



Northeast Minnesota Planning Region

Covering the following counties:

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

2025 REGIONAL PROFILE

Updated October 2025

Carson Gorecki

Regional Analyst, Northeast Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Duluth CareerForce

402 West 1st Street

Duluth, MN 55802-1516

Office: (218) 302-8413

E-mail: carson.gorecki@state.mn.us

Web: <http://mn.gov/deed/data/>



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 327,179 people in 2024, 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. Since 2010, the region has added 1,463 people, a small increase of 0.4%. Meanwhile, the state of Minnesota grew by 1.5% with an increase of almost 87,000 people (Table 1).

Area	2020 Population	2024 Population	2020-2024 Change	
			Number	Percentage
Northeast Minnesota	326,225	327,179	+1,463	+0.4%
Aitkin Co.	15,697	16,335	+638	+4.1%
Carlton Co.	36,207	36,745	+538	+1.5%
Cook Co.	5,600	5,571	-29	-0.5%
Itasca Co.	45,014	45,442	+428	+1.0%
Koochiching Co.	12,062	11,594	-468	-3.9%
Lake Co.	10,905	10,698	-207	-1.9%
St. Louis Co.	200,231	200,794	+563	+0.3%
City of Duluth	86,721	87,680	+959	+1.1%
State of Minnesota	5,706,494	5,793,151	+86,657	+1.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, 2024 Pop. Estimates

Three of the 7 counties in the region lost population from 2020 to 2024, with Koochiching County losing 468 people, a -3.9% decline, making it the third fastest declining county in the state. Cook and Lake counties saw slight declines in the past decade while Itasca and St. Louis counties saw small increases. Aitkin and Carlton County gained the most people, adding nearly 650 and 550 people, respectively. At 4.1%, Aitkin County was the 11th fastest growing county since 2020. Carlton County was the 33rd fastest growing county, and the only other one in the region that grew on pace with the state as a whole (Table 1).

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE

The recent population gain was fueled by increased in-migration. People moved into the region both from elsewhere in the country

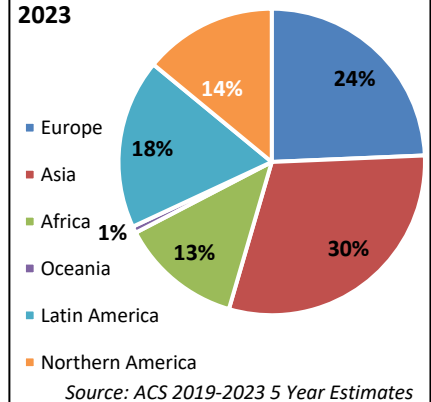
	Total Change	Natural Increase	Vital Events		Net Migration		
			Births	Deaths	Total	Inter-national	Domestic
Northeast	+1,470	-5,134	+12,179	-17,313	+6,407	+832	+5,575
Minnesota	+86,459	+51,570	+268,689	-217,119	+33,161	+81,091	-47,930

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

(+5,575) as well as from abroad (+832) (Table 2). Positive net migration offset a negative natural increase (more deaths than births) of nearly 5,100. 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.

International in-migration was slow in the region, and Northeast was home to around 5,900 foreign born residents, or 1.8% of the total population, compared to 8.6% statewide. 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, which nearly doubled since 2013. Based on year of entry, Northeast's foreign-born population was "older" than the rest of the state. About 33% of the region's immigrants entered the U.S. before 1990, compared to just 18.2% statewide. The region had a smaller percentage of foreign-born residents who entered 2010 or later or between 1990-2009 than the state. Compared to the total population, the foreign-born population has both a larger share of its population between the ages of 25 and 54 (47.3% to 33.8%). While a higher percentage of foreign-born residents had an advanced degree than native born, immigrants were also more likely to have less than a high school diploma.

Figure 2. Northeast Minnesota Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2023

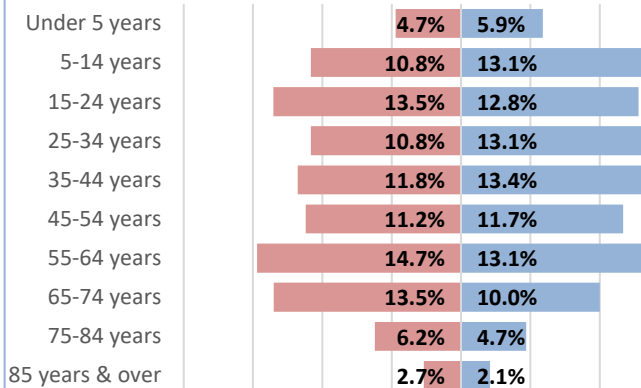


POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

Northeast Minnesota has a much older population than the rest of the state, with 21.9% of residents aged 65 years and over, compared to 16.5% 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 1,716 people in 23 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 35,000 individuals (Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2. Percentage of Population by Age

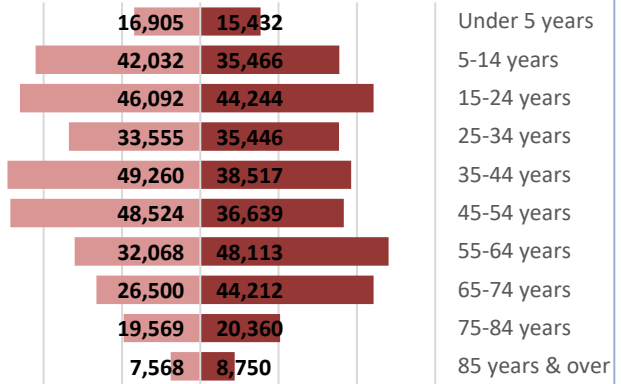
Group, 2024 ■ Northeast Minnesota ■ Minnesota



Source: 2019-2023 ACS, 2024 Population Estimates

Figure 3. Population Pyramid, 2000-2024

■ 2000 Population ■ 2024 Estimate



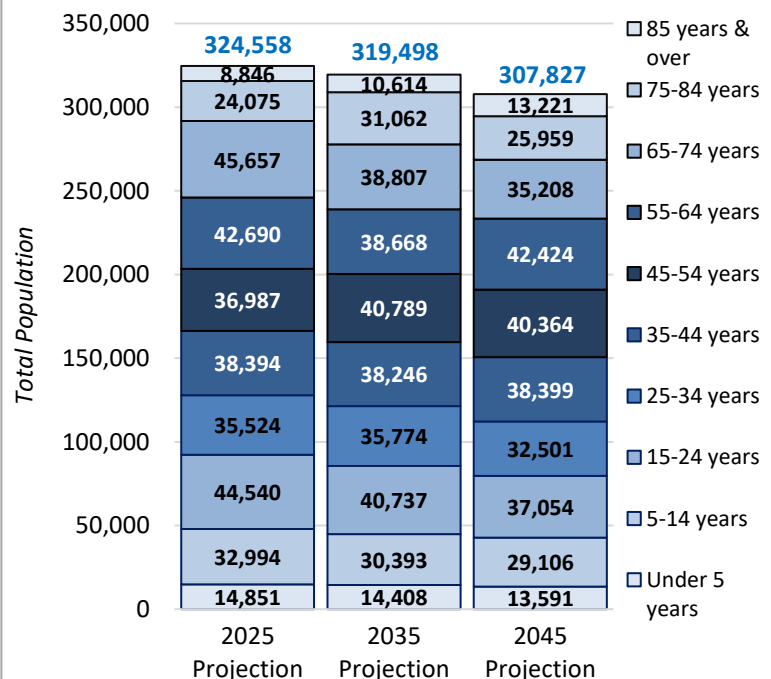
Source: 2000 Census, 2024 Population Estimates

POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP

Population projections indicate an accelerating decline in the region over the next two decades. According to population projections from the [State Demographic Center](#), Northeast Minnesota is expected to lose more than 16,700 residents from 2025 to 2045, a 5.2% decline (Figure 4). In comparison, the state of Minnesota is projected to grow 5.5% from 2025 to 2045, closing in on 6.2 million residents.

However, the Arrowhead is expected to add nearly 6,300 people aged 75 years and over, a 19% jump. The region is also projected to see a smaller gain in 45-to-54-year-olds (+9.1%). 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 nearly 11,000 people.

Figure 4. Northeast Minnesota Population Projections by Age Group, 2025-2045



Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

POPULATION BY RACE

Northeast Minnesota's population is less diverse than the state's but is becoming more diverse over time. In 2023, about 90.3% of the region's residents reported White alone as their race, compared to 78.4% of residents statewide. The region had much smaller percentages of Black or African American residents, Asian or Other Pacific Islanders, and people of Hispanic or Latino origin. However, at 2.0%, Northeast Minnesota had a higher share of people reporting as American Indian or Alaska Native than the state. Two or More Races was the fastest growing group in the region (Table 3).

