

**COUNTY PROFILE**

**Benton Co.**

Benton Co. is a part of Economic Development Region 7W, which is located in the Central Planning Region.



**POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS**

|                              |                             |             |                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 2025 population:             | <b>41,744 people</b>        | Median Age: | <b>36.2 years</b> |
| Population change, 2020-2025 | 367 people<br>0.9% increase | state:      | 38.8 years        |

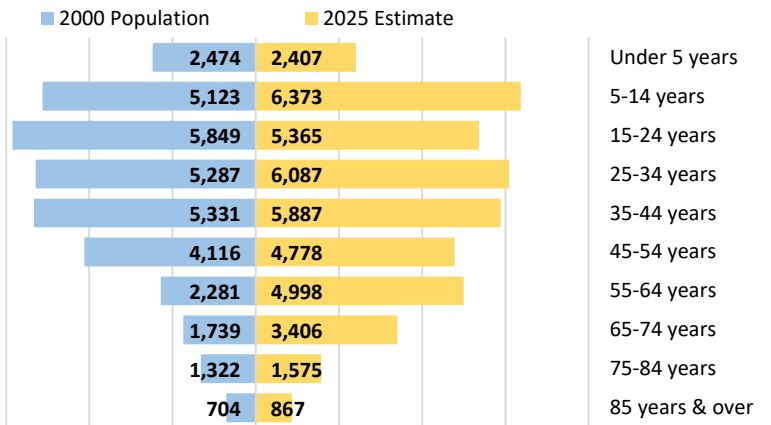
Benton Co. is the 25th largest of the 87 counties in the state. Its population increased so far this decade, ranking as the 42nd fastest growing in the state from 2020 to 2025. Benton Co.'s population has a younger median age than the state and a smaller percentage of people aged 65 years and older. The population is aging, especially as the Baby Boom generation moves through the population pyramid (see Figure 1).

**Table 1. Population by Age Group, 2025**

|                         | Number        | Percent       |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Under 5 years           | 2,407         | 5.8%          |
| 5-14 years              | 6,373         | 15.3%         |
| 15-24 years             | 5,365         | 12.9%         |
| 25-34 years             | 6,087         | 14.6%         |
| 35-44 years             | 5,887         | 14.1%         |
| 45-54 years             | 4,778         | 11.4%         |
| 55-64 years             | 4,998         | 12.0%         |
| 65-74 years             | 3,406         | 8.2%          |
| 75-84 years             | 1,575         | 3.8%          |
| 85 years & over         | 867           | 2.1%          |
| <b>Total Population</b> | <b>41,744</b> | <b>100.0%</b> |

Source: Census 2025 Population Estimates, 2020-2024 ACS

**Figure 1. Population Pyramid, 2000-2025**



Benton Co. enjoyed a natural increase - more births than deaths from 2020 to 2025, but also experienced net out-migration - meaning more people moved out than moved in. Despite suffering domestic out-migration, Benton Co. welcomed net international in-migration - gaining new Minnesotans from foreign countries (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Population Change, 2020-2025**

|                    | Total Population Change | April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2025 |              |         |               |               |          |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------|---------------|---------------|----------|
|                    |                         | Natural Increase              | Vital Events |         | Net Migration |               |          |
|                    |                         |                               | Births       | Deaths  | Total         | International | Domestic |
| Benton Co.         | 349                     | 438                           | 2,482        | 2,044   | -89           | 307           | -396     |
| State of Minnesota | 122,685                 | 63,075                        | 330,813      | 267,738 | 59,610        | 96,812        | -37,202  |

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

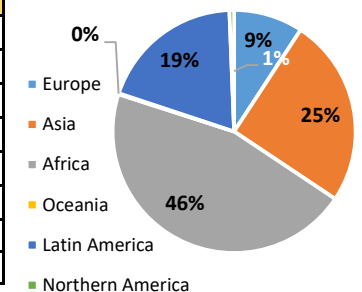
Compared to the state, Benton Co. has a smaller percentage of foreign-born residents. From 2014 to 2024, Benton Co. saw an increase in the number of foreign-born residents, which was faster than the statewide increase.

**Table 3. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2024**

|                                | Benton Co.   |             | Change 2014-2024 |              | Minnesota   |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
|                                | Number       | Percent     | Number           | Percent      | Percent     | Change       |
| <b>Foreign-born Population</b> | <b>1,452</b> | <b>3.5%</b> | <b>598</b>       | <b>70.0%</b> | <b>8.7%</b> | <b>23.3%</b> |
| Europe                         | 134          | 9.2%        | 30               | 28.8%        | 8.7%        | -3.6%        |
| Asia                           | 365          | 25.1%       | -27              | -6.9%        | 34.8%       | 12.8%        |
| Africa                         | 662          | 45.6%       | 476              | 255.9%       | 28.6%       | 73.9%        |
| Oceania                        | 2            | 0.1%        | 2                | #DIV/0!      | 0.4%        | 5.4%         |
| Americas:                      | 289          | 19.9%       | 117              | 68.0%        | 27.4%       | 12.8%        |
| Latin America                  | 280          | 19.3%       | 129              | 85.4%        | 25.0%       | 14.5%        |
| Northern America               | 9            | 0.6%        | -12              | -57.1%       | 2.4%        | -2.8%        |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey

**Figure 2. Place of Birth for the Foreign Born Population, 2024**

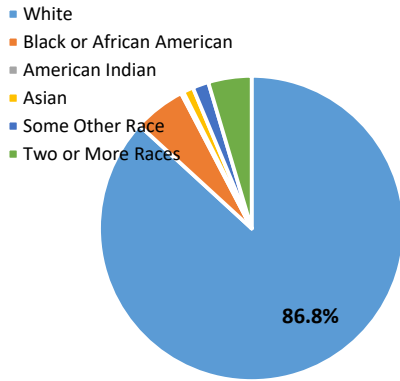


## COUNTY PROFILE

Benton Co.

Benton Co.'s population was becoming more racially diverse over time. Since 2014, the white population declined, but the number of people of other races increased (see Table 4).

