

For Vermont workers and families, geography matters

Employment grew in April for the fourth straight month, adding more than 1,000 people to the ranks of working Vermonters. But from 2012 to 2017 the total number of people employed in the state shrank by nearly 3,000, or about one percent. The losses have not been evenly distributed. Only four counties—Addison, Chittenden, Lamoille, and Washington—saw employment gains, which totaled more than 2,000 over the

LATEST BLS DATA - MAY 18, 2018			
	APR 2018	MAR 2018	APR 2017
Labor Force	348,039	346,963	344,587
Employment	338,438	337,376	333,951
Unemployment	9,601	9,587	10,636
Unemployment Rate	2.8%	2.8%	3.1%

five-year period.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Food stamp needs

In March one in nine Vermonters relied on 3SquaresVT, the state's food stamp program.¹ While that number is down from the height of the recession, more than 70,000 Vermonters still need help getting enough to eat. And where they live makes a difference: Residents of the Northeast Kingdom were twice as likely to need assistance as residents of Chittenden and Addison counties. Reliance on 3SquaresVT in Southern Vermont was also higher than the statewide average.

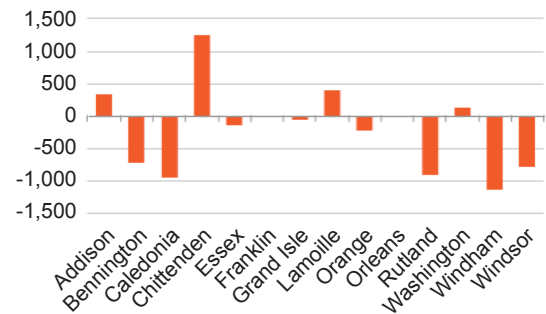
Child care costs

Challenges in the child care market differ by geography as well. The maximum state payment through the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) for a preschool-age child was \$173.53 a week in 2017. Subsidies are linked to rated quality, with higher amounts going to higher-quality providers. But even the maximum payment would cover the average cost for full-time care for a preschool-age child in only one county, Caledonia. The maximum payment is also lower than the federally recommended level for state child care subsidies.

1 3SquaresVT is Vermont's name for its federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Employment has declined in most counties

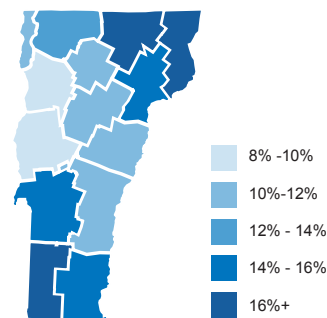
Change in average annual employment, by county, 2012-2017



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

Reliance on food aid is highest in the north

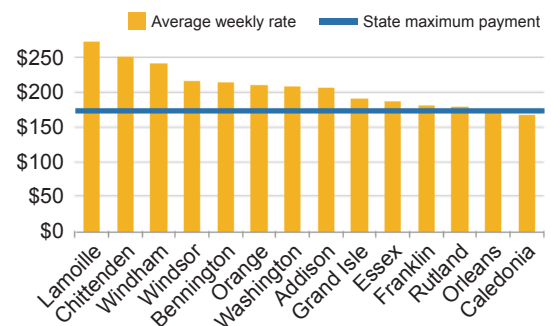
Share of population receiving 3SquaresVT benefits, by county, March 2018



Data sources: Vermont Department for Children and Families and U.S. Census Bureau Population Division, Annual Estimates of Resident Population, 2017

Child care subsidies don't cover costs equally

Average weekly child care cost and state subsidy, by county, 2017



Data source: Vermont Department for Children and Families

Note: Weekly rates are for a preschool-age child in a licensed center full time. The state maximum payment is only for providers with the highest quality rating.