Table 3. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2023	Northeast Minnesota			Minnesota	
	Number	Percent	Change from 2013-2023	Percent	Change from 2013-2023
Total	326,078	100.0%	-0.1%	100.0%	+6.8%
White	294,416	90.3%	-2.8%	78.4%	-2.2%
Black or African American	4,516	1.4%	+16.4%	6.8%	+38.9%
American Indian & Alaska Native	6,630	2.0%	-25.9%	0.9%	-11.6%
Asian & Other Pac. Islander	2,669	0.8%	+5.2%	5.1%	+29.6%
Some Other Race	2,057	0.6%	+83.0%	2.7%	+96.1%
Two or More Races	15,790	4.8%	+127.4%	6.2%	+168.3%
Hispanic or Latino origin	5,817	1.8%	+45.7%	6.2%	+37.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Cook County had the most diverse populace in the region, with 14.9% of residents reporting as people of color, primarily because 6.3% of Cook County residents identified as American Indian or Alaska Native. In contrast, Aitkin and Lake Counties had 6.5% and 4.5% of their respective populations reporting as people of color.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

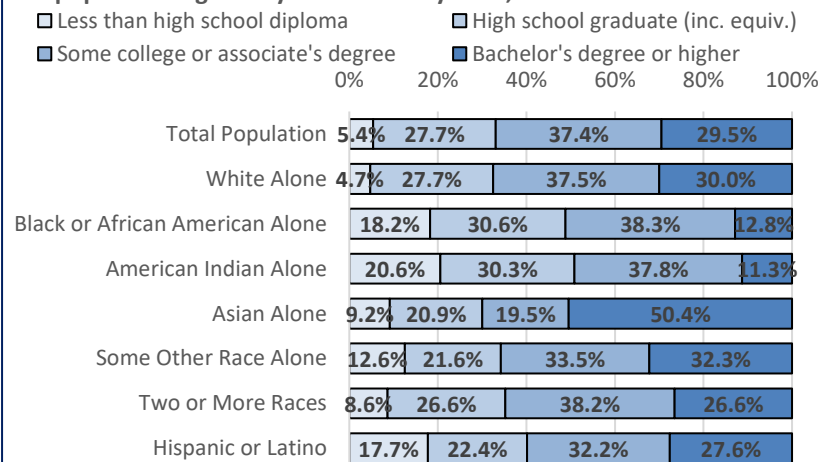
With 40.3% of adults aged 18 years and over holding a college degree, Northeast Minnesota had lower educational attainment than the state in 2023, where 47.3% of adults have an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree. In contrast, the region had a higher share of people with some college but no degree, an associate degree, or a high school diploma. The region's older population and industry mix led to a different educational attainment profile (Table 4).

Table 4. Educational Attainment for the Adult Population, 2023	Northeast MN		Minnesota
	Number	Percent	Percent
Total, 18 years & over	263,772	100.0%	100.0%
Less than high school	15,361	5.8%	6.8%
High school grad. (incl. equiv.)	74,525	28.3%	24.4%
Some college, no degree	67,649	25.6%	21.4%
Associate degree	34,609	13.1%	11.2%
Bachelor's degree	47,279	17.9%	24.0%
Advanced degree	24,349	9.2%	12.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Educational attainment varied significantly by race and ethnicity in Northeast. More than 17% of American Indian, Hispanic or Latino, and Black or African American adults had less than a high school diploma, compared to just 4.7% of White residents. The shares of Blacks, American Indians, and those identifying as Two or More Races with some college or associate degrees were similar to White residents. Half of Asian and one third of residents of some other race had a bachelor's degree or higher. Both shares were greater than the White population's (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Northeast Minnesota Educational Attainment for the population aged 25 years & over by Race, 2023



Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey

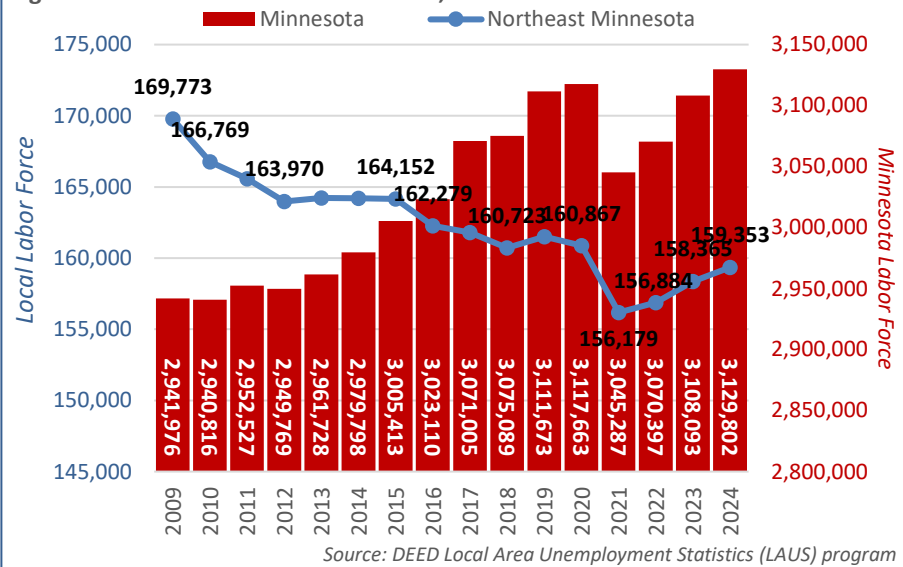
LABOR FORCE

LABOR FORCE CHANGE

According to data from DEED's [Local Area Unemployment Statistics](#) program, Northeast Minnesota had an average of 159,353 workers in 2024. In the depths of the Great Recession in 2009, the region's labor force reached its peak with nearly 170,000 workers as workers filtered in to make additional income, but then declined as the economy recovered. Even though the region's population declined only slightly over the past decade, the labor force lost 4,344 workers from 2009-2019 due to an aging population, a trend that accelerated from 2020 into 2021 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. From 2019 through 2021, 8,621 workers left the labor force, a decline of 5.2%. Northeast is one of two regions to see its labor force shrink since 2009, with a loss (-6.1%) that was greater than that of Southwest (-4.0%). By contrast, the statewide labor force added 187,826 workers since 2009, despite the loss of more than 72,375 workers during the pandemic (Figure 6).

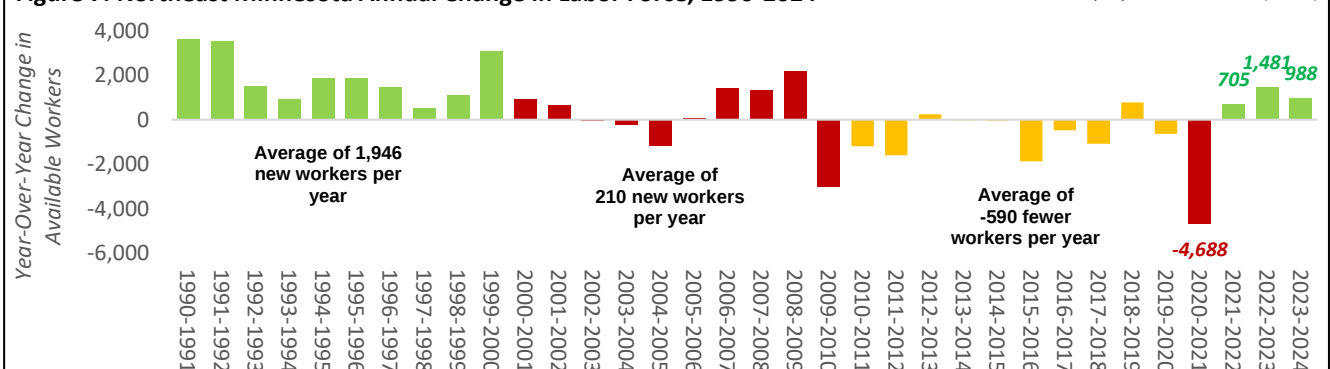
After averaging a net gain of about 1,950 additional labor force participants per year between 1990 and 2000, Northeast Minnesota employers were able to tap into a large and growing pool of talented workers. However, from 2001 to 2019, Northeast Minnesota's labor force ceased expanding (see Figure 7). This decrease was then overshadowed by the sizable losses of 2020. The region dropped to 156,179 workers in 2021, the lowest number since 1995, before climbing back to 159,353 workers through 2024.

Figure 6. Annual Labor Force Estimates, 2009-2024



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 increasingly evident 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. Northeast Minnesota Annual Change in Labor Force, 1990-2024 Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



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 further 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 1.4% 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 modest gains in the number of 25-to-54-year-olds (Table 5).

