,245) in Wisconsin as well as Hennepin (3,516) and Pine (1,609) counties. The average commute time for workers the region was 21.5 minutes, compared to 23.5 minutes for workers statewide. More than 58% of workers commuted less than 20 minutes each way, compared to 46.5% statewide. As of 2021, about 7.4% of workers worked at home, an increase from 5.4% before the pandemic.

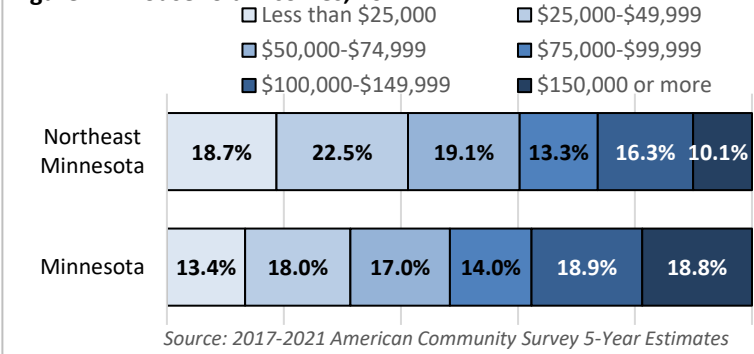
About 3.7% were able to walk to work¹.

INCOMES, WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

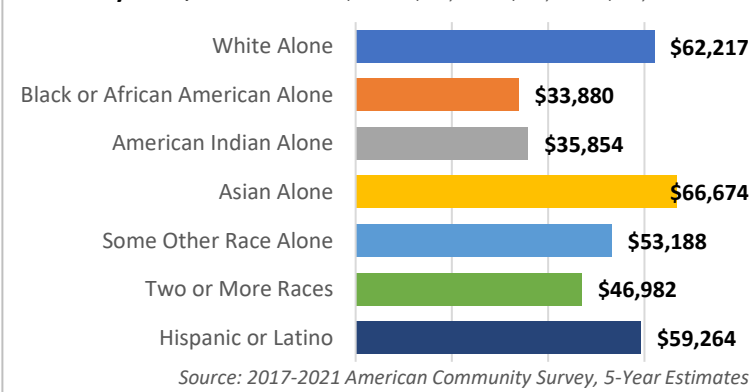
Household incomes were significantly lower in Northeast Minnesota than the rest of the state. The median household income in the Arrowhead was \$61,080 in 2021, compared to \$77,706 in Minnesota, ranking last of the six planning regions. More than two out of five households (41.2%) in the region had incomes below \$50,000 in 2021, compared to 31.4% of households statewide. Only 10.1% of households had incomes greater than \$150,000 in the region (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Household Incomes, 2021



Median household incomes varied by race or origin in the region. American Indian and Black or African American households reported the lowest incomes in Northeast Minnesota, with median incomes just over half those of White, Asian and Hispanic or Latino households. Households led by a householder of Two or More or Some Other Race were also likely to have incomes at least \$10,000 less than White households. Asian households had the highest median incomes, both over \$66,600 a year (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Northeast Minnesota Median Household Income by Race, 2021



¹ 2017-2021 American Community Survey

COST OF LIVING

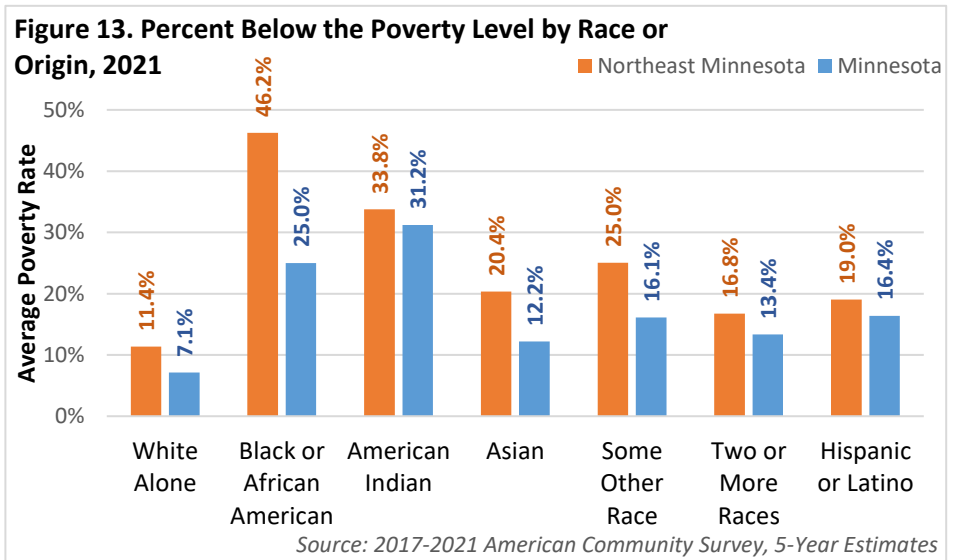
According to DEED’s [Cost of Living tool](#), the basic needs budget for an average Minnesota family (which consists of 2 adults and 1 child, with 1 full-time and 1 part-time worker) was \$60,720 in 2022. The cost of living for a similar family in Northeast Minnesota was \$50,952 – which was the third lowest of the 6 planning regions in the state. The highest monthly costs were for transportation, food, and housing; though the region’s housing, childcare, and taxes were lower than the rest of the state. In order to meet the basic needs cost of living for the region, the two workers in the family scenario described would need to earn an average of \$16.33 per hour working a combined 60 hours per week.

DEED’s Cost of Living tool provides different estimates for household compositions including single people, partnered couples, and up to 4 children. For a single person living alone and working full-time, the estimated yearly cost in the Arrowhead would be \$30,780 which would require an hourly wage of \$14.80 to meet the basic needs standard of living (Table 8).