**Figure 3. Population by Race, 2024**



| Table 4. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2024 | Benton Co.    |               |                       | Minnesota     |                       |
|---|---------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
|   | Number        | Percent       | Change from 2014-2024 | Percent       | Change from 2014-2024 |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>41,593</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>6.7%</b>           | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>6.6%</b>           |
| White                                   | 36,110        | 86.8%         | -2.0%                 | 77.1%         | -3.5%                 |
| Black or African American               | 2,296         | 5.5%          | 140.7%                | 7.0%          | 38.6%                 |
| American Indian or Alaska Native        | 115           | 0.3%          | -41.0%                | 0.9%          | -8.6%                 |
| Asian or Other Pac. Islanders           | 455           | 1.1%          | 3.9%                  | 5.2%          | 27.1%                 |
| Some Other Race                         | 706           | 1.7%          | 1581.0%               | 2.9%          | 107.8%                |
| Two or More Races                       | 1,911         | 4.6%          | 274.7%                | 7.0%          | 188.0%                |
| Hispanic or Latino origin               | 1,460         | 3.5%          | 104.8%                | 6.4%          | 38.4%                 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey

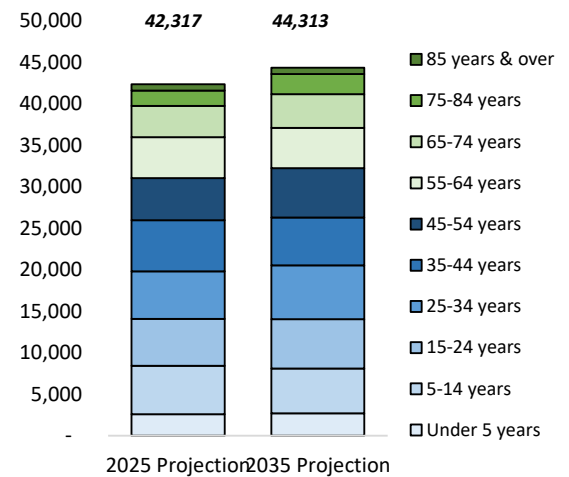
## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, Benton Co.'s population is expected to grow from 2025 to 2035, with a rate of change that is faster than the projected statewide growth rate (3.7%). In addition to the overall growth, the number of people aged 65 years and older is expected to increase over the next decade (see Figure 4 and Table 5).

| Table 5. Population Projections by Age Group, 2025-2035 |                 |                 |                |                |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Benton Co.  | 2025 Projection | 2035 Projection | Numeric Change | Percent Change |
| Under 5 years   | 2,581           | 2,681           | 100            | 3.9%           |
| 5-14 years  | 5,844           | 5,407           | -437           | -7.5%          |
| 15-24 years   | 5,633           | 5,935           | 302            | 5.4%           |
| 25-34 years   | 5,738           | 6,507           | 769            | 13.4%          |
| 35-44 years   | 6,149           | 5,759           | -390           | -6.3%          |
| 45-54 years   | 5,089           | 5,925           | 836            | 16.4%          |
| 55-64 years   | 4,935           | 4,873           | -62            | -1.3%          |
| 65-74 years   | 3,765           | 4,043           | 278            | 7.4%           |
| 75-84 years   | 1,855           | 2,452           | 597            | 32.2%          |
| 85 years & over   | 728             | 731             | 3              | 0.4%           |
| <b>Total Population</b>                                 | <b>42,317</b>   | <b>44,313</b>   | <b>1,996</b>   | <b>4.7%</b>    |

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

**Figure 4. Projections by Age Group, 2025-2035**

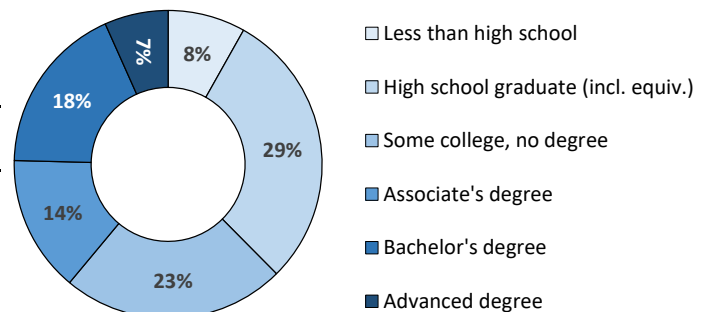


## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Benton Co. has a lower percentage of adults (18 years & over) with at least a high school diploma than the state (93.3%), and a lower percentage of people with at least some college experience. Benton Co. also has a higher percentage of people with an Associate's degree and a lower percentage of people with a Bachelor's degree or higher.

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Percentage of the adult population (18 years &amp; over) with at least a high school diploma:</b> | <b>91.8%</b> |
| <b>College-educated:</b>   | <b>62.4%</b> |
| state:   | 68.9%        |
| <b>Associate's Degree:</b>   | <b>14.3%</b> |
| <b>Bachelor's Degree:</b>  | <b>17.9%</b> |
| <b>Advanced Degree:</b>  | <b>6.7%</b>  |

**Figure 5. Educational Attainment, 2024**



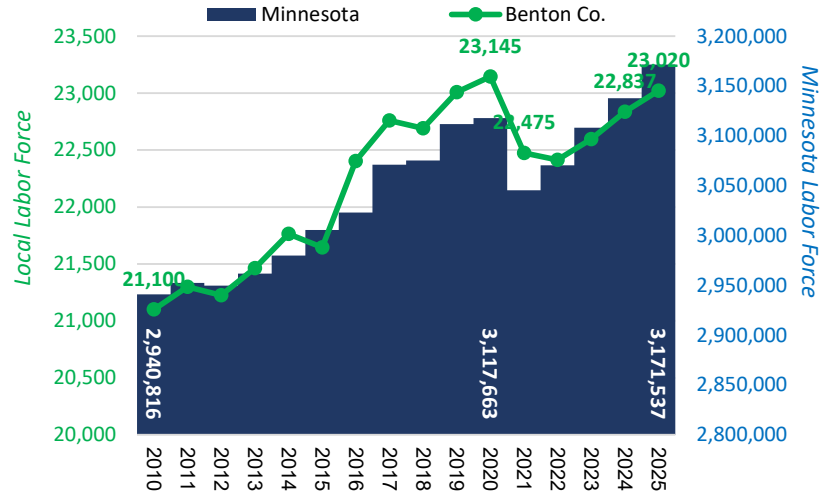
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020-2024 American Community Survey