Table 5. Northeast Minnesota Labor Force Projections

	2025 Labor Force Projection	2035 Labor Force Projection	2025-2035 Change	
			Numeric	Percent
16 to 19 years	8,178	7,214	-964	-11.8%
20 to 24 years	19,647	18,503	-1,144	-5.8%
25 to 44 years	63,143	63,230	+87	+0.1%
45 to 54 years	31,227	34,437	+3,210	+10.3%
55 to 64 years	26,509	24,011	-2,497	-9.4%
65 to 74 years	9,065	7,705	-1,360	-15.0%
75 years & over	1,703	2,156	+453	+26.6%
Total Labor Force	159,472	157,256	-2,216	-1.4%

Source: calculated from Minnesota State Demographic Center population projections and 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

With just 59.4% of the population over 16 years of age in the labor force, Northeast has much lower labor force participation than the state. Each Northeast age group had lower participation rates than those statewide, especially in the oldest age groups (Table 6).

The region also had lower labor force participation rates than the state for every racial or ethnic group; and 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 6,200 veterans and 11,300 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 the most-educated workers. Unemployment rates were highest for youth, people of color, workers with disabilities, and those with the lowest education levels. Regional unemployment rates were higher across the board.

Table 6. Northeast Minnesota Employment Characteristics, 2023

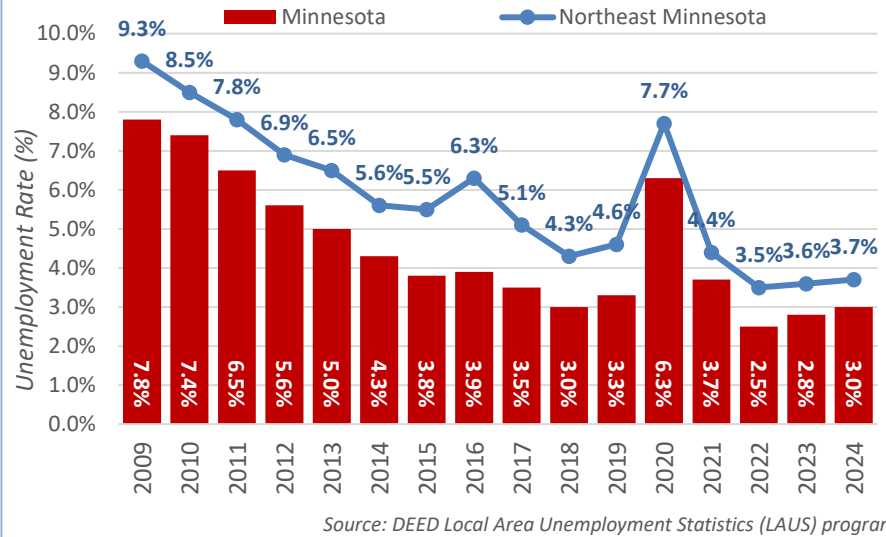
Age Group	Northeast Minnesota			Minnesota	
	Labor Force	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Partic. Rate	Unemp. Rate
Total Labor Force	161,307	59.4%	4.5%	68.5%	3.9%
16 to 19 years	8,716	50.4%	8.4%	52.7%	9.9%
20 to 24 years	18,789	80.9%	6.6%	83.4%	6.5%
25 to 44 years	62,969	85.4%	4.7%	88.7%	3.5%
45 to 54 years	30,830	84.4%	3.2%	87.8%	2.9%
55 to 64 years	29,776	62.1%	3.4%	72.8%	3.0%
65 to 74 years	8,749	19.9%	3.5%	27.8%	3.4%
75 years & over	1,501	5.2%	5.3%	6.6%	3.1%
Employment Characteristics by Gender					
Male	84,422	61.4%	5.1%	72.0%	4.3%
Female	76,884	57.2%	3.9%	64.9%	3.6%
Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin					
White alone	147,763	59.4%	4.2%	67.5%	3.4%
Black or African American	1,569	44.8%	20.9%	71.0%	8.4%
American Indian & Alaska Native	2,692	51.1%	12.3%	57.7%	11.4%
Asian or Other Pacific Islanders	1,626	71.9%	4.9%	74.6%	3.5%
Some Other Race	1,134	68.8%	2.5%	75.9%	5.6%
Two or More Races	6,538	63.9%	5.8%	74.2%	6.1%
Hispanic or Latino	2,704	68.6%	6.3%	77.1%	5.9%
Employment Characteristics by Veteran Status, 18 to 64 years					
Military Veteran	6,198	74.4%	3.4%	81.2%	4.1%
Employment Characteristics by Disability, 20 to 64 years					
With Any Disability	11,273	47.2%	8.8%	55.3%	9.5%
Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment					
Population 25 to 64 years	123,530	78.1%	4.0%	84.4%	3.3%
Less than H.S. Diploma	4,436	56.2%	5.7%	67.1%	4.7%
H.S. Diploma or Equivalent	26,088	66.9%	3.1%	76.5%	2.6%
Some College or Assoc. Degree	49,926	80.0%	3.9%	85.0%	3.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	123,530	78.1%	4.0%	84.4%	3.3%

Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Northeast has consistently reported higher unemployment rates than Minnesota, typically around 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 4.3% and landed at 4.6% in 2019. Since then, a steep climb early in the pandemic was erased as rates consistently fell to a record low 3.5% in 2022, before ticking up slightly in 2024 (see Figure 8).

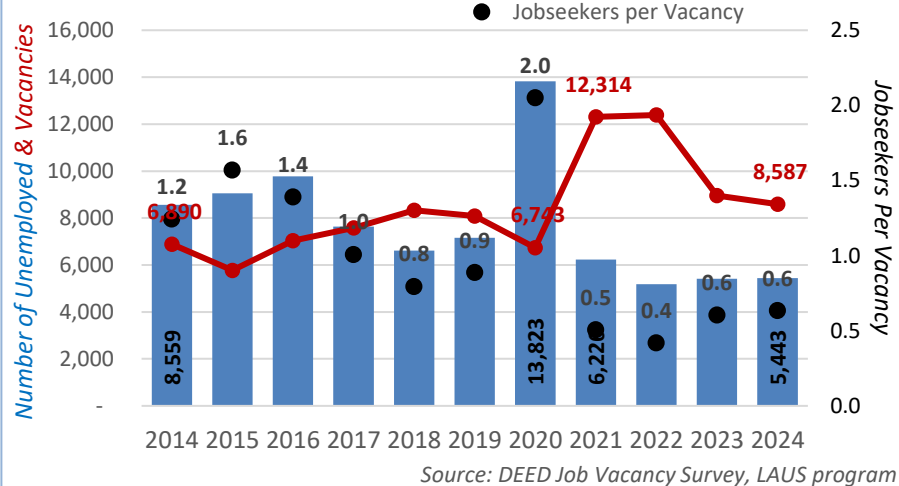
Figure 8. Unemployment Rates, 2009-2024



JOBSEEKERS PER VACANCY

Prior to the pandemic crisis, the labor market had already been tightening. One clear example of this is the ratio of unemployed jobseekers per vacancy, which in 2019 stood at 0.9-to-1 in Northeast Minnesota; meaning there were slightly fewer people looking for work than there were open jobs. After briefly rising to 2.0 in 2020, the ratio declined to an all-time low of 0.4 jobseekers per vacancy in 2022 before ticking up slightly in 2023 and 2024. According to the most recent job vacancy survey results,

Figure 9. Jobseekers Per Vacancy, 2014-2024



there were 8,587 openings reported by employers compared to 5,443 unemployed jobseekers in the region (see Figure 9). By comparison, the ratio climbed as high as 11.0 during the recession in 2009.

COMMUTE SHED AND LABOR SHED

According to commuting data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the majority – just under 79% – of workers who live in the region also work within the region. However, Northeast is a net importer of labor, having slightly more jobs than available workers. About 110,600 workers both lived and worked in the 7-county region, while another 31,900 workers commuted into the region for work, compared to 30,620 who live in the region but commuted to other counties for work (Table 7 and Figure 10).

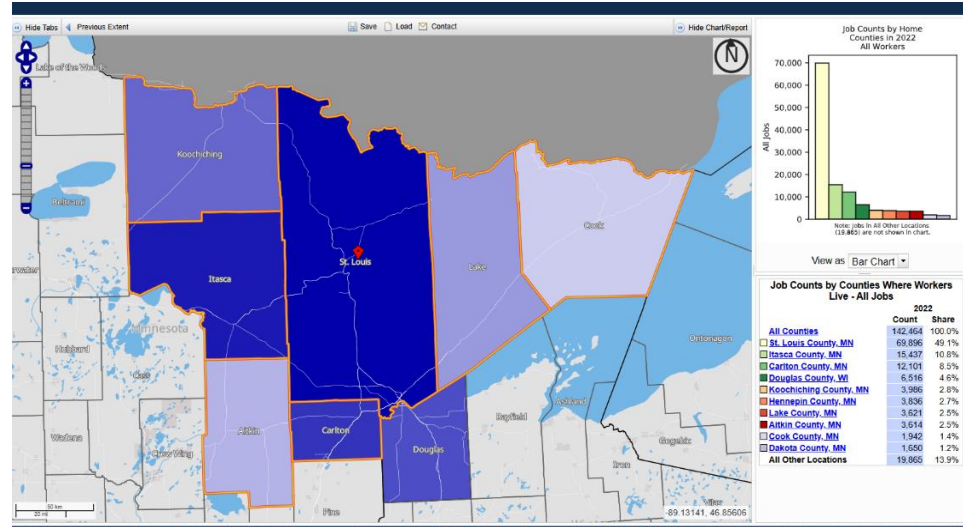
Since 2010, the share of people employed in the region but living elsewhere grew the fastest, expanding 17%.