Table 8. Family Yearly Cost, Worker Hourly Wage, and Family Monthly Costs, 2022										
Family Composition	Number of Workers	Yearly Cost of Living	Hourly Wage Required	Monthly Costs						
				Child Care	Food	Health Care	Housing	Transportation	Other	Taxes
Northeast Minnesota										
Single, 0 children	1 FT	\$30,780	\$14.80	\$0	\$393	\$161	\$909	\$845	\$315	\$313
Single, 1 child	1 FT	\$47,532	\$22.85	\$630	\$581	\$449	\$952	\$776	\$371	\$202
2 parents, 1 child	1 FT, 1 PT	\$50,952	\$16.33	\$316	\$898	\$528	\$952	\$948	\$428	\$161
2 parents, 2 children	2 FT	\$68,616	\$16.49	\$963	\$1,172	\$539	\$1,237	\$951	\$583	\$273
State of Minnesota										
Single, 0 children	1 FT	\$34,992	\$16.82	\$0	\$403	\$159	\$961	\$760	\$330	\$303
2 parents, 1 child	1 FT, 1 PT	\$60,720	\$19.46	\$574	\$921	\$555	\$1,216	\$886	\$517	\$391

Source: [DEED Cost of Living tool](#)

In 2021, the Northeast Minnesota poverty rate was 12.6%, which was well above the statewide rate of 9.2%, but down slightly from the previous year. Like incomes, poverty levels varied widely by race and origin. It was estimated that over 46% of the region’s Black or African American population was below the poverty level in 2021, compared to just 11.4% of the White population. Likewise, poverty levels hovered around 34% for American Indians, 25% for residents of Some Other Race, 20.4% for Asians, and 19% of people of Hispanic or Latino origin. Almost 17% of people identifying as Two or More Races also were below the poverty level in 2021. In each case, the region’s poverty rate was higher than the state’s poverty rate (Figure 13).



Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

According to DEED’s [Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics \(OEWS\)](#) program, the median hourly wage for all occupations in Northeast Minnesota was \$22.57 as of the first quarter of 2023, which was the fourth highest wage level of the six planning regions in the state. Northeast’s median wage was \$1.68 below the state’s median hourly wage, equaling 93.1% of the statewide wage rate, and \$3.10 below the median hourly wage in the Twin Cities metro area, which would amount to a difference of nearly \$6,448 per year for a full-time worker (Table 9).

	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment
Central Minnesota	\$22.71	270,260
Northeast Minnesota	\$22.57	136,490
Northwest Minnesota	\$21.67	215,980
Southeast Minnesota	\$23.44	236,590
Southwest Minnesota	\$22.00	167,580
Twin Cities Metro Area	\$25.67	1,718,290
State of Minnesota	\$24.25	2,827,310

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics

Based on location quotient, Northeast Minnesota stands out for having higher concentrations of Community & Social Service, Protective Service, Installation, Maintenance & Repair, Food Preparation & Serving Related, and Healthcare Practitioners & Technical workers than the state. The largest occupations in the region include Office & Administrative Support, Food Preparation & Serving Related, Sales & Related, Healthcare Practitioners, and Transportation & Material Moving positions. Those occupational groups combined to account for over 45.4% of regional employment.

The lowest-paying jobs are concentrated in Food Preparation & Serving, Sales & Related, Personal Care & Service, Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance, and Healthcare Support. Each of these occupational groups paid at least \$5.50 below the median for all occupations and tend to have lower educational and training requirements (Table 10).

Occupational Group	Northeast Minnesota				State of Minnesota		
	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment	Share of Total Employment	Location Quotient	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Statewide Employment	Share of Total Employment
Total, All Occupations	\$22.57	136,490	100.0%	1.0	\$24.25	2,827,310	100.0%
Office & Administrative Support	\$20.75	16,030	11.7%	1.0	\$23.06	345,830	12.2%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$14.05	13,630	10.0%	1.3	\$14.89	216,970	7.7%
Sales & Related	\$15.06	11,540	8.5%	1.0	\$18.14	239,500	8.5%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$37.53	11,460	8.4%	1.3	\$41.07	186,700	6.6%
Transportation & Material Moving	\$19.53	9,370	6.9%	0.9	\$21.05	227,780	8.1%
Healthcare Support	\$17.05	9,180	6.7%	1.2	\$17.40	162,400	5.7%
Education, Training & Library	\$25.02	8,450	6.2%	1.1	\$24.82	158,830	5.6%
Management	\$42.60	7,720	5.7%	0.8	\$51.58	193,760	6.9%
Construction & Extraction	\$30.65	6,950	5.1%	1.3	\$31.00	113,930	4.0%
Production	\$22.97	6,640	4.9%	0.7	\$22.07	209,380	7.4%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$29.17	6,400	4.7%	1.3	\$27.95	98,670	3.5%
Business & Financial Operations	\$32.03	5,910	4.3%	0.6	\$38.19	201,940	7.1%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	\$16.29	4,560	3.3%	1.2	\$18.26	76,210	2.7%
Community & Social Service	\$24.43	4,310	3.2%	1.6	\$25.82	54,820	1.9%
Personal Care & Service	\$15.33	3,110	2.3%	1.1	\$16.96	58,120	2.1%
Protective Service	\$25.66	3,020	2.2%	1.5	\$25.83	40,620	1.4%
Architecture & Engineering	\$38.75	2,340	1.7%	0.9	\$40.60	53,100	1.9%
Computer & Mathematical	\$39.38	2,150	1.6%	0.4	\$49.73	99,250	3.5%
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$32.18	1,680	1.2%	1.2	\$39.37	29,070	1.0%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	\$23.52	1,280	0.9%	0.7	\$28.80	37,630	1.3%
Legal	\$41.44	530	0.4%	0.6	\$47.87	18,730	0.7%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$23.49	240	0.2%	1.2	\$19.84	4,060	0.1%

Source: DEED Occupational Employment Statistics, Qtr. 1 2023

The highest paying jobs in Northeast Minnesota are found in Management, Legal, Computer & Mathematical, Architecture & Engineering, and Healthcare Practitioners & Technical occupations, which all have wages \$10 higher than the median wage for all occupations. Many occupations in these groups require higher levels of education and experience, including many that require postsecondary training. The pay gaps at the highest end of the wage scale for the Management and Computer & Mathematical occupational groups, near and exceed \$20 more per hour. The highest paying occupational groups are also less concentrated in the region.

JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Employers in Northeast Minnesota reported 12,388 job vacancies in 2022, the 2nd highest total in the history of the survey. Demand for workers continued to surge after the peak of the pandemic surge in 2020 and was high across most sectors. The sectors with the largest number of openings were Healthcare & Social Assistance (5,960 vacancies), Accommodation & Food Services (2,306), Retail Trade (1,358), and Educational Services (767). More than 83% of regional vacancies were in these industries.

Rising demand has led to rising wages, with the median hourly wage offer from the current survey jumping to \$17.36 per hour, which was the highest offer on record, and the third highest among the six planning regions. Wage offers ranged from under \$15/hr for Food Prep & Serving, Building, Personal Care, and Healthcare Support to over \$31/hr for Architecture & Engineering and Computer & Mathematical positions.

The largest number of vacancies by occupation were in Food Preparation & Serving Related, Healthcare Support, Healthcare Practitioners & Technical, and Community & Social Service occupations. More than 52% of regional vacancies were in these occupational groups. Job vacancy rates, a measure of turnover and demand, were the highest for Community & Social Services, Healthcare Support, and Healthcare Practitioners & technical. Overall, 34% of the openings were part-time, 36% required post-secondary education, and 44% required 1 or more years of experience (Table 11).

Table 11. Northeast Minnesota Job Vacancy Survey Results, 2022

Northeast Minnesota	Number of Total Vacancies	Median Hourly Wage Offer	Percent Part-Time	Percent Temporary or Seasonal	Requiring Post-Secondary Education	Requiring 1 or More Years of Work Exp.	Requiring Certificate or License	Job Vacancy Rate
Total, All Occupations	12,388	\$17.36	34%	11%	36%	44%	57%	9.2%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	1,974	\$13.44	53%	24%	1%	25%	8%	15.8%
Healthcare Support	1,920	\$14.98	29%	0%	24%	12%	73%	19.4%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,703	\$27.35	42%	2%	86%	50%	97%	14.7%
Community & Social Service	862	\$23.99	13%	0%	82%	82%	81%	22.4%
Transportation & Material Moving	799	\$16.76	62%	14%	7%	26%	63%	8.9%
Sales & Related	776	\$20.46	21%	2%	1%	21%	51%	6.3%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	652	\$19.19	9%	4%	71%	78%	81%	10.0%
Office & Administrative Support	591	\$17.71	34%	1%	9%	66%	43%	3.9%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	509	\$15.29	51%	33%	1%	29%	20%	11.3%
Education, Training & Library	507	\$17.89	45%	40%	77%	83%	68%	6.3%
Management	422	\$24.15	10%	0%	71%	89%	67%	5.8%
Personal Care & Service	371	\$14.87	36%	8%	20%	63%	56%	12.6%
Production	300	\$16.14	2%	0%	2%	16%	36%	4.6%
Business & Financial Operations	273	\$24.50	14%	2%	61%	73%	37%	4.8%
Construction & Extraction	214	\$15.77	0%	72%	7%	81%	18%	3.2%
Protective Service	165	\$16.15	62%	45%	15%	56%	81%	5.3%
Architecture & Engineering	139	\$31.37	0%	1%	91%	77%	57%	5.9%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	68	\$16.90	62%	7%	21%	33%	21%	5.4%
Computer & Mathematical	65	\$31.98	21%	0%	93%	94%	55%	3.1%
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	26	\$30.85	32%	4%	100%	96%	92%	1.6%

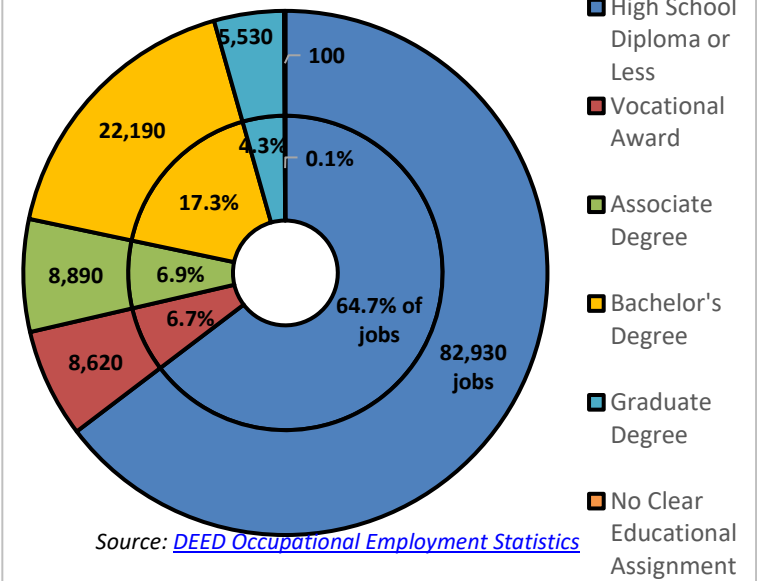
Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 2022

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Reflecting the recent job vacancy data, DEED’s Occupational Employment Statistics program shows that slightly more than one-third of current jobs held in the region typically require post-secondary education to enter. The other two-thirds require no more than a high school diploma, and sometimes less. However, some amount of on-the-job training is often needed (Figure 14).