LABOR FORCE TRENDS

At 4.7%, Benton Co. had a higher unemployment rate than the state in 2025. Benton Co.'s unemployment rate declined compared to the 6.4% pandemic rate posted in 2020. The number of unemployed workers actively seeking work in Benton Co. increased over the past year, and is down compared to 2020.

|                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>23,020</b>                 | available workers              |
| Labor Force change, 2010-2025 | 1,920 workers<br>9.1% increase |
| <b>4.7%</b>                   | unemployment rate              |
| 3.9%                          | state                          |
| <b>1,082</b>                  | unemployed workers             |

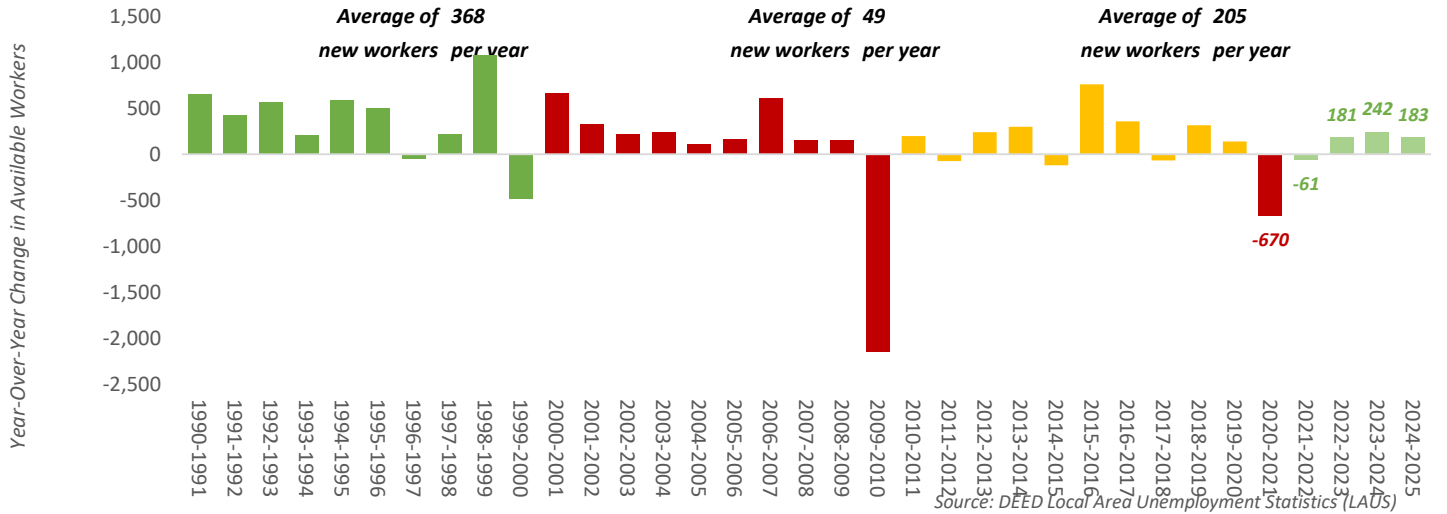
Figure 6. Annual Labor Force Estimates



Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Labor force growth has slowed in recent years. After experiencing a net gain of workers each year from 1990 to 2000, Benton Co. averaged an annual gain of new workers from 2000 to 2010, and most recently a gain of new workers since 2010 (see Figure 7). Moving forward, Benton Co. is expected to add workers from 2025 to 2035 (see Table 6).

Figure 7. Annual Change in Labor Force, 1990-2025



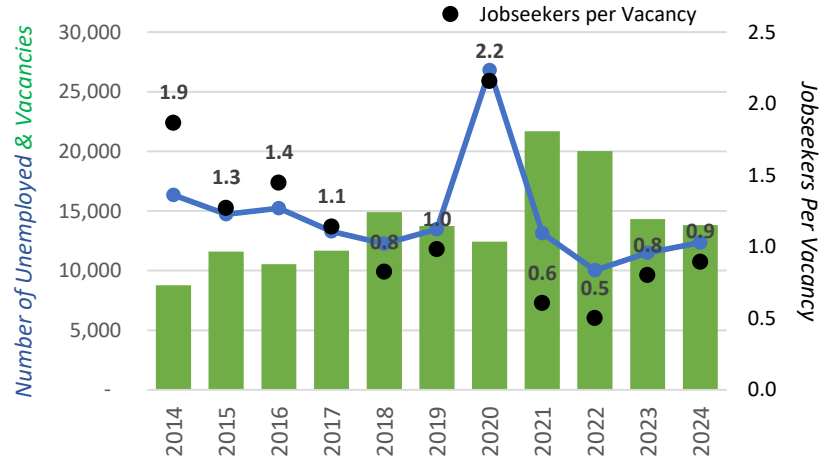
Source: DEED Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

| Table 6. Labor Force Projections, 2025-2035 | Labor Force Projection |               |
|---|------------------------|---------------|
|   | 2025                   | 2035          |
| 16 to 24 years                              | 3,756                  | 4,052         |
| 25 to 54 years                              | 15,314                 | 16,409        |
| 55 to 64 years                              | 3,699                  | 3,653         |
| 65 years & over                             | 1,085                  | 1,209         |
| <b>Total Labor Force</b>                    | <b>23,854</b>          | <b>25,323</b> |

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2020-2024 ACS

The labor market had grown extremely tight in recent years, with less than 1 jobseeker per vacancy until the pandemic recession. In 2024, job vacancies in Central returned to pre-pandemic levels and the number of unemployed workers was trending upward, but employers were still seeing challenges finding enough workers for open jobs (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Jobseekers Per Vacancy, 2014-2024



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, LAUS program

**LABOR FORCE CHARACTERISTICS**

Benton Co. had a higher labor force participation rate than the state. The labor force in Benton Co. is less racially diverse than the state (where 78.7% of workers are white alone), but is becoming more diverse over time.