Table 7. Northeast Minnesota Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (Primary Jobs), 2022	2022	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	142,464	100.0%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	31,867	22.4%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	110,597	77.6%
Living in the Selection Area	141,217	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	30,620	21.7%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	110,597	78.3%

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap](#)

St. Louis County is the largest employment center in the region and the biggest draw for workers living in the region (49.1% of jobs), followed by Itasca (10.8%), and Carlton (8.5%) (Figure 10). Employers in the region draw workers from outside the region including Douglas County, WI (6,516), as well as Hennepin (3,836) and Dakota (1,650) counties. The average commute time for workers the region was 21.5 minutes, compared to 23.1 minutes for workers statewide. About 58% of workers commuted less than 20 minutes each way, compared to 48% statewide. As of 2023, 9.8% of workers worked at home, an increase from 5.4% before the pandemic. About 3.3% were able to walk to work.

Figure 10. Northeast Minnesota Labor & Commute Shed, 2022



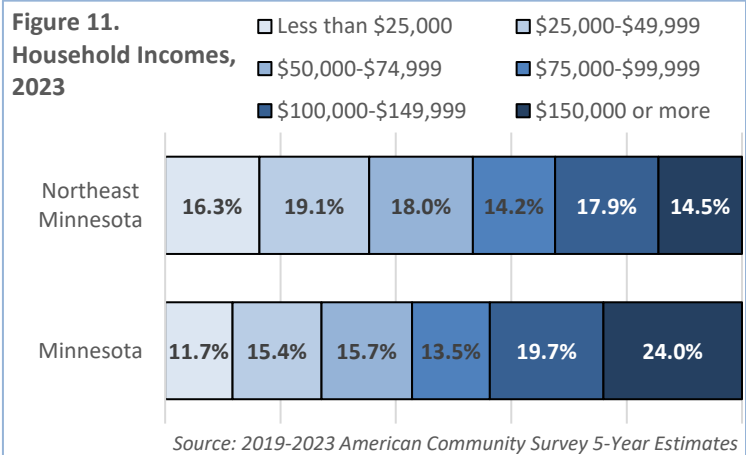
INCOMES, WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

Household incomes were significantly lower in Northeast Minnesota than the rest of the state. The median household income in the Arrowhead was \$69,864 in 2023, compared to \$87,556 in Minnesota, ranking last of the six planning regions. More than one out of every three households (35.4%) in the region had incomes below \$50,000 in 2023, compared to 27.1% of households statewide. Just 14.5% of households had incomes greater than \$150,000 in the region (Figure 11). On a positive note, median household incomes in the region grew over the past decade. Median incomes were highest in Carlton (\$80,042) and Lake (\$75,621), and lowest in Aitkin (\$59,498).

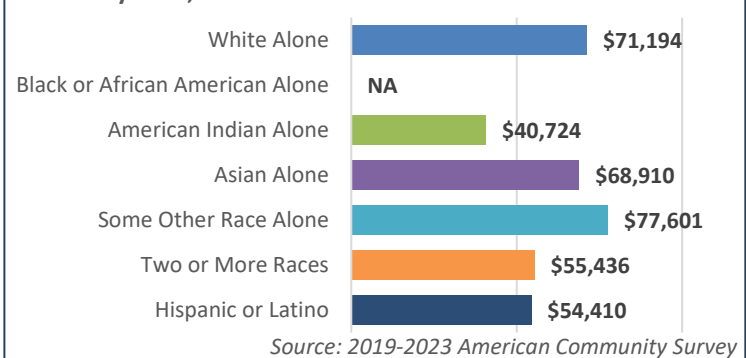
Figure 11.

Household Incomes, 2023



Median household incomes varied by race or origin in the region. American Indian and Black or African American households reported the lowest incomes in several of the counties in Northeast Minnesota, with median incomes about 60% those of White and Asian households. Households of some other race had the highest median incomes at over \$77,600 a year (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Northeast Minnesota Median Household Income by Race, 2023



COST OF LIVING

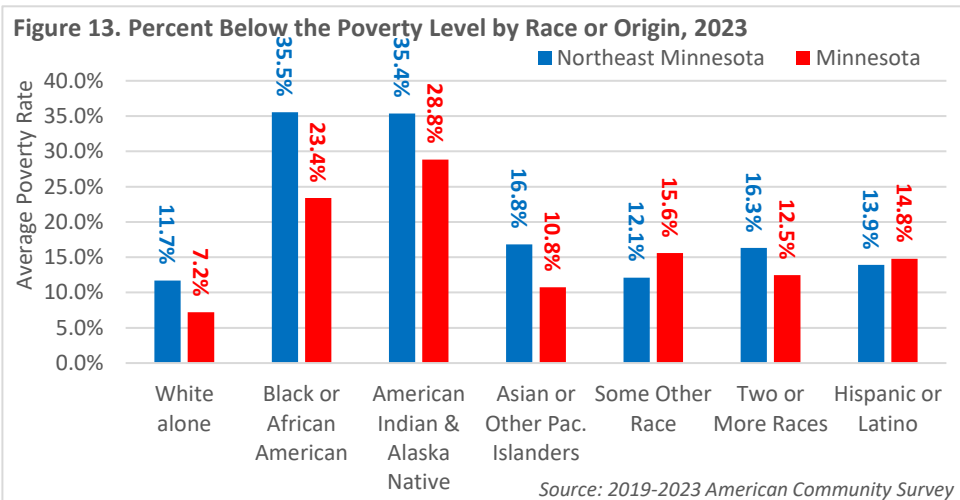
According to DEED's [Cost of Living tool](#), the basic needs budget for an average Minnesota family (which consists of 2 adults and 1 child, with 1 full-time and 1 part-time worker) was \$70,308 in 2024. The cost of living for a similar family in Northeast Minnesota was \$60,840 – which was the third lowest of the 6 planning regions in the state. The highest monthly costs were for housing, transportation, and food; though all but the region's health care costs 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 \$19.50 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 \$31,188 which would require an hourly wage of \$14.99 to meet the basic needs standard of living (Table 8).

Table 8. Family Yearly Cost, Worker Hourly Wage, and Family Monthly Costs, 2024										
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	\$31,188	\$14.99	\$0	\$413	\$150	\$857	\$573	\$294	\$312
Single, 1 child	1 FT	\$51,120	\$24.58	\$786	\$602	\$415	\$1,073	\$569	\$401	\$414
2 parents, 1 child	1 FT, 1 PT	\$60,840	\$19.50	\$396	\$940	\$530	\$1,116	\$1,030	\$476	\$582
2 parents, 2 children	2 FT	\$83,436	\$20.06	\$1,187	\$1,222	\$541	\$1,469	\$1,072	\$622	\$840
State of Minnesota										
Single, 0 children	1 FT	\$36,768	\$17.68	\$0	\$424	\$156	\$1,154	\$573	\$365	\$392
2 parents, 1 child	1 FT, 1 PT	\$70,308	\$22.53	\$545	\$964	\$556	\$1,446	\$1,028	\$557	\$763
Source: <i>DEED Cost of Living tool</i>										

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

In 2023, the Northeast Minnesota poverty rate was 12.7%, which was well above the statewide rate of 9.2%. In sum, nearly 40,000 people in the region had income below the poverty line. Like incomes, poverty levels varied widely by race and origin. It was estimated that more than 35% of the region's Black or African American and American Indian populations were



below the poverty level in 2023, compared to 11.7% of the White population. Likewise, rates were higher for Asians, those of Two or More Races, and Hispanic or Latino origin. The region's poverty rate was higher than the state's poverty rate for most racial or ethnic groups, excepting Some Other Race and Hispanic or Latinos (see Figure 13).

WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

According to DEED's [Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics \(OEWS\)](#) program, the median hourly wage for all occupations in Northeast Minnesota was \$23.47 as of the first quarter of 2025, which was the fourth highest wage level of the six planning regions in the state. Northeast's median wage was \$2.75 below the state's median hourly wage, equaling 89.5% of the statewide wage rate, and \$5.01 below the median hourly wage in the Twin Cities metro area, which would amount to a difference of nearly \$10,400 per year for a full-time worker (Table 9).

