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# IDAHO AT A GLANCE

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Facts and figures  
about Idaho,  
its geography,  
resources, and  
people

Idaho Department of Commerce

# IDAHO AT A GLANCE

We are pleased to have the opportunity to answer your questions about what it is like to live and work in this beautiful part of America. We hope you find the following information useful.

## EMPLOYMENT

Idaho has a strong and diversified economy. While the traditional resource-based industries of agriculture, forest products, and mining are major segments of the economy, retail and wholesale trade, tourism, electronics, health services, and information-oriented services are among the growth sectors. As in any economy, employment growth in Idaho is not uniform. In the past few years, some counties experienced strong positive growth, some remained unchanged, and some experienced declines. Employment growth in 1998 and 1999 is expected to occur at a slower rate than earlier in the decade, but still higher than the national average.

For employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors, contact the Idaho Department of Labor at 317 Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735. It has 24 job service offices strategically distributed throughout the state to assist you. Addresses and phone numbers for the job service offices can be found in the Dept. of Labor Directory on their home page at <http://www.doe.state.id.us>. Idaho's larger communities are also served by excellent private firms that match job seekers with employment opportunities in the private sector.

### AVERAGE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

	1997
Civilian Labor Force	633,600
Unemployment	33,800
Percent Unemployment	5.3%
Total Employment	599,800

### NON-FARM WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT

Annual Average	1997	1994
Total	508,600	460,900
Mining	3,100	2,400
Construction	31,900	28,700
Manufacturing	74,400	71,900
Trans., Commun., & Public Utilities	24,000	21,800
Wholesale Trade	29,900	26,600
Retail Trade	98,800	90,100
Finance, Ins., & Real Estate	25,400	24,100
Services	121,800	102,400
Government	99,300	92,900

### AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY – 1997

Total Manufacturing.....	\$12.46
Food & Kindred Products.....	10.70
Lumber & Wood Products.....	11.56
Mining .....	14.81
Construction .....	16.47
Communications .....	17.53
Utilities .....	18.66
Wholesale Trade .....	11.35
Retail Trade .....	8.09

### MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE BY OCCUPATION –1996/1997

Managers, Financial .....	21.30
Managers, General .....	19.00
Computer Programmers .....	18.70
Systems, Analysts, EDP .....	17.10
Engineers, Electrical & Electronic .....	28.80
Electronic Technicians & Technologists .....	13.40
Accountants .....	15.00
Salespersons-Retail .....	7.40
Clerks, General Office .....	8.50
Cashiers .....	5.70
Secretaries, General Office .....	9.20
Receptionists & Information Clerks .....	7.60
Assemblers, Electrical & Electronic .....	7.20
Assemblers & Fabricators- Excl Mach, Elec, Precision .....	8.00
Electricians .....	18.90
Helper-Construction Trades .....	8.90
Carpenters .....	13.20
Welders .....	11.20
Truck Drivers, Heavy or Tractor Trailer .....	12.10
Log Fallers & Buckers .....	19.40
Logging Tractor Operators .....	16.80
Machine Oper/Tender, Crushing/ Grinding/Mixing/Blending .....	11.10
Mechanics, Machinery Maintenance .....	11.80
Janitors .....	6.90
Nurses, Registered .....	17.30
Social Workers .....	12.20
Medical & Clinical Lab Technologists .....	17.50
Nursing Aides, Orderlies/Attendants .....	6.80
Cooks, Restaurant .....	6.60

## 1996 POPULATION

STATE OF IDAHO .....	1,189,251	
<u>Largest Cities</u>	<u>7/1/96</u>	<u>% Change 90-96</u>
Boise City .....	152,737	20.6%
Pocatello .....	51,344	11.3%
Idaho Falls .....	48,079	9.3%
Nampa .....	37,558	32.4%
Twin Falls .....	31,989	15.8%
Coeur d'Alene .....	31,076	26.5%
Lewiston .....	30,271	7.8%
Caldwell .....	21,089	14.6%
Meridian .....	20,627	115.0%
Moscow .....	20,101	9.3%
Post Falls .....	14,303	94.6%
Rexburg .....	14,204	-0.7%
Blackfoot .....	10,406	7.9%
Burley .....	9,498	9.1%
Mountain Home .....	8,988	13.6%
Chubbuck .....	8,876	13.9%
Garden City .....	8,714	36.8%
Hayden .....	7,951	62.7%
Jerome .....	7,292	11.7%
Sandpoint .....	6,748	29.7%
Payette .....	6,647	17.2%

## COST OF LIVING

On the basis of average housing costs, utilities, health care, transportation, groceries, and other services, Idaho's cost of living is the second lowest of the eleven western states. Boise's cost of living is 101.9% of the national average, Pocatello's is 95.2%, and Twin Falls' is 98.3%. The chart at the right provides a comparison of the relative cost of living in the western states averaged over four quarters for the participating cities within those states.