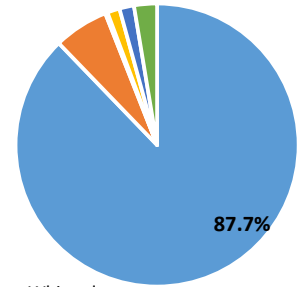
**Table 7. Employment Characteristics, 2024**

|                          | Benton Co.                         |                          |             | Minnesota                |             | Labor Force by Gender |               |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|
|                          | In Labor Force (available workers) | Labor Force Partic. Rate | Unemp. Rate | Labor Force Partic. Rate | Unemp. Rate | Male                  | Female        |
| <b>Total Labor Force</b> | <b>23,308</b>                      | <b>72.4%</b>             | <b>3.9%</b> | <b>68.1%</b>             | <b>4.1%</b> | <b>12,095</b>         | <b>11,209</b> |
| 16 to 19 years           | 1,126                              | 55.6%                    | 3.6%        | 52.6%                    | 10.3%       | 509                   | 616           |
| 20 to 24 years           | 2,403                              | 90.0%                    | 10.9%       | 83.3%                    | 6.6%        | 1,056                 | 1,346         |
| 25 to 44 years           | 10,768                             | 90.3%                    | 3.1%        | 88.7%                    | 3.7%        | 5,724                 | 5,042         |
| 45 to 54 years           | 4,290                              | 90.1%                    | 2.3%        | 87.8%                    | 3.0%        | 2,356                 | 1,936         |
| 55 to 64 years           | 3,733                              | 75.0%                    | 4.8%        | 72.7%                    | 3.2%        | 1,939                 | 1,792         |
| 65 to 74 years           | 726                                | 21.4%                    | 0.3%        | 27.7%                    | 3.6%        | 380                   | 345           |
| 75 years & over          | 263                                | 10.8%                    | 0.8%        | 6.7%                     | 3.2%        | 131                   | 132           |

**Employment Characteristics by Race & Hispanic Origin**

|                                 |        |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| White alone                     | 20,445 | 71.2% | 2.9%  | 67.0% | 3.5%  |
| Black or African American       | 1,456  | 91.9% | 13.7% | 70.8% | 8.7%  |
| American Indian & Alaska Native | 63     | 66.3% | 50.8% | 58.0% | 10.8% |
| Asian or Other Pac. Islanders   | 330    | 83.3% | 20.9% | 75.2% | 3.5%  |
| Some Other Race                 | 387    | 79.0% | 0.0%  | 75.4% | 5.8%  |
| Two or More Races               | 611    | 66.8% | 3.6%  | 74.0% | 5.7%  |
| Hispanic or Latino              | 716    | 73.4% | 5.3%  | 76.6% | 5.8%  |

**Figure 9. Labor Force by Race, 2024**



**Employment Characteristics by Disability, 20 to 64 years**

|                                     |       |       |       |       |      |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| With Any Disability, 20 to 64 years | 1,333 | 51.2% | 13.7% | 56.1% | 9.4% |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|

**Employment Characteristics by Educational Attainment, 25 to 64 years**

|                               |        |       |      |       |      |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Population, 25 to 64 years    | 18,790 | 86.7% | 3.3% | 84.5% | 3.4% |
| Less than H.S. Diploma        | 1,209  | 77.3% | 5.5% | 66.2% | 4.9% |
| H.S. Diploma or Equivalent    | 4,111  | 79.6% | 5.0% | 76.6% | 2.5% |
| Some College or Assoc. Degree | 7,569  | 87.8% | 3.1% | 85.0% | 3.7% |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher   | 5,892  | 93.2% | 0.7% | 90.5% | 2.2% |

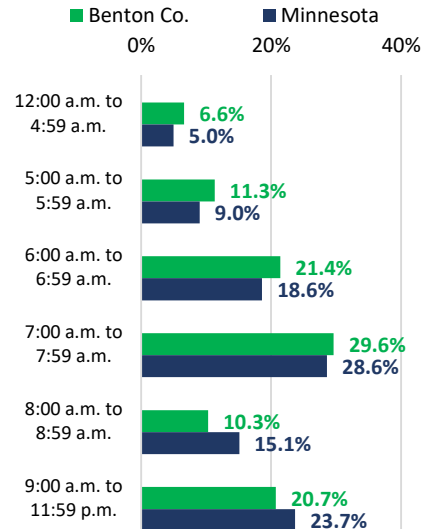
Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

A smaller percentage of workers in Benton Co. worked in the same county in which they live compared to the state. Benton Co. also had a longer average commute time than the state.

**Table 8. Commuting Characteristics, 2024**

|   | Benton Co.          |         | Minnesota           |         |
|---|---------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
|   | Number              | Percent | Number              | Percent |
| Worked in state of residence              | 22,033              | 99.8%   | 2,875,211           | 97.8%   |
| Worked in county of residence             | 8,478               | 38.4%   | 2,013,824           | 68.5%   |
| Worked out of county of residence         | 13,555              | 61.4%   | 864,327             | 29.4%   |
| Worked outside state of residence         | 44                  | 0.2%    | 64,678              | 2.2%    |
| <b>MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK</b>    |                     |         |                     |         |
| Car, truck, or van                        | 18,920              | 85.7%   | 2,246,075           | 76.4%   |
| Public transportation (excl. taxicab)     | 88                  | 0.4%    | 52,918              | 1.8%    |
| Other method (walk, bike, taxi, etc.)     | 971                 | 4.4%    | 123,475             | 4.2%    |
| Worked at home                            | 2,097               | 9.5%    | 517,420             | 17.6%   |
| <b>TRAVEL TIME TO WORK</b>                |                     |         |                     |         |
| Less than 10 minutes                      | 3,444               | 15.6%   | 490,961             | 16.7%   |
| 10 to 19 minutes                          | 8,213               | 37.2%   | 943,704             | 32.1%   |
| 20 to 29 minutes                          | 4,482               | 20.3%   | 658,535             | 22.4%   |
| 30 to 44 minutes                          | 3,245               | 14.7%   | 538,000             | 18.3%   |
| 45 to 59 minutes                          | 1,214               | 5.5%    | 164,634             | 5.6%    |
| 60 or more minutes                        | 1,479               | 6.7%    | 144,055             | 4.9%    |
| <b>Mean travel time to work (minutes)</b> | <b>23.2 minutes</b> |         | <b>22.7 minutes</b> |         |