Table 9. Occupational Employment Statistics by Region, 1 st Qtr. 2025	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment
Central Minnesota	\$23.85	280,040
Northeast Minnesota	\$23.47	139,940
Northwest Minnesota	\$22.98	223,320
Southeast Minnesota	\$24.82	244,290
Southwest Minnesota	\$23.24	169,900
Twin Cities Metro Area	\$28.48	1,762,280
State of Minnesota	\$26.22	2,920,470

Source: [DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics](#)

Based on location quotient, Northeast Minnesota stands out for having higher concentrations of Community & Social Service; Farming, Fishing, & Forestry; Construction & Extraction, Protective Service, Healthcare Practitioners & Technical, and Installation, Maintenance & Repair workers than the state. The largest occupations in the region include Office & Administrative Support, Food Preparation & Serving Related, Sales & Related, Healthcare Practitioners, and Healthcare Support positions. Those occupational groups combined to account for over 45.8% 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 \$5.00 below the median for all occupations and tend to have lower educational and training requirements (Table 10).

Table 10. Northeast Minnesota Occupational Employment Statistics, 2025

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	\$23.47	139,940	100.0%	1.0	\$26.22	2,920,470	100.0%
Management	\$46.38	7,780	5.6%	0.8	\$59.38	200,060	6.9%
Business & Financial Operations	\$36.09	6,060	4.3%	0.6	\$39.95	208,210	7.1%
Computer & Mathematical	\$38.42	2,100	1.5%	0.4	\$50.02	97,460	3.3%
Architecture & Engineering	\$40.58	2,240	1.6%	0.8	\$45.03	57,950	2.0%
Life, Physical & Social Science	\$36.86	1,730	1.2%	1.1	\$38.33	32,150	1.1%
Community & Social Service	\$27.67	4,330	3.1%	1.5	\$29.82	59,290	2.0%
Legal	\$40.98	530	0.4%	0.5	\$49.52	20,750	0.7%
Education, Training & Library	\$25.07	8,410	6.0%	1.0	\$27.84	170,270	5.8%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	\$23.54	1,280	0.9%	0.7	\$28.84	36,030	1.2%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$40.04	11,570	8.3%	1.3	\$46.51	187,480	6.4%
Healthcare Support	\$18.28	10,020	7.2%	1.2	\$18.67	176,750	6.1%
Protective Service	\$27.12	3,020	2.2%	1.3	\$29.37	46,960	1.6%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$14.56	14,420	10.3%	1.2	\$16.05	240,830	8.2%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	\$17.77	4,660	3.3%	1.2	\$19.16	81,700	2.8%
Personal Care & Service	\$17.15	3,520	2.5%	1.2	\$17.54	63,300	2.2%
Sales & Related	\$16.71	11,750	8.4%	1.0	\$18.66	244,780	8.4%
Office & Administrative Support	\$22.70	16,400	11.7%	1.0	\$24.07	340,040	11.6%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	\$24.08	230	0.2%	1.5	\$23.48	3,300	0.1%
Construction & Extraction	\$34.23	7,820	5.6%	1.4	\$34.20	114,050	3.9%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	\$30.21	6,770	4.8%	1.3	\$30.40	105,650	3.6%
Production	\$25.14	6,360	4.5%	0.6	\$23.56	205,220	7.0%
Transportation & Material Moving	\$21.57	8,930	6.4%	0.8	\$22.85	228,260	7.8%

Source: [DEED Occupational Employment Statistics, Qtr. 1 2025](#)

The highest paying jobs in Northeast Minnesota are found in Management, Computer & Mathematical, Legal, Architecture & Engineering, and Healthcare Practitioners & Technical occupations, which all have wages \$15 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 compared to the Twin Cities metro area are near and exceed \$20 more per hour. The four highest-paying occupational groups are also less concentrated in the region.

JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Employers in Northeast Minnesota reported 8,587 job vacancies in 2024, down slightly from the year before, but still near historically high levels. The sectors with the largest number of openings were Healthcare & Social Assistance (2,668 vacancies), Accommodation & Food Services (1,311), Retail Trade (1,430), Other Services (507), and Public Administration (581). More than 75% of regional vacancies were in these industries.

The rising demand of the past several years has translated to rising wage offers, with the 2024 median hourly wage offer jumping to \$18.66 per hour, which was the highest offer on record, and the fourth-highest among the six planning regions. Wage offers ranged from under \$16/hr for Food Prep & Serving and Sales & Related to over \$39/hr for Management and Healthcare Practitioner positions.

The largest number of vacancies by occupation were in Food Preparation & Serving Related, Sales & Related, Healthcare Practitioners & Technical and Healthcare Support occupations. More than 55% of regional vacancies were in these four occupational groups. Job vacancy rates, a measure of turnover and demand, were the highest for Architecture & Engineering, Personal Care & Service, Sales & Related, Healthcare Practitioners & Technical, and Healthcare Support. Overall, 30% of the openings were part-time, 33% required post-secondary education, and 37% required 1 or more years of experience (Table 11).

Table 11. Northeast Minnesota Job Vacancy Survey Results, 2024

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	8,587	\$18.66	30%	10%	33%	37%	51%	6.2%
Management	185	\$50.94	3%	0%	90%	99%	89%	2.4%
Business & Financial Operations	276	\$26.51	4%	1%	63%	93%	52%	4.5%
Computer & Mathematical	30	\$29.91	13%	0%	72%	93%	28%	1.4%
Architecture & Engineering	305	\$31.47	1%	0%	70%	66%	65%	13.6%
Life, Physical & Social Sciences	77	\$28.87	13%	10%	95%	94%	88%	4.4%
Community & Social Service	229	\$20.86	24%	0%	33%	81%	57%	5.3%
Legal	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Education, Training & Library	302	\$21.23	27%	32%	58%	33%	89%	3.6%
Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media	68	\$18.87	74%	49%	65%	65%	63%	5.3%
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1,091	\$39.45	27%	1%	95%	54%	99%	9.4%
Healthcare Support	976	\$17.84	34%	1%	33%	18%	86%	9.7%
Protective Service	79	\$20.78	48%	12%	23%	53%	73%	2.6%
Food Preparation & Serving Related	1,381	\$14.85	50%	9%	0%	12%	3%	9.6%
Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.	290	\$15.85	34%	27%	1%	6%	9%	6.2%
Personal Care & Service	453	\$16.99	24%	10%	54%	15%	66%	12.9%
Sales & Related	1,347	\$15.90	41%	9%	1%	23%	3%	11.5%
Office & Administrative Support	303	\$17.38	36%	4%	4%	46%	11%	1.8%
Construction & Extraction	61	\$24.60	0%	4%	5%	71%	79%	0.8%
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	331	\$22.85	4%	2%	44%	76%	86%	4.9%
Production	83	\$20.38	7%	0%	5%	31%	35%	1.3%

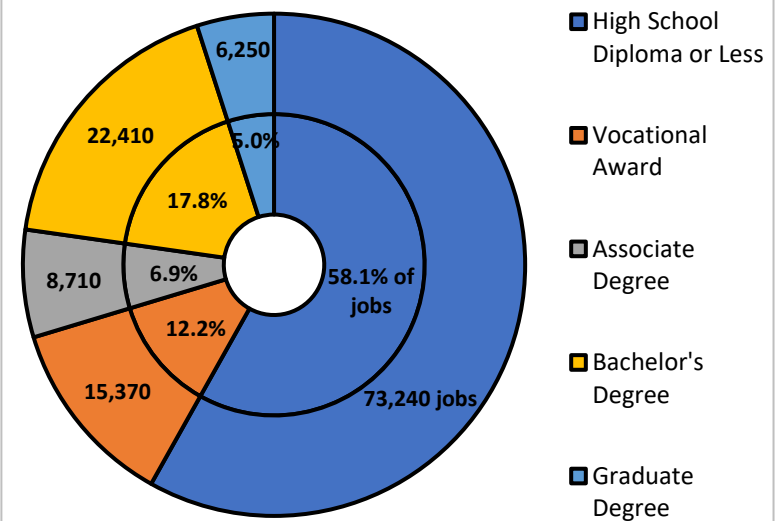
Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 2024

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Reflecting the recent job vacancy data, DEED's Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics program shows that about 42% of current jobs held in the region typically require post-secondary education to enter. The other 58% 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 Minnesota¹. 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, 2024