Source: ACCRA Cost of Living Index  
1st quarter to 4th quarter, 1997.

## INDEX

95.2	WY
98.4	ID
99.3	UT
100.0	NAT'L AVG
100.7	MT
101.2	NM
101.8	CO
106.6	OR
107.4	NV
108.4	WA
113.5	AZ
115.6	CA

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The yellow pages of telephone books provide an excellent profile of economic activity and employment possibilities for most communities. To obtain telephone books for Idaho communities, dial 1 (800) 422-8793 (U.S. West). New residents will find the local newspapers useful. Below are the addresses of Idaho's largest daily newspapers.

Boise	The Idaho Statesman P.O. Box 40 Boise, Idaho 83707 (208) 377-6200	Moscow	The Daily News 409 S. Jackson Moscow, Idaho 83843 (208) 882-5561
Coeur d'Alene	The Coeur d'Alene Press 201 N. Second Street Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814 (208) 664-8176	Nampa	The Idaho Press-Tribune P.O. Box 9399 Nampa, Idaho 83652 (208) 467-9251
Idaho Falls	The Post Register 333 Northgate Mile Idaho Falls, Idaho 83403 (208) 522-1800	Pocatello	The Idaho State Journal P.O. Box 431 Pocatello, Idaho 83204 (208) 232-4161
Lewiston	The Lewiston Morning Tribune 505 C. Street Lewiston, Idaho 83501 (208) 743-9411	Twin Falls	The Times-News P.O. Box 548 Twin Falls, Idaho 83303 (208) 733-0931

Another useful source of information is the Idaho Blue Book. In just over 300 pages, it describes Idaho's history, government, economy, education system, and recreational opportunities. It can be obtained for \$10.00 payable to the Secretary of State, Room 203, Statehouse, Boise, Idaho 83720-0080.

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## TAXES

The combined total of state and local taxes on income, property, sales, and autos for a family of four with \$25,000 annual income in Boise, Idaho, is lower than that in the largest city of 41 other states. For a family with an income level of \$50,000, the total tax is lower than that in the largest city of 29 other states. For a family with an income level of \$75,000, it is lower than that in the largest city of 20 other states.

Source: Washington, D.C., Office of Tax and Revenue, 1997.

In fiscal year 1994, 23 of the 50 states had higher overall taxes per \$1,000 of total personal income than Idaho, and only 13 states had lower overall taxes per capita.

Source: Idaho Tax Commission

### PROPERTY TAXES

Below are average property tax rates within the following communities:

Boise	1.7410%
Coeur d'Alene	1.5926%
Idaho Falls	2.1826%
Lewiston	2.0858%
Nampa	1.9809%
Pocatello	2.5013%
Twin Falls	1.8743%

Because of the homeowner's exemption, these rates are applied to only half of the value of the first \$100,000 of improvements on owner-occupied homesites but are applied to 100% of the land value. These rates represent the rates in the largest city in selected counties.

Source: Idaho Tax Commission Average Urban Tax Rate (by county) -1997

### PERSONAL INCOME TAX

Idaho income taxes are graduated. For married couples and heads of households, for each \$2,000 increment of the first \$10,000 of taxable income, the following rates apply: 2%, 4%, 4.5%, 5.5%, and 6.5% respectively. The rate is 7.5% for taxable income between \$10,000 and \$15,000, 7.8% between \$15,000 and \$40,000, and the maximum tax rate when taxable income exceeds \$40,000 is 8.2%. These rates apply to incomes of single taxpayers at income levels of one-half those of married couples filing jointly. Idaho's definition of taxable income closely parallels the definition used by the federal government. While out-of-state pension income is taxable, a credit for taxes paid to another state may be available.

For more tax information, contact: Idaho State Tax Commission, 800 Park Blvd., Boise, Idaho 83722, (208) 334-7660.