**Figure 10. Time Leaving Home to go to Work, 2024**



Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

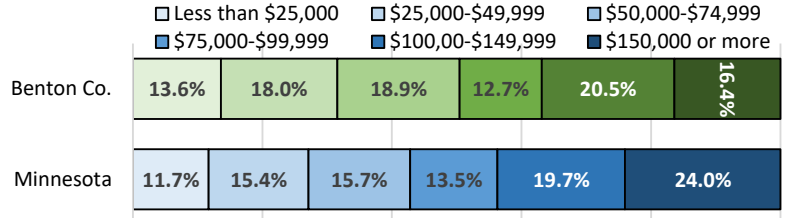
**INCOMES, COST OF LIVING, & HOUSING**

Benton Co. had a lower median household income than the state, and a higher percentage of households with incomes below \$50,000. Overall, Benton Co. had the 43rd highest median household income of the 87 counties in the state.

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Median Household Income</b> | <b>\$74,410</b> |
| state                          | \$89,062        |
| <b>Median Family Income</b>    | <b>\$98,468</b> |
| state                          | \$113,993       |
| <b>Per Capita Income</b>       | <b>\$38,579</b> |
| state                          | \$48,237        |

Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey

**Figure 11. Household Incomes, 2024**



Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The cost of living has increased in recent years with expenses up in many areas. Benton Co. had a lower cost of living than the state, with a required hourly wage of \$15.59 for a single person living alone to meet a basic needs cost of living, and an hourly wage requirement of \$20.93 for a typical family with 2 adults and 1 child (see Table 9).

**Table 9. Basic Needs Cost of Living Estimates, 2024**

| Single Adult, 0 children   | Single Yearly Cost of Living | Hourly Wage Required | Monthly Costs |         |             |         |                |       |       |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------|-------------|---------|----------------|-------|-------|
|  |                              |                      | Child Care    | Food    | Health Care | Housing | Transportation | Other | Taxes |
| Benton Co.   | \$32,429                     | \$15.59              | \$0           | \$420   | \$183       | \$908   | \$570          | \$293 | \$328 |
| State of Minnesota   | \$38,376                     | \$18.45              | \$0           | \$452   | \$202       | \$1,199 | \$561          | \$365 | \$419 |
| Typical Family: 2 Adults (1 working full-time, 1 part-time), 1 child | Family Yearly Cost of Living | Hourly Wage Required | Monthly Costs |         |             |         |                |       |       |
|  |                              |                      | Child Care    | Food    | Health Care | Housing | Transportation | Other | Taxes |
| Benton Co.   | \$65,300                     | \$20.93              | \$462         | \$954   | \$639       | \$1,189 | \$1,053        | \$473 | \$672 |
| State of Minnesota   | \$74,616                     | \$23.92              | \$558         | \$1,028 | \$697       | \$1,498 | \$1,026        | \$558 | \$853 |

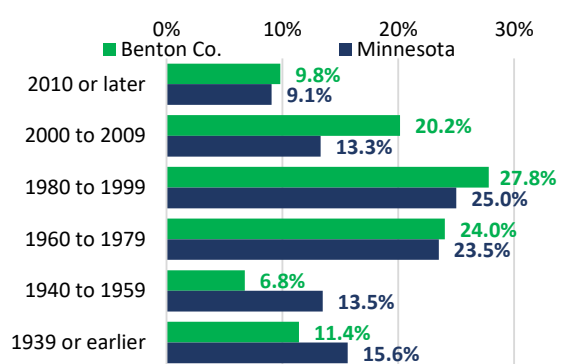
Source: DEED Cost of Living tool

Benton Co. had a lower median house value than the state, having the 25th highest value of the 87 counties in 2024. Benton Co.'s housing stock was newer than the state's, with a higher percentage of units built since 2000 (see Figure 12).

| Table 10. Estimated Value of Owner-occupied Housing Units, 2024 | Benton Co.       |               | Minnesota        |
|---|------------------|---------------|------------------|
|   | Total            | Percent       | Percent          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>11,157</b>    | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>100.0%</b>    |
| Less than \$50,000  | 607              | 5.4%          | 4.0%             |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999  | 393              | 3.5%          | 3.7%             |
| \$100,000 to \$149,999  | 602              | 5.4%          | 5.2%             |
| \$150,000 to \$199,999  | 1,306            | 11.7%         | 8.1%             |
| \$200,000 to \$299,999  | 3,845            | 34.5%         | 22.6%            |
| \$300,000 to \$499,999  | 3,352            | 30.0%         | 36.9%            |
| \$500,000 or more   | 1,052            | 9.4%          | 19.6%            |
| <b>Median (dollars)</b>   | <b>\$271,000</b> |               | <b>\$329,300</b> |

Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

**Figure 12. Year Structure Built, 2024**



|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Median monthly owner costs, owner-occupied units with a mortgage</b> | <b>\$1,770</b> |
| state   | \$1,947        |

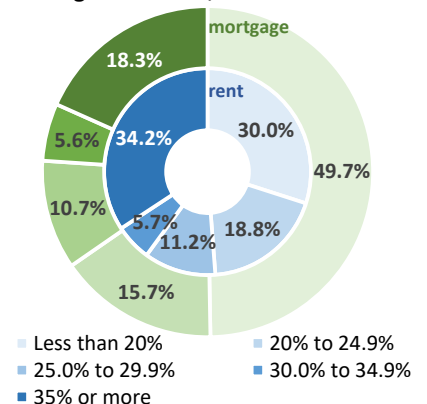
|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Percentage of households with a mortgage spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs</b> | <b>23.9%</b> |
| state   | 23.2%        |

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Median monthly rent costs</b> | <b>\$982</b> |
| state                            | \$1,280      |

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Percentage of renters spending 30% or more of their household income on rent</b> | <b>40.0%</b> |
| state   | 48.1%        |

Source: 2020-2024 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates

**Figure 13. Housing Costs as a Percentage of Income, 2024**



OCCUPATIONS

At \$24.27 in 2025, wages were lower in Region 7W than the state. Overall, Region 7W had the 3rd highest median hourly wage level of the 13 economic development regions in the state. Wages were highest for management occupations (\$50.18) and lowest for food preparation and serving related jobs (\$15.41) (see Table 11).