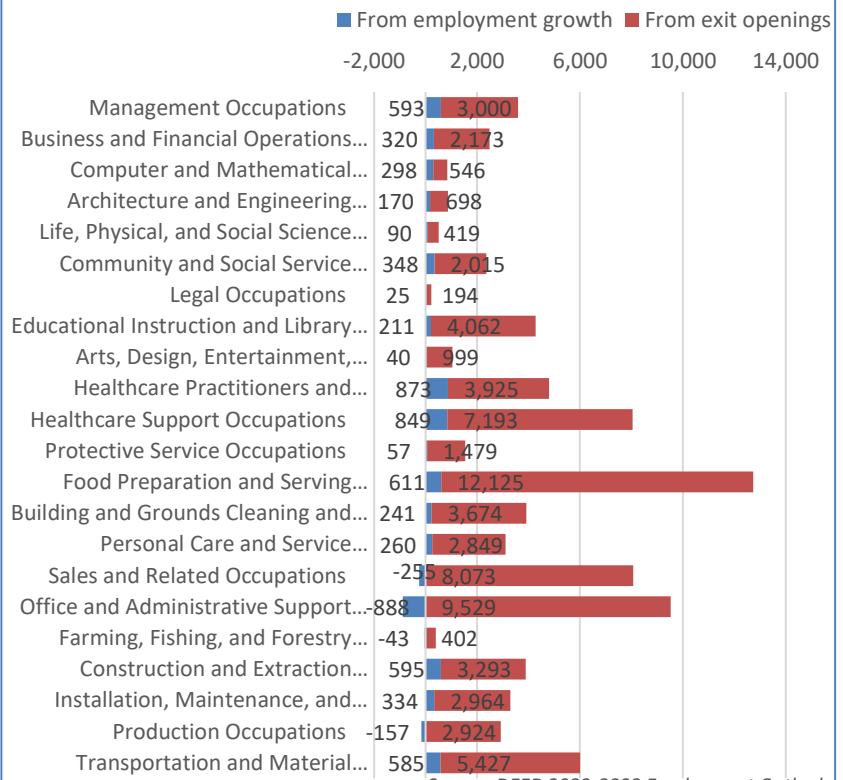


Source: [DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics](#)

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Overall, the Northeast planning area is projected to grow 3.3% from 2022 to 2032, a gain of 5,157 new jobs. In addition, the region is also expected to need 178,526 replacement openings to fill jobs left vacant by retirements and career changers. Employment growth is expected to slow from the initial pandemic recovery, more in line with pre-2020 employment growth. Accordingly, Food Preparation & Serving is the occupational group expected to add the most jobs, followed by Office & Admin. Support, and Sales & Related occupations (Figure 15). The largest percent growth is expected for Computer & Mathematical (+12.6%), Healthcare Support (+8.9%), Architecture & Engineering (+7.5%), and Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (+7.3%).

Figure 15. Regional Employment Projections, 2022-2032



Source: DEED 2022-2032 Employment Outlook

¹ <https://www.collegetuitioncompare.com/compare/tables/?state=MN>

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

According to DEED's [Occupations in Demand](#) tool, there are over 445 occupations in demand (OID) in Northeast Minnesota, and 267 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 just under 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, Education, Retail, 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 & Personal Care Aides \$36,611/yr	Nursing Assistants \$43,783/yr	Registered Nurses \$84,451/yr	General & Operations Managers \$77,788/yr
Retail Salespersons \$33,817/yr	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers \$62,124/yr	Radiologic Technologists & Technicians \$76,419/yr	Accountants & Auditors \$74,639/yr
Food Preparation Workers \$33,094/yr	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, & Cosmetologists \$39,033/yr	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers \$79,035/yr	Pharmacists \$143,951/yr
Fast Food & Counter Workers \$30,019/yr	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses \$57,976/yr	Veterinary Technologists & Technicians \$47,241/yr	Project Management Specialists \$94,155/yr
Janitors & Cleaners, exc. Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners \$37,249/yr	Medical Assistants \$47,235/yr	Dental Hygienists \$91,369/yr	Financial Managers \$128,471/yr
Waiters & Waitresses \$22,952/yr	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics \$53,239/yr	Surgical Technologists \$66,757/yr	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education \$61,345/yr
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation & Serving Workers \$43,418/yr	Substance abuse, beh. disorder, & mental health counselors \$51,475/yr	Respiratory Therapists \$81,337/yr	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term \$41,454/yr
Cashiers \$29,732/yr	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks \$48,935/yr	Physical Therapist Assistants \$64,843/yr	Medical & Health Services Managers \$103,535/yr
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary \$38,028/yr	Electricians \$85,688/yr	Civil Engineering Technologists & Technicians \$79,462/yr	Human Resources Specialists \$67,642/yr
Cooks, Restaurant \$36,715/yr	Pharmacy Technicians \$47,252/yr	Cardiovascular Technologists & Technicians \$86,132/yr	Industrial Engineers \$95,993/yr

Source: DEED Occupations in Demand

ECONOMY

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

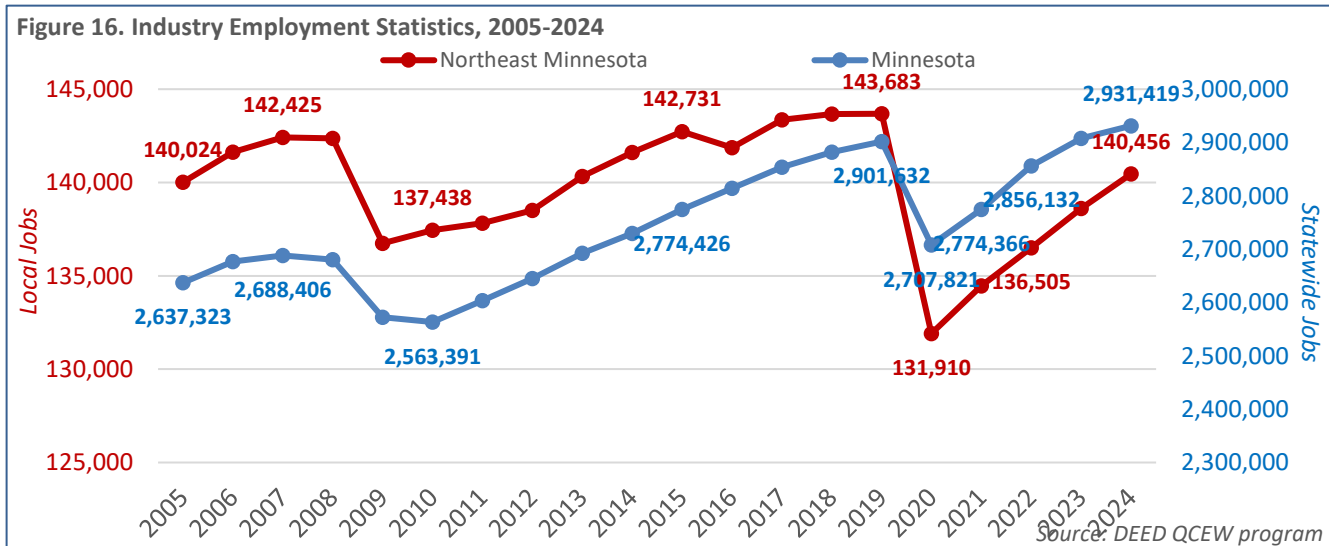
According to DEED's [Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages \(QCEW\) program](#), Northeast Minnesota was home to 9,421 business establishments providing 140,456 covered jobs through 2024, with a total payroll of just over \$8.2 billion (Table 13). That was 4.8% of total employment in the state of Minnesota, and the smallest share of the six planning regions. Average annual wages were \$58,522 in the region, which was about \$15,700 lower than the average annual wage statewide. Average wages were up 4.3% from 2023 to 2024, after growing 2.7%, 4.6%, and 5.7% over the past five years.

St. Louis County is the largest employment center in the region with 95,489 jobs at 5,643 firms; followed by Itasca County and Carlton County with 16,606 and 13,265 jobs, respectively. All seven counties in the region added jobs between 2020 and 2024, and five of the seven counties added jobs in the past year, from 2023 to 2024. Itasca County saw the fastest increase since COVID, slightly outpacing the statewide growth rate from 2020 to 2024. Despite small declines in Cook and Koochiching county, the region grew faster than the state overall in the past year, adding jobs at a 1.3% growth rate compared to 0.8% statewide (Table 13).

Geography	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Total Payroll	Average Annual Wage	2023-2024		2020-2024	
					Change in Jobs	Percent Change	Change in Jobs	Percent Change
Northeast Minnesota	9,421	140,456	\$8,219,783,386	\$58,522	+1,844	+1.3%	+8,546	+6.5%
Aitkin Co.	475	4,324	\$206,364,084	\$47,725	+39	+0.9%	+311	+7.7%
Carlton Co.	816	13,265	\$770,544,773	\$58,089	+318	+2.5%	+935	+7.6%
Cook Co.	333	2,627	\$118,904,773	\$45,263	-28	-1.1%	+164	+6.7%
Itasca Co.	1,350	16,606	\$897,923,385	\$54,072	+723	+4.6%	+1,292	+8.4%
Koochiching Co.	426	4,242	\$241,212,193	\$56,863	-118	-2.7%	+80	+1.9%
Lake Co.	378	3,902	\$212,538,577	\$54,469	+91	+2.4%	+236	+6.4%
St. Louis Co.	5,643	95,489	\$5,772,295,601	\$60,450	+820	+0.9%	+5,529	+6.1%
State of Minnesota	212,756	2,931,419	\$217,596,492,078	\$74,229	+23,696	+0.8%	+223,598	+8.3%

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

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, before finally 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 11,800 fewer jobs. Early pandemic losses in the region (-8.2%) exceeded the statewide losses, which amounted to a decline of -6.7% (Figure 16). By 2024, employment still remained below pre-pandemic levels, at 97.8% of 2019 levels, despite a recovery of 8,550 jobs and 6.5% growth over three years.