Certain careers – such as dentists, lawyers, and teachers – require a college education, while other jobs – including cost estimators, sales representatives, and correctional officers – do not. College is an excellent way to move up career ladders and open windows of opportunity to fields that would otherwise be closed, such as nursing or engineering. Many of these occupations offer high wages and are in high demand in the marketplace. While education is typically a worthwhile investment, college can be expensive – with average annual expenses ranging between \$20,600 and more than \$53,600 per year in Minnesota². For those who go to college, choice of major matters – different programs lead to different jobs that earn different amounts of money.

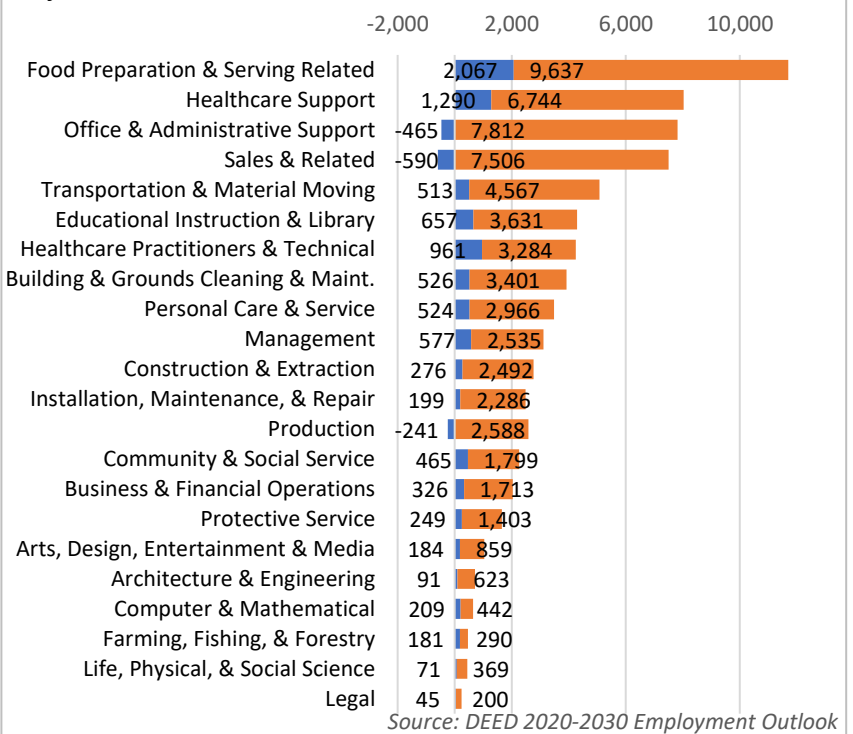
Figure 14. Share of Jobs by Educational Requirements in Northeast Minnesota, 2022



EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Overall, the Northeast planning area is projected to grow 5.5% from 2020 to 2030, a gain of 8,115 new jobs. In addition, the region is also expected to need 174,485 replacement openings to fill jobs left vacant by retirements and other career changers. The notable increase in projected employment growth is largely attributable to the continued recovery from pandemic-related employment losses. Accordingly, Food Prep. & Serving is the occupational group expected to add the most jobs, followed by Healthcare Support, Office & Admin. Support, and Sales & Related occupations (Figure 15). The largest percent growth is expected for Farming, Fishing, & Forestry, Food Prep., Healthcare Support, and Personal Care.

Figure 15. Northeast Minnesota Regional Employment Projections, 2020-2030



² <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=94>

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

According to DEED's [Occupations in Demand](#) tool, there are over 471 occupations in demand (OID) in Northeast Minnesota, and 282 occupations are showing relatively high demand. Training and education requirements of these occupations range from short-term on-the-job training to postsecondary education and advanced degrees. Most OID require a high school diploma or less, and less than one-third require a bachelor's degree or higher. While OID exist in every sector, the region's major industries are well represented as many of the jobs are concentrated in Health Care, Accommodation & Food Service, Other Services, and other related industries (Table 12).

High School or Less	Vocational Training	Some College or Assoc. Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Home Health and Personal Care Aides \$32,409/yr	Nursing Assistants \$38,023/yr	Registered Nurses \$78,829/yr	Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, & mental health counselors \$47,421/yr
Retail Salespersons \$30,436/yr	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses \$50,965/yr	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers \$69,705/yr	General and Operations Managers \$74,719/yr
Cashiers \$28,649/yr	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics \$48,638/yr	Clinical Laboratory Technologists & Technicians \$62,998/yr	Secondary School Teachers, exc. Spec. Educ. \$64,162/yr
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General \$51,214/yr	Medical Assistants \$44,580/yr	Dental Hygienists \$80,434/yr	Social & Community Service Managers \$65,308/yr
Waiters and Waitresses \$23,385/yr	Industrial Machinery Mechanics \$67,655/yr	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians \$67,078/yr	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education \$62,554/yr
Janitors & Cleaners, exc. Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners \$34,993/yr	Dental Assistants \$54,500/yr	Surgical Technologists \$62,349/yr	Accountants and Auditors \$66,865/yr
Driver/Sales Workers \$27,752/yr	Electricians \$77,859/yr	Forest and Conservation Technicians \$49,163/yr	Pharmacists \$137,104/yr
Fast Food & Counter Workers \$28,490/yr	First-Line Supervisors of Personal Service Workers \$41,164/yr	Respiratory Therapists \$75,469/yr	Human Resources Specialists \$63,477/yr
Stockers & Order Fillers \$32,400/yr	Computer User Support Specialists \$56,023/yr	Cardiovascular Technologists & Technicians \$79,749/yr	Preschool Teachers \$34,916/yr
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners \$30,367/yr	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, exc. Engines \$63,006/yr	Computer Network Support Specialists \$70,683/yr	Child, Family, & School Social Workers \$66,072/yr