Table 11. Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2025

| Occupational Group                   | Region 7W          |                         |                     |                            | State of Minnesota |                          |                     |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
|                                      | Median Hourly Wage | Estimated Regional Jobs | Share of Total Jobs | Regional Location Quotient | Median Hourly Wage | Estimated Statewide Jobs | Share of Total Jobs |
| <b>Total, All Occupations</b>        | <b>\$24.27</b>     | <b>179,570</b>          | <b>100.0%</b>       | <b>1.0</b>                 | <b>\$26.22</b>     | <b>2,920,470</b>         | <b>100.0%</b>       |
| Management                           | \$50.18            | 10,110                  | 5.6%                | 0.8                        | \$59.38            | 200,060                  | 6.9%                |
| Business & Financial Operations      | \$37.66            | 7,840                   | 4.4%                | 0.6                        | \$39.95            | 208,210                  | 7.1%                |
| Computer & Mathematical              | \$39.67            | 2,370                   | 1.3%                | 0.4                        | \$50.02            | 97,460                   | 3.3%                |
| Architecture & Engineering           | \$40.64            | 2,240                   | 1.2%                | 0.6                        | \$45.03            | 57,950                   | 2.0%                |
| Life, Physical & Social Science      | \$41.66            | 1,030                   | 0.6%                | 0.5                        | \$38.33            | 32,150                   | 1.1%                |
| Community & Social Service           | \$30.55            | 3,070                   | 1.7%                | 0.8                        | \$29.82            | 59,290                   | 2.0%                |
| Legal                                | \$42.95            | 660                     | 0.4%                | 0.5                        | \$49.52            | 20,750                   | 0.7%                |
| Education, Training & Library        | \$28.39            | 12,170                  | 6.8%                | 1.2                        | \$27.84            | 170,270                  | 5.8%                |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment & Media  | \$23.62            | 1,470                   | 0.8%                | 0.7                        | \$28.84            | 36,030                   | 1.2%                |
| Healthcare Practitioners & Technical | \$44.48            | 11,280                  | 6.3%                | 1.0                        | \$46.51            | 187,480                  | 6.4%                |
| Healthcare Support                   | \$18.83            | 9,780                   | 5.4%                | 0.9                        | \$18.67            | 176,750                  | 6.1%                |
| Protective Service                   | \$32.60            | 2,720                   | 1.5%                | 0.9                        | \$29.37            | 46,960                   | 1.6%                |
| Food Preparation & Serving Related   | \$15.41            | 15,880                  | 8.8%                | 1.1                        | \$16.05            | 240,830                  | 8.2%                |
| Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.  | \$18.65            | 5,480                   | 3.1%                | 1.1                        | \$19.16            | 81,700                   | 2.8%                |
| Personal Care & Service              | \$17.40            | 3,560                   | 2.0%                | 0.9                        | \$17.54            | 63,300                   | 2.2%                |
| Sales & Related                      | \$18.00            | 17,080                  | 9.5%                | 1.1                        | \$18.66            | 244,780                  | 8.4%                |
| Office & Administrative Support      | \$23.58            | 19,480                  | 10.8%               | 0.9                        | \$24.07            | 340,040                  | 11.6%               |
| Farming, Fishing & Forestry          | \$23.37            | 210                     | 0.1%                | 1.0                        | \$23.48            | 3,300                    | 0.1%                |
| Construction & Extraction            | \$33.11            | 11,100                  | 6.2%                | 1.6                        | \$34.20            | 114,050                  | 3.9%                |
| Installation, Maintenance & Repair   | \$30.00            | 7,680                   | 4.3%                | 1.2                        | \$30.40            | 105,650                  | 3.6%                |
| Production                           | \$23.66            | 17,720                  | 9.9%                | 1.4                        | \$23.56            | 205,220                  | 7.0%                |
| Transportation & Material Moving     | \$22.56            | 16,640                  | 9.3%                | 1.2                        | \$19.80            | 228,260                  | 7.8%                |

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, Qtr. 1 2025

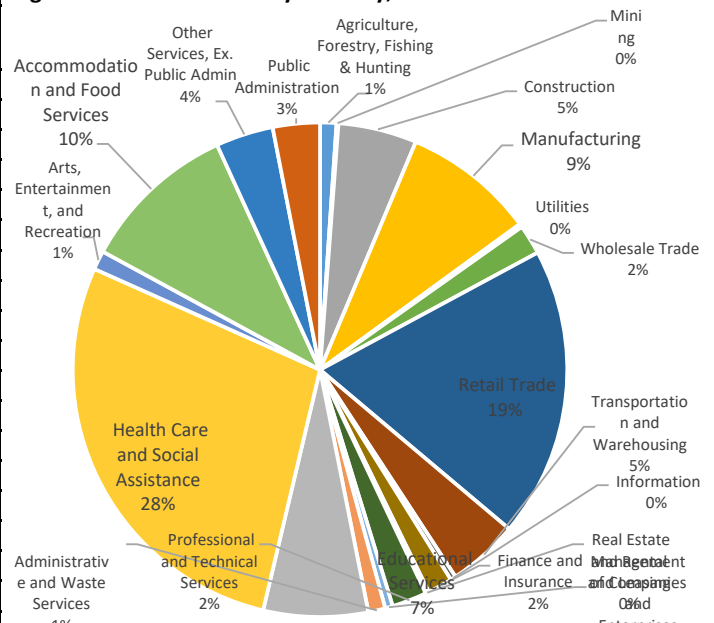
JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Benton Co. is a part of the Central planning region. There were 13827 job vacancies posted by employers in 2024, indicating extensive opportunity in the region, with openings across several occupations and industries (see Figure 14).