With 33,910 jobs at 1,108 firms, Health Care & Social Assistance is the largest employing sector in the Northeast region, accounting for 24.1% of total jobs in the region. That is 6.5 percentage points higher than the state's concentration of employment in the sector. Massive growth in 2024 led this industry past pre-pandemic levels, when jobs were cut in reaction to changing economic conditions. Health Care & Social Assistance was one eleven sectors that saw employment growth over the year in 2024, adding over 1,200 net new jobs. At \$65,131 in 2024, average annual wages were about \$6,500 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 22.3% of all the jobs in the region. While Retail Trade saw a slight decline in 2024, employment in both sectors were up considerably compared to the lows suffered in 2020 during the pandemic. With Accommodation & Food Service averaging \$23,309 a year and Retail Trade paying an average of \$34,532 per year, both sectors are among the lowest paying. Combined, the two sectors regained nearly 3,300 jobs from 2020 to 2024, a steady recovery.

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 2020, Public Administration added 450 jobs, mostly in the last year. Educational Services lost jobs in 2024, but was still up slightly compared to 2020 employment levels. Manufacturing was the 6th largest industry in 2024 – accounting for 6.6% of employment – and expanded 10.5% from 2020-2024. Perhaps the most well-known industry in the region is Mining, which offered 4,227 jobs (3% of total) at 35 firms. At nearly \$115,000, the Mining sector paid the second highest average wage in the region, behind Utilities, which was just over \$115,000. Fifteen of the 20 main industries added jobs from 2020 to 2024, including six that expanded more than 10%. Though the job losses aren't huge, the largest percent declines since 2020 occurred in Information (-8.9%), Finance & Insurance (-8.8%), Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting (-7.9%), and Management of Companies (-7.3%) (see Table 14).

Table 14. Northeast Minnesota Industry Employment Statistics, 2024

NAICS Industry Title	2024 Annual Data				2023-2024		2020-2024	
	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	9,421	140,456	\$8,219,783	\$58,522	+1,844	+1.3%	+8,546	+6.5%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	132	514	\$24,673	\$48,002	-19	-3.6%	-44	-7.9%
Mining	35	4,227	\$485,596	\$114,880	+130	+3.2%	+337	+8.7%
Construction	1,086	7,446	\$603,994	\$81,117	+75	+1.0%	+1,015	+15.8%
Manufacturing	335	9,227	\$688,403	\$74,607	+129	+1.4%	+878	+10.5%
Utilities	50	1,537	\$177,289	\$115,347	+47	+3.2%	+106	+7.4%
Wholesale Trade	261	2,831	\$217,993	\$77,002	-15	-0.5%	+26	+0.9%
Retail Trade	1,277	16,969	\$585,972	\$34,532	-82	-0.5%	+759	+4.7%
Transportation & Warehousing	343	3,864	\$247,225	\$63,982	-25	-0.6%	-9	-0.2%
Information	140	1,032	\$56,364	\$54,616	-52	-4.8%	-101	-8.9%
Finance & Insurance	440	3,684	\$287,926	\$78,156	-178	-4.6%	-355	-8.8%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	292	1,291	\$54,759	\$42,416	+10	+0.8%	+142	+12.4%
Professional & Technical Services	605	4,669	\$398,798	\$85,414	+72	+1.6%	+323	+7.4%
Management of Companies	51	676	\$64,560	\$95,502	-25	-3.6%	-53	-7.3%
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Svcs.	364	3,127	\$120,430	\$38,513	-108	-3.3%	+156	+5.3%
Educational Services	274	11,363	\$632,635	\$55,675	-129	-1.1%	+133	+1.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,108	33,910	\$2,208,588	\$65,131	+1,219	+3.7%	+816	+2.5%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	274	3,622	\$110,963	\$30,636	+286	+8.6%	+817	+29.1%
Accommodation & Food Services	981	14,354	\$334,584	\$23,309	+102	+0.7%	+2,540	+21.5%
Other Services	998	4,760	\$162,344	\$34,106	+13	+0.3%	+606	+14.6%
Public Administration	377	11,348	\$756,688	\$66,680	+394	+3.6%	+452	+4.1%

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. Nearly one quarter (23.2%) of workers in the region were 55 years or older, compared to 22.6% statewide and 21.7% in the region one decade earlier. In contrast, the percentage of workers under 25 years old fell from 18.2% in 2014 to 15.9% in 2024 (Table 15). The share of workers 19 years and under fell slightly, but was equal in Northeast Minnesota to 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 (+91%) over the past decade, followed by workers aged 20-24 (+84%). The age groups with the highest wages were those between 45 and 54 years, with median hourly wages greater than \$31.

The share of women workers in the regional workforce rose slightly from 2014 to 2024. And while the median hourly wage for women (+59.3%) increased relatively faster than it did for men (+44.8%) over the last 10 years, median hourly wages for women were still only 83.7% of the male median wage. In 2014 that ratio was 76.1%, 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. Workers between ages 45 and 64 had median hours worked that exceeded that figure. The fewest median hours worked were by workers 19 and under, 20 to 24 years, and those 65 years and older. Women worked a median 365 hours per quarter in 2024, 82.8% of the male median. From 2014, median hours worked for all workers fell from 407 to 384. However, hours increased the most for workers over 64 and under 25 years of age, growing 10.9% and between 5% and 6%, respectively. Median hours declined for all other age groups and for males, but held steady for females (Table 15).

Table 15. Workforce Demographics by Age Group and Gender, Total of All Industries, 2014-2024								
Northeast Minnesota	Percentage of Workers		Percent of Workers, Minnesota		Median Hourly Wage		Median Hours Worked (Per Qtr.)	
	2014	2024	2014	2024	2014	2024	2014	2024
Total, all ages	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	\$16.36	\$24.32	407	384
19 and under	6.3%	6.0%	6.4%	6.0%	\$8.29	\$15.82	124	132
20 to 24 years	11.9%	9.9%	11.1%	9.0%	\$10.63	\$19.55	245	258
25 to 44 years	39.1%	42.0%	42.4%	43.6%	\$17.97	\$27.77	446	439
45 to 54 years	21.0%	19.0%	20.8%	18.7%	\$21.08	\$31.08	480	459
55 to 64 years	17.8%	16.7%	15.4%	16.5%	\$20.60	\$28.18	464	449
65 years and over	3.9%	6.5%	3.9%	6.1%	\$13.23	\$20.17	201	223
Male	49.8%	49.7%	49.3%	48.9%	\$19.30	\$27.95	457	441
Female	50.2%	50.3%	50.7%	51.1%	\$14.68	\$23.39	365	365

Source: [DEED Quarterly Employment Demographics](#)

EMPLOYMENT DIVERSITY

While people of color make up 9.3% of the overall population, they held 9.7% of total jobs in Northeast Minnesota, according to data from the Quarterly Workforce Indicators program. In 2023, that equaled 13,989 workers of color, compared to 130,138 White alone workers. However, workers of color held just 5% of total jobs in the region in 2003, meaning their share of employment nearly doubled over 20 years (Figure 17).

Workers of color have filled an additional 7,288 jobs in the region since 2003, accounting for 66% of the 11,066 total jobs added. With 3,281 jobs, Hispanic or Latino workers were the largest racial or ethnic group in the regional economy and gained 2,059 jobs since 2003. The next largest group was workers of more than one race, who held 3,140 jobs in 2023, an increase of 1,743 from 2003. Indigenous workers were the next largest group with 2,927 jobs. After increasing 207% from 2003 to 2023, Black or African Americans held 2,647 jobs. Asians held 1,922 jobs in 2023 (Figure 18).

Employment for people of color rebounded quicker following the pandemic peak of 2020, growing 13.4% as White employment grew 0.9%. Most sectors in Northeast Minnesota are non-diverse, but there are a couple sectors that rely more heavily on workers of color. For example, 17% of the Arts, Entertainment & Recreation and 16.9% of Transportation & Warehousing jobholders are people of color.

The largest number of workers of color were employed in Health Care & Social Assistance (2,901), Accommodation & Food Services (2,090), Transportation & Warehousing (1,468), and Retail Trade (1,433) (Figure 19). Accommodation & Food Services and Retail were two of the four lowest-paying sectors in the region.