Source: [DEED Occupations in Demand](#)

ECONOMY

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

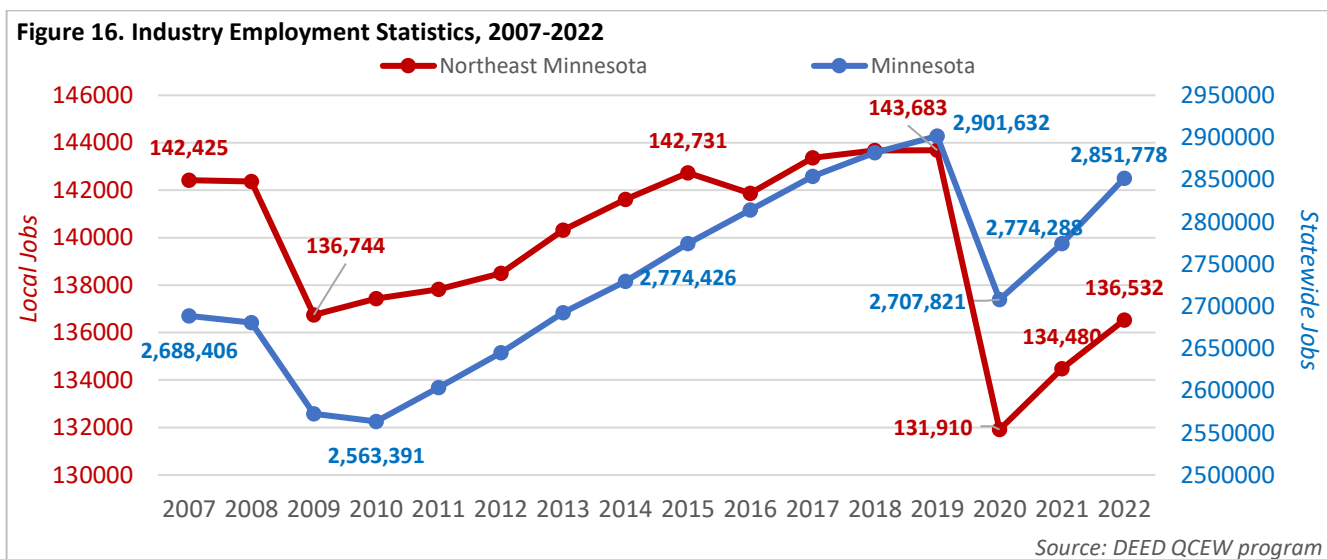
According to DEED’s [Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages \(QCEW\) program](#), Northeast Minnesota was home to 9,153 business establishments providing 136,532 covered jobs through 2022, with a total payroll of over \$7.4 billion (Table 13). That was 4.8% of total employment in the state of Minnesota, and the smallest share of the six planning regions. Average annual wages were \$54,704 in the region, which was about \$15,000 lower than the average annual wage statewide, but a 4.5% increase from 2021 and 10.5% increase from 2020 wages.

Geography	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll	Average Annual Wage	2021-2022		2019-2022	
					Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Northeast Minnesota	9,153	136,532	\$7,468,837	\$54,704	+2,052	+1.5%	-7,151	-5.0%
Aitkin Co.	474	4,218	\$186,901	\$44,310	+71	+1.7%	+81	+2.0%
Carlton Co.	782	13,007	\$702,643	\$54,020	+328	+2.6%	-170	-1.3%
Cook Co.	332	2,528	\$104,192	\$41,215	-23	-0.9%	-353	-12.3%
Itasca Co.	1,297	15,721	\$794,035	\$50,508	+143	+0.9%	-570	-3.5%
Koochiching Co.	422	4,403	\$238,123	\$54,082	+153	+3.6%	-151	-3.3%
Lake Co.	355	3,770	\$192,387	\$51,031	-121	-3.1%	-436	-10.4%
St. Louis Co.	5,492	92,886	\$5,250,555	\$56,527	+1,504	+1.6%	-5,549	-5.6%
State of Minnesota	199,603	2,851,778	\$198,839,399	\$69,725	+77,490	+2.8%	-49,854	-1.7%

Source: [DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages \(QCEW\)](#)

St. Louis County is the largest employment center in the region with 92,886 jobs at 5,492 firms; followed by Itasca County and Carlton County with 15,721 and 13,007 jobs, respectively. Of the seven counties, only Aitkin added jobs between 2019 and 2022. Of the other six, Cook lost over 12.3% and Lake lost 10.4% of jobs over three years. Carlton and Koochiching counties’ percent losses were the smallest. The regional decline was driven by employment losses in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the year, employment rebounded slightly, growing by 2,052 (Table 13). Over the last year employment grew in all counties except Cook and Lake.

Northeast Minnesota has seen employment ups and downs over the past decade but ended 2019 with 6,939 more jobs than it had in 2009, surpassing pre-Great Recession levels in 2015. However, a decade of employment gains was eliminated in a few months in 2020 as the regional economy finished the year with nearly 12,000 fewer jobs. Early pandemic losses in the region (-8.2%) exceeded the statewide losses which amounted to a decline of -6.7% (Figure 16). 2022 employment remained below pre-pandemic levels, at 95% of 2019 levels, despite a recovery of 4,622 jobs over two years.