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## HOUSING

Since property values vary tremendously from community to community and even within a community, we suggest you contact a real estate broker in your locality who is a member of a national relocation network. As a free service, the broker can put you in touch with qualified real estate professionals in specific Idaho communities.

Idaho's housing costs are moderate and affordable, and homes are available from modest cottages to executive estates. The following table portrays the average house value in geographically representative Idaho communities:

### 1997 AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING COST

Community	Median \$ Value	Mean \$ Value
Boise	112,300	132,300
Burley/Rupert	63,100	74,200
Coeur d'Alene	96,400	114,800
Idaho Falls	86,300	98,100
Ketchum/Sun Valley	250,600	385,600
Lewiston	87,000	96,700
Nampa/Caldwell	86,800	95,300
Pocatello	82,500	91,700
Sandpoint	100,400	122,500
Twin Falls	73,500	85,500

Source: Idaho Association of Realtors

### RESIDENTIAL ENERGY COSTS

Idaho provides a substantial energy cost advantage over much of the nation, with competitive natural gas rates and some of the lowest residential electric rates in the country. Rates vary regionally as the following data demonstrates:

#### SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Electricity</u>
\$37.81/mo	49.60/mo
(75 Therms/mo)	(1,000 KWH/mo)

#### NORTHERN IDAHO

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Electricity</u>
\$34.71/mo	\$43.62/mo
(75 Therms/mo)	(1,000 KWH/mo)

#### SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO

<u>Natural Gas</u>	<u>Electricity*</u>
\$37.81/mo	\$62.68/mo
(75 Therms/mo)	(1,000 KWH/mo)

\*However, the electricity rates for the majority of the population of southeastern Idaho are the same as the rates for southwestern Idaho.

## CLIMATE

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

	<u>Elevation</u>	<u>Annual Mean Precipitation</u>	<u>Mean Snowfall</u>	<u>July Avg High Temp</u>	<u>Jan Avg Low Temp</u>	<u>July Avg Afternoon Humidity</u>
Boise	2,840	12.0 in.	21.3 in.	90.5	21.2	22%
Coeur d'Alene	2,160	25.7 in.	52.2 in.	85.1	22.3	34%
Idaho Falls	4,730	10.9 in.	37.5 in.	86.0	10.0	25%
Lewiston	1,440	12.4 in.	19.8 in.	89.0	27.1	34%
Pocatello	4,450	12.2 in.	47.2 in.	88.0	14.4	38%
Twin Falls	3,960	10.5 in.	31.3 in.	85.0	19.0	27%

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## HOSPITALS

Almost every Idaho community with a population more than 2,500 is within 13 miles of a hospital. Of the two community exceptions, the farthest distance to a hospital is about 16 miles. There are 50 licensed hospitals in the state.

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## CRIME RATE

Idaho's crime rate is the lowest in the West. In fact, according to FBI data, the rate of serious crime here is 21% less than the national average.

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## WATER QUALITY

Much of Idaho's surface water flows out of the high mountains and is generally of high quality. People swim and fish in the center of Boise, the state's largest city, and water-based sports are enjoyed throughout the state. In addition, high-quality ground water is pumped extensively for agriculture, industrial, and residential use from the Snake River Plain aquifer across southern Idaho and from the Rathdrum Prairie aquifer in the northern panhandle. For detailed information on water quality, contact: Bureau of Water Quality, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, Idaho 83706-1255, (208) 373-0502.

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## AIR QUALITY

Idaho's air quality is generally good throughout the year. A few locations experience temperature inversions in the winter months, and in some localities pollen can affect people who have allergies. For detailed information about specific areas of the state, contact: Bureau of Air Quality, 1410 N. Hilton, Boise, Idaho 83706-1255, (208) 373-0502.

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## COMMUTING TIME

The average commuting time from home to work in Idaho is about 17 minutes.

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## CULTURE

Culture activities in Idaho are as diverse as the state's geography. World-famous resorts host first-class musical performers, theatre, winter carnivals, and art shows. Idaho is home to a symphony orchestra, opera and ballet companies, chamber music groups, and a summer Shakespeare festival. But culture comes in many forms throughout the state: jazz and bluegrass music, big-name stars, nationally recognized music festivals, community theatre, rodeos, county fairs, and professional sports. For information, contact: Idaho Travel Council, 700 West State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0093, (208) 334-2470.