Figure 17. Employment by Race & Ethnicity, All Industries, Northeast Minnesota, 2003-2023

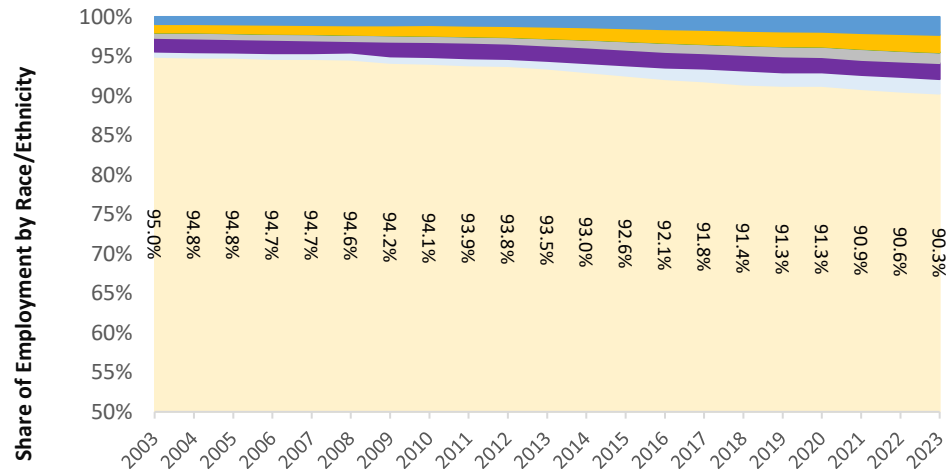


Figure 18. Workers of Color Employment, All Industries, Northeast Minnesota, 2003-2023

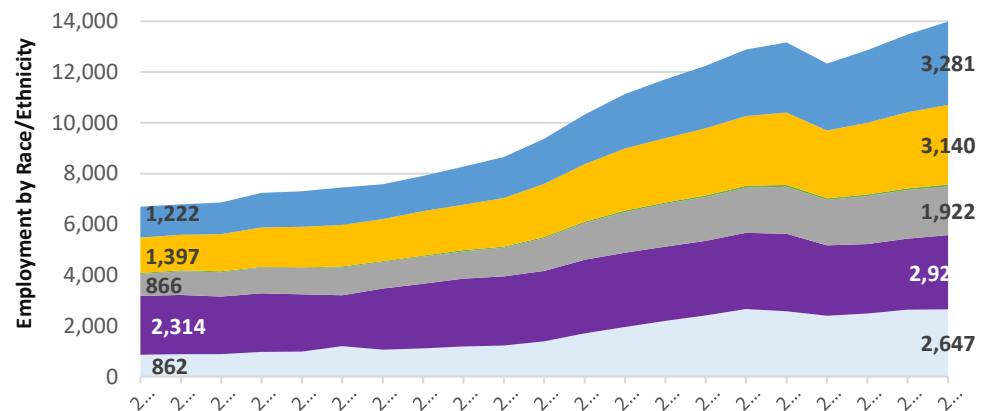
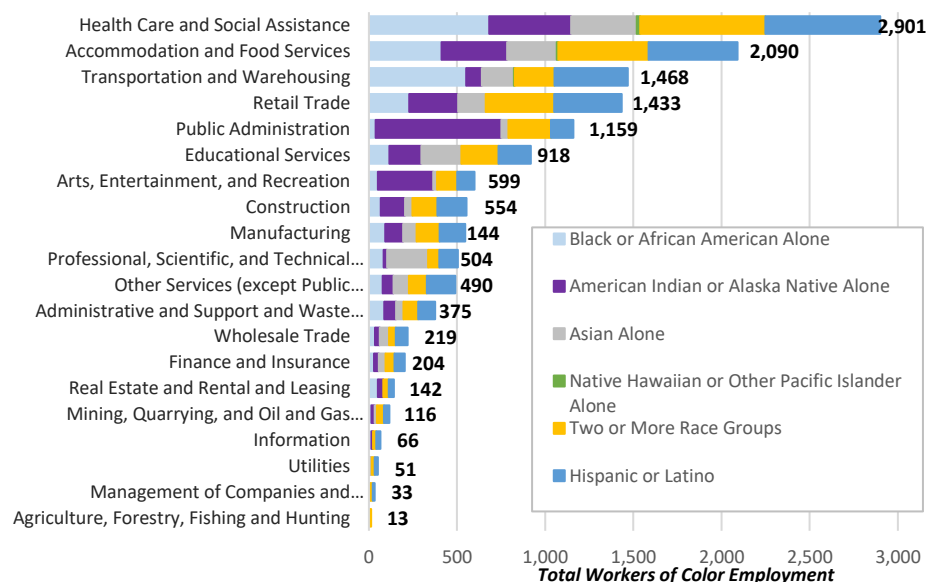


Figure 19. People of Color Employment by Industry, Northeast Minnesota, 2023



Source: DEED, Census LEHD Quarterly Workforce Indicators

INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

The Northeast Minnesota planning region is projected to grow 3.3% from 2022 to 2032, a gain of 5,157 new jobs. By comparison, the state is projected to grow 4.6% over the same period. The sectors expected to grow the fastest are diverse, and include high and low-paying industries such as Management and Arts, Entertainment, & Rec. The most new jobs are expected to be added in Health Care & Social Assistance, Accommodation & Food Svcs., and Construction. By contrast, Retail, Utilities, Information, and Finance & Insurance are projected to see employment declines as the way we work continues to evolve under the implementation of new technology and structural changes to the economy (Table 16).

Table 16. Northeast Minnesota Industry Projections, 2022-2032

Industry	Estimated Employment 2022	Projected Employment 2032	Percent Change 2022-2032	Numeric Change 2022-2032
Total, All Industries	153,945	159,102	+3.3%	+5,157
Health Care & Social Assistance	31,799	33,864	+6.5%	+2,065
Retail Trade	16,565	16,360	-1.2%	-205
Public Administration	15,176	15,440	+1.7%	+264
Accommodation & Food Services	14,034	14,860	+5.9%	+826
Educational Services	12,004	12,056	+0.4%	+52
Total, Self-Employed	9,619	9,506	-1.2%	-113
Manufacturing	8,777	9,016	+2.7%	+239
Construction	7,006	7,544	+7.7%	+538
Other Services	5,953	6,118	+2.8%	+165
Professional and Technical Svcs.	5,055	5,444	+7.7%	+389
Finance & Insurance	4,592	4,578	-0.3%	-14
Transportation & Warehousing	4,151	4,437	+6.9%	+286
Mining	4,006	4,134	+3.2%	+128
Wholesale Trade	3,202	3,359	+4.9%	+157
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,125	3,383	+8.3%	+258
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt.	3,097	3,231	+4.3%	+134
Utilities	1,352	1,342	-0.7%	-10
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1,235	1,268	+2.7%	+33
Information	1,222	1,208	-1.1%	-14
Agriculture Forestry, Fish & Hunt	1,222	1,134	-7.2%	-88
Management of Companies	753	820	+8.9%	+67

Source: DEED 2022-2032 Employment Outlook

NONEMPLOYER ESTABLISHMENTS

Northeast Minnesota was home to 21,680 self-employed businesses or “nonemployers” in 2023, 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).” Northeast Minnesota saw a steady increase in nonemployers over the past decade, responding to economic changes. In sum, the region gained 1,725 nonemployers from 2013-2023, an 8.6% increase. These non-employers generated sales receipts of just over \$1.0 billion in 2023 (Table 17).

Table 17. Nonemployer Statistics, 2023

	2023		2013-2023	
	Number of Firms	Receipts (\$1,000s)	Change in Firms	Percent Change
Northeast MN	21,680	\$1,017,015	+1,725	+8.6%
Aitkin Co.	1,143	\$65,481	+31	+2.8%
Carlton Co.	2,037	\$92,646	+43	+2.2%
Cook Co.	786	\$37,635	+4	+0.5%
Itasca Co.	3,123	\$145,972	+123	+4.1%
Koochiching Co.	835	\$36,215	-9	-1.1%
Lake Co.	903	\$47,334	+81	+9.9%
St. Louis Co.	12,853	\$591,732	+1,452	+12.7%
Minnesota	453,181	\$25,619,689	+64,281	+16.5%

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 2,406 farms producing just over \$90 million in the market value of products sold in 2022 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).

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.

Table 18. Census of Agriculture, 2022

	Number of Farms	Market Value of Products Sold	State Rank
Northeast Minnesota	2,406	\$90,006,000	6/6
Aitkin Co.	449	\$22,322,000	81/87
Cook Co.	25	\$506,000	86/87
Carlton Co.	463	\$13,416,000	83/87
Itasca Co.	424	\$13,796,000	82/87
Koochiching Co.	190	\$10,444,000	84/87
Lake Co.	34	\$468,000	87/87
St. Louis Co.	821	\$29,054,000	79/87
State of Minnesota	65,531	\$28,482,097,000	

Source: 2022 Census of Agriculture