Table 12. Central Job Vacancy Survey Results, 2024

| Occupational Group                   | Number of Vacancies | Wage Offer     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| <b>Total, All Occupations</b>        | <b>13,827</b>       | <b>\$19.81</b> |
| Management                           | 319                 | \$29.45        |
| Business & Financial Operations      | 394                 | \$33.36        |
| Computer & Mathematical              | 40                  | \$26.02        |
| Architecture & Engineering           | 197                 | \$30.87        |
| Life, Physical & Social Sciences     | 122                 | \$33.52        |
| Community & Social Service           | 283                 | \$23.80        |
| Education, Training & Library        | 735                 | \$19.62        |
| Healthcare Practitioners & Technical | 1,450               | \$29.97        |
| Healthcare Support                   | 1,363               | \$18.33        |
| Protective Service                   | 189                 | \$21.58        |
| Food Preparation & Serving Related   | 1,814               | \$15.03        |
| Building, Grounds Cleaning & Maint.  | 260                 | \$16.97        |
| Personal Care & Service              | 417                 | \$14.99        |
| Sales & Related                      | 1,861               | \$15.92        |
| Office & Administrative Support      | 911                 | \$20.11        |
| Construction & Extraction            | 693                 | \$22.04        |
| Installation, Maintenance & Repair   | 695                 | \$23.62        |
| Production                           | 598                 | \$20.21        |
| Transportation & Material Moving     | 1,128               | \$20.98        |

Figure 14. Job Vacancies by Industry, 2024



Source: DEED Job Vacancy Survey, 2024

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

Table 13. Central Planning Region Occupations in Demand, 2025

| High School or Less   | Vocational Training   | Associate Degree  | Bachelor's Degree or Higher   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Home Health and Personal Care Aides<br>\$37,520/yr            | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers<br>\$61,513/yr                            | Registered Nurses<br>\$101,788/yr                                   | General and Operations Managers<br>\$86,311/yr                                |
| Retail Salespersons<br>\$35,294/yr                            | Nursing Assistants<br>\$45,077/yr   | Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers<br>\$80,894/yr                 | Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education<br>\$63,707/yr           |
| Fast Food and Counter Workers<br>\$31,729/yr                  | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses<br>\$60,654/yr                  | Radiologic Technologists and Technicians<br>\$84,540/yr             | Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical<br>\$64,803/yr |
| Cashiers<br>\$32,454/yr                                       | Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks<br>\$51,037/yr                       | Veterinary Technologists and Technicians<br>\$49,370/yr             | Medical and Health Services Managers<br>\$109,085/yr                          |
| Stockers and Order Fillers<br>\$37,670/yr                     | Psychiatric Technicians<br>\$46,781/yr  | Architectural and Civil Drafters<br>\$63,877/yr                     | Accountants and Auditors<br>\$76,798/yr                                       |
| First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and<br>\$45,691/yr | Machinists<br>\$60,200/yr   | Dental Hygienists<br>\$99,124/yr                                    | Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education<br>\$38,622/yr                   |
| Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary<br>\$38,072/yr      | Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists<br>\$64,200/yr              | Detectives and Criminal Investigators<br>\$81,545/yr                | Substitute Teachers, Short-Term<br>\$44,131/yr                                |
| First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers<br>\$47,056/yr | Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics<br>\$52,077/yr                       | Industrial Engineering Technologists and Technicians<br>\$64,951/yr | Project Management Specialists<br>\$94,626/yr                                 |
| Customer Service Representatives<br>\$45,804/yr               | Substance abuse, behavioral disorder, and mental health counselors<br>\$56,854/yr | Surgical Technologists<br>\$70,461/yr                               | Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical<br>\$64,293/yr    |
| Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and<br>\$37,935/yr        | Medical Assistants<br>\$48,651/yr   | Diagnostic Medical Sonographers<br>\$97,765/yr                      | Child, Family, and School Social Workers<br>\$69,904/yr                       |

Source: DEED Occupations in Demand

Benton Co. is a part of the Central planning region, which is projected to see a 5.2% increase in employment levels over the next decade. In addition to new jobs created, there will be a much larger number of exit openings (see Figure 15).

Table 14. Regional Industry Employment Projections, 2022-2032

| Central Planning Region                    | Estimated Employment 2022 | Projected Employment 2032 | Percent Change 2022-2032 |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Total, All Industries</b>               | <b>315,929</b>            | <b>332,231</b>            | <b>5.2%</b>              |
| Natural Resources & Mining                 | 5,649                     | 5,809                     | 2.8%                     |
| Utilities                                  | 1,986                     | 1,998                     | 0.6%                     |
| Construction                               | 20,532                    | 22,780                    | 10.9%                    |
| Manufacturing                              | 41,539                    | 44,543                    | 7.2%                     |
| Wholesale Trade                            | 11,219                    | 12,105                    | 7.9%                     |
| Retail Trade                               | 35,711                    | 35,808                    | 0.3%                     |
| Transportation & Warehousing               | 9,287                     | 10,143                    | 9.2%                     |
| Information                                | 3,002                     | 3,214                     | 7.1%                     |
| Finance & Insurance, Real Estate           | 10,142                    | 10,528                    | 3.8%                     |
| Professional Services & Mgmt. of Companies | 9,040                     | 9,979                     | 10.4%                    |
| Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt.               | 10,369                    | 11,004                    | 6.1%                     |
| Educational Services                       | 24,622                    | 24,913                    | 1.2%                     |
| Health Care & Social Assistance            | 45,668                    | 49,836                    | 9.1%                     |
| Leisure & Hospitality                      | 26,046                    | 27,642                    | 6.1%                     |
| Other Services                             | 10,880                    | 11,311                    | 4.0%                     |
| Public Administration                      | 20,424                    | 21,077                    | 3.2%                     |

Source: DEED 2022-2032 Employment Outlook

Figure 15. Regional Occupational Employment Projections, 2022-2032



**ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

After losing jobs over the past year, Benton Co. had the 24th largest economy of the 87 counties in the state. Benton Co. was the 67th fastest growing in the past year and the 70th fastest growing since 2020. From 2020 to 2025, employment in Benton Co. has grown since the pandemic recession.