With 32,249 jobs at 1,042 firms, Health Care & Social Assistance is the largest employing sector in the Northeast region, accounting for 23.6% of total jobs in the region. That is nearly 6.3 percentage points higher than the state's concentration of employment in the sector. As in most sectors, employment declined since 2019. That decline was relatively larger than for all industries combined. Health Care & Social Assistance employment is one of the six sectors that saw employment declines over the year into 2022. At \$60,938 in 2022, average annual wages were about \$6,200 higher in Health Care than all industries.

The next largest sectors were Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Service as these two industries made up another 22.6% of all the jobs in the region. While both sectors lost jobs over the 2+ years of the pandemic, Retail employment declined by 2.4%, relatively better than the 7% decline experienced by Accommodation & Food Services. With Accommodation & Food Service averaging \$21,400 a year and Retail paying an average of \$32,900 per year, both sectors are among the lowest paying. Combined, the two sectors added 1,005 jobs over the year.

Employment in Educational Services and Public Administration comprise the fourth and fifth largest industries in the region, accounting for 16.2% of total employment. Since 2019, Public Administration lost 444 jobs, mostly in the last year. Educational Services saw even greater losses with a decline of 476 but had slight job growth into 2022. Manufacturing was the 6th largest industry in 2021 – accounting for 6.4% of employment – and experienced a slight contraction since 2019. Perhaps the most well-known industry in the region is Mining, which offered 3,985 jobs (2.9% of total) at 35 firms. The Mining industry saw the largest percent employment losses over the year. Professional & Technical Services and Construction were the only industries to gain jobs over the past three years. The largest percent declines since 2019 occurred in Information (-16.7%), Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation (-11.6%), and Other Services (-11.2%). Of those three industries only Information continued to decline from 2021-2022 (Table 14).

NAICS Industry Title	2022 Annual Data				2021-2022		2019-2022	
	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll (\$1,000s)	Avg. Annual Wage	Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Total, All Industries	9,153	136,532	\$7,468,837	\$54,704	+2,052	+1.5%	-7,151	-5.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,042	32,249	\$1,965,188	\$60,938	-426	-1.3%	-2,339	-6.8%
Retail Trade	1,260	16,677	\$548,864	\$32,911	+179	+1.1%	-406	-2.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	967	14,142	\$302,755	\$21,408	+826	+6.2%	-1,071	-7.0%
Educational Services	263	11,400	\$588,027	\$51,581	+97	+0.9%	-476	-4.0%
Public Administration	381	10,712	\$642,822	\$60,010	-53	-0.5%	-444	-4.0%
Manufacturing	338	8,746	\$598,927	\$68,480	+368	+4.4%	-145	-1.6%
Construction	1,056	7,258	\$528,808	\$72,859	+309	+4.4%	+251	+3.6%
Professional & Technical Services	575	4,646	\$348,376	\$74,984	-72	-1.5%	+288	+6.6%
Other Services	939	4,569	\$148,842	\$32,576	+216	+5.0%	-576	-11.2%
Mining	35	3,985	\$507,745	\$127,414	-202	-4.8%	-233	-5.5%
Finance & Insurance	431	3,904	\$294,234	\$75,367	+45	+1.2%	-432	-10.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	347	3,790	\$230,921	\$60,929	+106	+2.9%	-427	-10.1%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	273	3,334	\$96,104	\$28,825	+142	+4.4%	-437	-11.6%
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Svcs.	349	3,198	\$112,617	\$35,215	+339	+11.9%	-236	-6.9%
Wholesale Trade	257	2,883	\$201,951	\$70,049	+124	+4.5%	-102	-3.4%
Utilities	50	1,462	\$153,488	\$104,985	+22	+1.5%	-4	-0.3%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	279	1,214	\$47,672	\$39,269	+40	+3.4%	-76	-5.9%
Information	146	1,092	\$55,145	\$50,499	-14	-1.3%	-219	-16.7%
Management of Companies	45	730	\$73,313	\$100,428	+21	+3.0%	-24	-3.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	125	536	\$23,039	\$42,983	-15	-2.7%	-43	-7.4%

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program

EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

According to DEED's Quarterly Employment Demographics (QED) program, the workforce in the region was aging over the past 10 years. Over one-fifth (22.8%) of workers in the region were 55 years or older, compared to 22.1% statewide and 20.6% in the region one decade earlier. In contrast, the percentage of workers under 25 years old fell from 18.6% in 2012 to 17.2% in 2022 (Table 15). The share of workers 19 years and under grew slightly and was higher in Northeast Minnesota than the rest of the state.

As noted above, wages climbed across the board for all workers due to rising demand and a tight labor market. Wages were lowest for the youngest and oldest workers who tend to fill lower-skilled, less-than-full time jobs in industries like Retail Trade, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation, and Accommodation & Food Services. Despite having the lowest wages, workers aged 19 and under of age saw the highest relative wage growth (+83%) over the past decade, followed by workers aged 20-24 (+76%). The age groups with the highest wages were those between 45 and 64 years, with median hourly wages greater than \$25.50.

By gender, the share of women workers in the regional workforce declined slightly from 2012 to 2022. And while the median hourly wage for women increased relatively faster than it did for men over the last 10 years, women still earn only 80% of the male median wage. In 2012 that ratio was 75.1% so the pay gap is narrowing but still significant.

Lastly, QED tracks the number of hours worked per quarter. A full-time, 35 hours a week worker would equate to 455 hours per quarter. Males and workers between ages 45 and 54 had median hours worked that exceeded that figure. The fewest median hours worked were by workers 19 and under and those 65 years and older. Women worked a median 358 hours per quarter in 2021, 79% of the male median. From 2012, median hours worked for all workers fell from 409 to 391. Hours increased the most for workers over 64 and 20-24, growing 7% and 5% respectively. Median hours declined or remained the same for all other age groups (Table 15).