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## AUTO REGISTRATION AND TITLE AND DRIVERS' LICENSING

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

<u>Service</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Registration and Title Transfer	County Assessor
Drivers' Licenses	County Sheriff

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## RECREATION

All of Idaho is a haven for recreation enthusiasts. The northern portion has the greatest concentration of lakes in the West, and evergreen forests abound. The Salmon River bisects the rugged Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness and provides some of the best whitewater kayaking and rafting in the world. On the south side of this wilderness are the beautiful Sawtooth Wilderness Area and the majestic White Cloud Peaks. World-famous Sun Valley is located nearby.

Hells Canyon, the deepest gorge in North America, lies on the state's western border, overlooked by the Seven Devils Mountains. In the southwestern corner of Idaho are the tallest sand dunes on the continent. In the south-east is the Craters of the Moon National Monument, where America's astronauts trained for their moonwalks. Idaho has 19 ski areas, 600 miles of nordic trails, 464,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs, 6,000 miles of streams, 2,400 miles of floatable rivers, 22 state parks, and 15 national forests.

For information on fish and game regulations and species, contact: Idaho Department of Fish and Game, 600 S. Walnut, Boise, Idaho 83712, (208) 334-3700. For recorded information on tourism, fish and game regulations, and related subjects, call 1-800-635-7820.

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## HISTORY

Idaho's history is rich in texture, from the early preeminence of American Indians to the pioneer fur trappers, miners, lumber barons, railroad builders, and farmers who later populated the territory. Remnants of this history can still be viewed today in many parts of the state. For further information on Idaho history, contact: Idaho Historical Society, 210 Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83702, (208) 334-2682.

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## EDUCATION

Idaho has a highly educated populace: It has the sixth-highest literacy rate in the nation, and when comparing the percentage of the population that has graduated from high school, it ranks 14th (85.9%) in the nation. Over 68% of the state's total general fund is allocated to education. Idaho's students score well above the national average on the SAT. More than 96% of Idaho's school-age children attend public schools, demonstrating a high level of public confidence and ensuring a demographically balanced student population.

For information on Idaho's overall primary and secondary school system, contact: Superintendent of Public Instruction, Room 200, Len B. Jordan Building, 650 W. State Street, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0027, (208) 332-6800.

Idaho's college and vocational education opportunities are available throughout the state. Higher education is provided by ten institutions, including three state universities, one four-year state college, and two community colleges. Every city with a population over 15,000 except two has a college or university, and off-campus programs are available at convenient locations throughout the state. In addition, there are eight vocational-technical training centers. These centers also provide training at business facilities off-campus.

Idaho's universities and colleges bring training, research, and technical assistance programs within reach of the entire state via computer, telecommunications, and video. Recent full-time equivalent (FTE) college academic enrollment data is shown below:

<u>Public Universities</u>	<u>1997 FTE Enrollment</u>
University of Idaho Moscow, Idaho	9,154
Boise State University Boise, Idaho	9,782
Idaho State University Pocatello, Idaho	8,164

<u>Public Four-Year College</u>	<u>1997 FTE Enrollment</u>
Lewis-Clark State College Lewiston, Idaho	1,927

<u>Private Four-Year Colleges</u>	<u>1997 FTE Enrollment</u>
Albertson College of Idaho Caldwell, Idaho	648
Northwest Nazarene College Nampa, Idaho	1,051
Boise Bible College Boise, Idaho	98
<u>Public Community Colleges</u>	<u>1997 FTE Enrollment</u>
College of Southern Idaho Twin Falls, Idaho	2,452
North Idaho College Coeur d'Alene, Idaho	2,343
<u>Private Two-Year College</u>	<u>1997 FTE Enrollment</u>
Ricks College Rexburg, Idaho	8,250

For information on specific colleges or universities, contact: Office of the State Board of Education, Len B. Jordan Building, Room 307, Boise, Idaho 83720, (208) 334-2270. University catalogs may be obtained by writing to each university.



For the addresses of community Chambers of Commerce or for demographic and economic information pertaining to specific counties and communities, please contact:

Idaho Department of Commerce  
700 W. State Street  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, Idaho 83720-0093  
(208) 334-2470  
IDC98 33120-10M

Upon request, information in this pamphlet will be provided in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.

The Idaho Department of Commerce is an equal opportunity employer.