**1,057** business establishments

**\$58,812** annual average wage

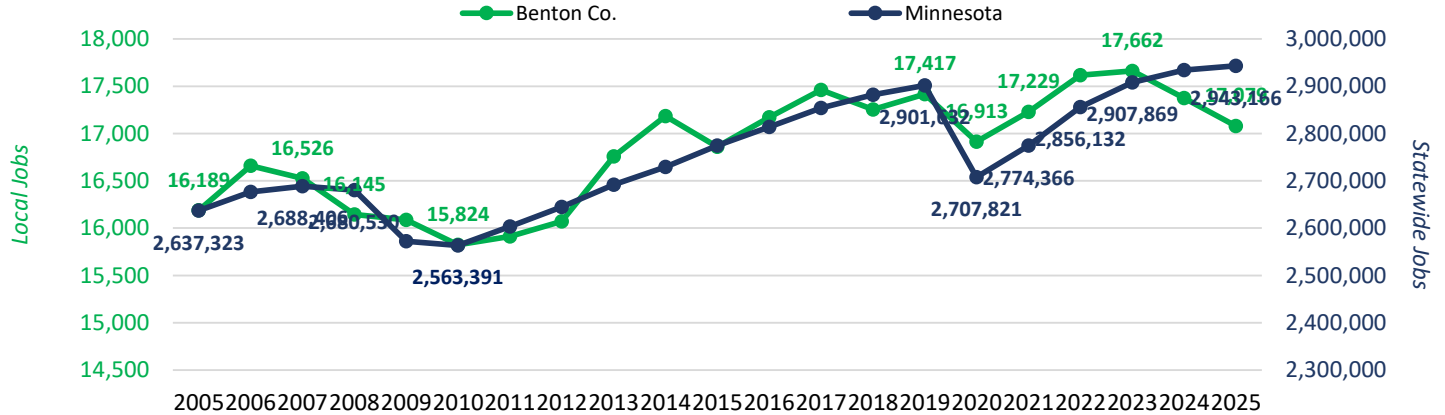
**17,079** jobs

**\$1,004,914,027** total industry payroll

Job change,  
2020-2025

**166 jobs**  
**1.0% increase**

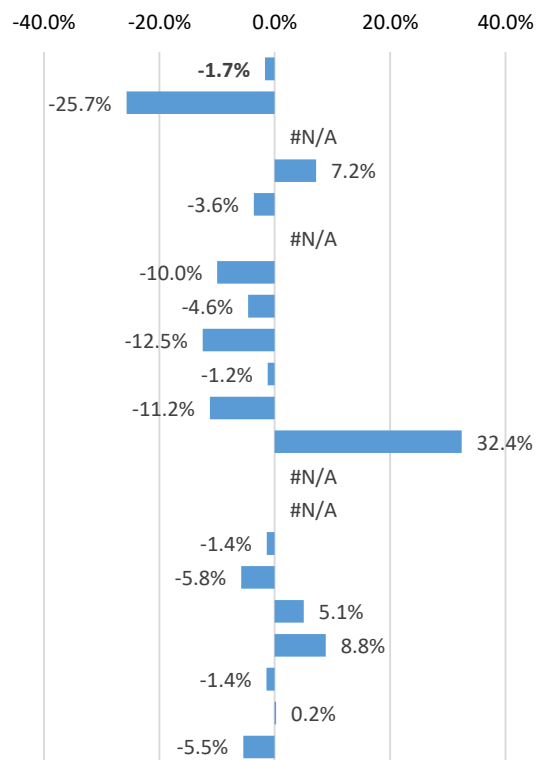
**Figure 16. Industry Employment Statistics, 2005-2025**



Source: DEED QCEW program

|  | Number of Jobs | Percent of Total Jobs | Average Annual Wage |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Total, All Industries</b>             | <b>17,079</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>         | <b>\$58,812</b>     |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting | 240            | 1.4%                  | \$51,064            |
| Mining                                   | #N/A           | #N/A                  | #N/A                |
| Construction                             | 2,751          | 16.1%                 | \$86,424            |
| Manufacturing                            | 3,274          | 19.2%                 | \$65,468            |
| Utilities                                | #N/A           | #N/A                  | #N/A                |
| Wholesale Trade                          | 1,148          | 6.7%                  | \$76,232            |
| Retail Trade                             | 1,739          | 10.2%                 | \$39,052            |
| Transportation & Warehousing             | 630            | 3.7%                  | \$61,984            |
| Information                              | 81             | 0.5%                  | \$69,732            |
| Finance & Insurance                      | 269            | 1.6%                  | \$62,452            |
| Real Estate & Rental & Leasing           | 192            | 1.1%                  | \$51,948            |
| Professional & Technical Services        | #N/A           | #N/A                  | #N/A                |
| Management of Companies                  | #N/A           | #N/A                  | #N/A                |
| Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services    | 496            | 2.9%                  | \$55,744            |
| Educational Services                     | 1,117          | 6.5%                  | \$56,472            |
| Health Care & Social Assistance          | 2,453          | 14.4%                 | \$39,208            |
| Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation        | 197            | 1.2%                  | \$29,172            |
| Accommodation & Food Services            | 1,023          | 6.0%                  | \$19,968            |
| Other Services                           | 404            | 2.4%                  | \$33,592            |
| Public Administration                    | 503            | 2.9%                  | \$67,184            |

**Figure 17. Change in Jobs, 2024-2025**



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

**For more information on Benton Co.'s population, labor force, and economic trends, contact:**

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Data updated: May 15, 2026