Northeast Minnesota	Percentage of Workers		Percent of Workers, Minnesota		Median Hourly Wage		Median Hours Worked (Per Qtr.)	
	2012	2022	2012	2022	2012	2022	2012	2022
Total, all ages	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	\$15.56	\$22.12	409	391
19 years & under	6.4%	6.9%	6.3%	6.6%	\$7.95	\$14.55	129	129
20 to 24 years	12.2%	10.3%	11.3%	9.2%	\$10.02	\$17.63	244	257
25 to 44 years	38.4%	41.6%	42.3%	43.6%	\$16.94	\$25.03	448	445
45 to 54 years	22.4%	18.3%	21.9%	18.4%	\$20.04	\$28.66	480	470
55 to 64 years	17.2%	17.2%	14.7%	16.7%	\$20.00	\$25.58	464	460
65 years & over	3.4%	5.6%	3.5%	5.4%	\$12.51	\$18.25	206	220
Male	49.3%	49.8%	49.1%	49.1%	\$18.50	\$25.64	456	451
Female	50.7%	50.2%	50.9%	50.9%	\$13.90	\$20.52	367	358

* Through 3rd Qtr. 2022. Source: [DEED Quarterly Employment Demographics](#)

EMPLOYMENT DIVERSITY

While people of different races make up 8.9% of the overall population, they held 9.4% of total jobs in Northeast Minnesota, according to data from the Quarterly Workforce Indicators program. In 2022, that equaled 13,390 workers of color, compared to 129,385 White alone workers. However, workers of color held just 4.8% of total jobs in the region in 2002, meaning their share of employment nearly doubled over 20 years (Figure 17).

Workers of color have filled an additional 7,057 jobs in the region since 2002, accounting for 65% of the 10,902 new jobs added. With 3,078 jobs, Hispanic or Latino workers were the largest racial or ethnic group in the regional economy and gained 1,941 jobs since 2002. The next largest group was workers of more than one race, who held 2,921 jobs in 2022, an increase of 1,585 from 2012. Indigenous workers were the next largest group with 2,768 jobs. After increasing 225% from 2002 to 2022, Black or African Americans held 2,649 jobs. Asians held 1,906 jobs in 2022. (Figure 18).

People of color employment rebounded quicker following the pandemic peak, growing 9.1% as White employment grew 0.2%. Most sectors in Northeast Minnesota are non-diverse, but there are a couple sectors that rely more heavily on workers of other races. For example, 17.2% of the Transportation & Warehousing and 17% of Arts, Entertainment & Recreation workforces are people of color. The largest number of workers of color were employed in Health Care & Social Assistance (2,841), Accommodation & Food Services (1,923), Transportation & Warehousing (1,533), and Retail Trade (1,267) (Figure 19). Other than Transportation & Warehousing, each of these sectors is among the four lowest paying in the region.

Figure 17. Employment by Race and Ethnicity, All Industries, Northeast Minnesota, 2001-'22

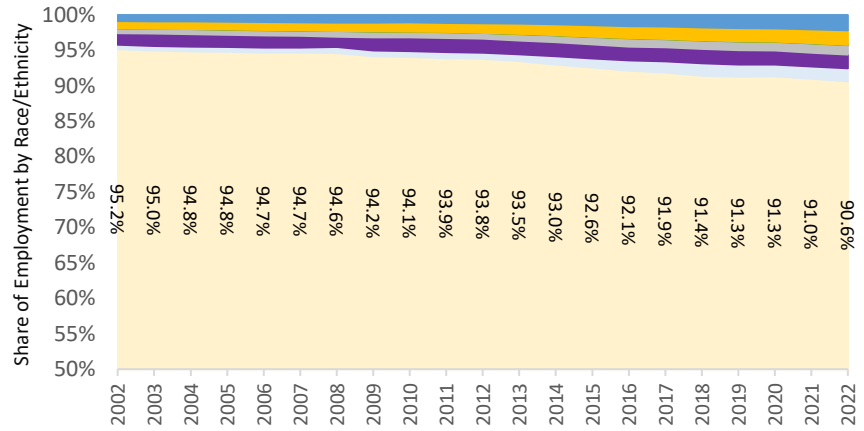


Figure 18. Workers of Color Employment, All Industries, Northeast Minnesota, 2002-2022

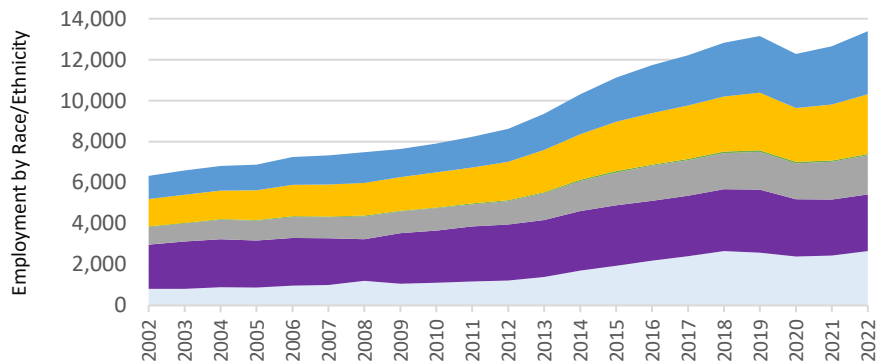
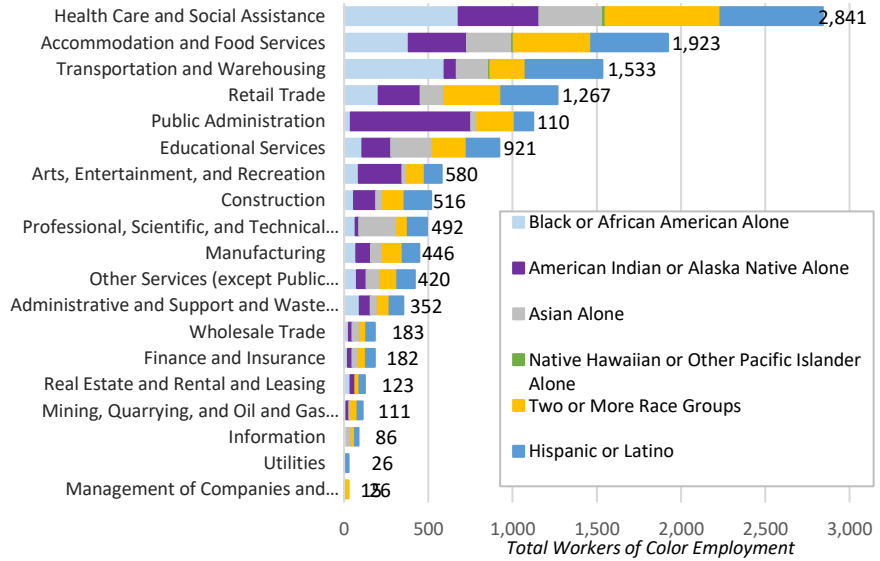


Figure 19. People of Color Employment by Industry, Northeast Minnesota, 2022



Source: DEED, Census LEHD Quarterly Workforce Indicators

INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

The Northeast Minnesota planning region is projected to grow 5.5% from 2020 to 2030, a gain of 8,115 new jobs. By comparison, the state is projected to grow 5.7% over the same period. The sectors expected to grow the fastest are also those more likely to have seen large employment losses in 2020. Arts, Entertainment, & Rec., Accommodation & Food Services, and Other Services are all projected to see double digit percent growth. Health Care and Accommodation & Food Services alone are expected to account for 2/3rds of new jobs added. Among the sectors predicted to decline are Retail, Manufacturing, Mining, Utilities, and Real Estate. (Table 16).

Industry	Estimated Employment 2020	Projected Employment 2030	Percent Change 2020-2030	Numeric Change 2020-2030
Total, All Industries	148,527	156,642	+5.5%	+8,115
Health Care & Social Assistance	32,183	35,151	+9.2%	+2,968
Public Administration	14,780	15,572	+5.4%	+792
Retail Trade	16,275	15,391	-5.4%	-884
Accommodation & Food Services	11,734	14,134	+20.5%	+2,400
Educational Services	11,884	12,440	+4.7%	+556
Manufacturing	8,329	8,166	-2.0%	-163
Construction	6,111	6,368	+4.2%	+257
Other Services	5,703	6,304	+10.5%	+601
Transportation & Warehousing	4,783	4,977	+4.1%	+194
Professional & Technical Services	4,617	4,948	+7.2%	+331
Finance & Insurance	4,616	4,755	+3.0%	+139
Mining	3,911	3,659	-6.4%	-252
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,613	3,397	+30.0%	+784
Wholesale Trade	3,122	3,127	+0.2%	+5
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt.	2,916	3,095	+6.1%	+179
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & hunt	1,027	1,359	+32.3%	+332
Information	1,145	1,210	+5.7%	+65
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1,144	1,128	-1.4%	-16
Utilities	1,295	1,097	-15.3%	-198
Management of Companies	742	747	+0.7%	+5

Source: DEED 2020-2030 Employment Outlook

NONEMPLOYER ESTABLISHMENTS

Northeast Minnesota was home to 20,441 self-employed businesses or “nonemployers” in 2019, which are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as “businesses without paid employees that are subject to federal income tax, originating from tax return information of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).” Unlike covered employment, Northeast Minnesota saw a slight but steady decline in nonemployers over the past decade, responding to economic changes. In sum, the region lost 383 nonemployers from 2009-2019, a -1.8% decrease. These non-employers generated sales receipts of over \$823 million in 2019 (Table 17).

	2019		2009-2019	
	Number of Firms	Receipts (\$1,000s)	Change in Firms	Percent Change
Northeast MN	20,441	\$823,893	-383	-1.8%
Aitkin Co.	1,149	\$52,899	22	2.0%
Carlton Co.	1,906	\$70,406	-177	-8.5%
Cook Co.	749	\$28,691	-55	-6.8%
Itasca Co.	2,932	\$122,279	-328	-10.1%
Koochiching Co.	843	\$29,006	-2	-0.2%
Lake Co.	871	\$38,256	31	3.7%
St. Louis Co.	11,991	\$482,356	126	1.1%
Minnesota	418,080	\$20,377,253	39,926	10.6%

Source: U.S. Census, Nonemployer Statistics program

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Unlike other parts of Greater Minnesota, agriculture is not a key industry in Northeast Minnesota, but there are 2,362 farms producing just over \$55 million in the market value of products sold in 2017 according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. All of the counties in the planning region rank near the bottom in Minnesota in regard to the market value of products sold (Table 18).

	Number of Farms	Market Value of Products Sold	State Rank
Northeast MN	2,362	\$55,215,000	6
Aitkin Co.	462	\$12,461,000	81
Carlton Co.	529	\$10,985,000	82
Cook Co.	32	\$381,000	86
Itasca Co.	337	\$8,004,000	83
Koochiching Co.	181	\$6,887,000	84
Lake Co.	42	\$358,000	87
St. Louis Co.	779	\$16,139,000	80
Minnesota	68,822	\$18,395,390,000	

Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture

Upon request, this information can be made available in alternate formats for people requiring additional accommodations by contacting Carson Gorecki at (218) 302-8413 or at carson.gorecki@state.mn.us.