

Hardest-Working States in America

Americans are hard workers, putting in an average of [1,800 hours per year](#), according to the World Economic Forum. That's 468 hours per year more than Germans work, but 405 fewer than Mexicans do, for example.

Even when given the chance to take time off, many Americans won't, as nearly half of workers don't expect to use all of their allotted vacation days. It is possible to work hard without overdoing it, though. Hard work is key to success, and the residents of some states understand that better than others.

To determine where Americans work the hardest, WalletHub compared the 50 states across 10 key indicators. They range from average workweek hours to the share of workers with multiple jobs to the average leisure time spent per day.



“It’s undeniable that America has fostered a culture of hard work, with people working longer hours than residents of other developed countries and often leaving vacation time on the table. Working hard is commendable, but people in the hardest-working states may need to consider taking a break once in a while, as a lack of leisure time can have a negative impact on people’s physical and mental health.”

- *Chip Lupo, WalletHub Analyst*

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Main Findings

Hardest-Working States in the U.S.

Overall Rank*	State	Total Score	Direct Work Factors Rank	Indirect Work Factors Rank
1	South Dakota	64.59	2	19
2	North Dakota	62.71	1	45
3	Alaska	61.16	3	12
4	Hawaii	59.83	4	1
5	Wyoming	58.11	7	2
6	Nebraska	54.54	5	38
7	Texas	54.27	6	36
8	New Hampshire	53.42	12	10
9	Tennessee	53.10	11	18
10	Georgia	52.36	9	28
11	Virginia	51.89	14	14
12	Kansas	51.38	15	15
13	Oklahoma	50.58	10	41
14	Maryland	50.38	18	3
15	Colorado	50.37	16	16
16	Alabama	47.68	8	49
17	Montana	47.21	21	13
18	Iowa	47.17	17	30
19	Indiana	45.98	20	25
20	Wisconsin	45.45	25	17
21	Mississippi	44.78	13	50
22	Louisiana	44.00	19	42
23	Utah	43.89	33	4
24	Vermont	43.58	24	35
25	Minnesota	43.49	30	8
26	Idaho	43.17	31	9
27	Maine	42.77	27	23
28	Arizona	41.85	29	20
29	Arkansas	41.51	23	46
30	Florida	41.20	26	43
31	Missouri	40.75	28	40
32	North Carolina	40.71	22	48
33	Kentucky	39.53	34	32
34	Delaware	39.08	39	6
35	Connecticut	38.81	37	11
36	South Carolina	38.03	32	44
37	Massachusetts	37.74	43	5
38	Washington	37.71	41	7
39	New Mexico	37.17	35	29
40	Illinois	36.90	38	22

41	Pennsylvania	36.27	36	31
42	West Virginia	33.85	42	39
43	New York	33.04	45	24
44	California	32.72	46	26
45	Rhode Island	32.00	44	37
46	Nevada	31.96	40	47
47	Ohio	31.90	47	27
48	New Jersey	30.79	48	33
49	Oregon	29.21	49	21
50	Michigan	27.32	50	34

Notes: *No. 1 = Hardest Working

With the exception of “Total Score,” all of the columns in the table above depict the relative rank of that state, where a rank of 1 represents the best conditions for that metric category.

In-Depth Look at the Hardest-Working States

South Dakota

South Dakota is the hardest-working state, in part because 6.5% of workers have multiple jobs, the 11th-highest percentage in the country. Although this may not be an ideal situation, indicating that people’s main jobs are not paying them enough, it’s still a testament to how hard South Dakota residents are willing to work.

In addition, South Dakota has the fifth-lowest share of “idle youth” – people ages 18 to 24 who are not in school, are not working and have no school experience beyond a high school diploma. This shows that young adults are actively trying to advance their education or career paths.

Finally, hard work continues to define South Dakotans, who also boast the highest employment rate in the country, at nearly 98%.

North Dakota

North Dakota ranks second among the hardest-working states, in part because it has the third-highest employment rate in the country, over 97%. Plus, workers ages 16 to 64 work an average of 39.4 hours per week – the fifth-most in the country.

People in the Roughrider State are also more likely to juggle multiple jobs, as North Dakota has the fourth-highest share of workers with multiple jobs. In addition, 33.5% of workers leave some vacation time unused, the second-highest percentage.

To top things off, both adults and young people stay busy in North Dakota. The state has the eighth-lowest share of households where no adults work, and the second-lowest share of people ages 18 to 24 with no degree beyond a high school diploma who are not in school and not working.

Alaska

Alaska has the third-hardest-working residents in the country. The average Alaskan worker between the ages of 16 and 64 works 41.4 hours per week, the highest number of hours in the country. This is significant because Alaska is the only state where the average exceeds 40 hours per week. For comparison, people in the District of Columbia work an average of 40 hours per week, but Alaska exceeds that by 1.4 hours.

In addition, Alaska has the 12th-highest share of workers who leave some vacation time unused, at 27.5%. It also has the 12th-highest share of workers who have more than one job and the 10th-lowest share of households where no adults work.

Methodology

In order to determine where the hardest-working Americans live, WalletHub compared the 50 states across two key dimensions: “Direct Work Factors” and “Indirect Work Factors.”

We evaluated those dimensions using ten key metrics, which are listed below with their corresponding weights. Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with a score of 100 representing the “hardest-working.”

We then determined each state’s weighted average across all metrics to calculate its overall score and used the resulting scores to rank-order the states.

Direct Work Factors – Total Points: 80

1. Average Workweek Hours: Triple Weight (~32.00 Points)

2. Employment Rate: Double Weight (~21.33 Points)

Note: This metric was calculated as follows: civilian population aged 16 and over employed / total civilian population aged 16 and over in labor force.

3. Share of Households where No Adults Work: Full Weight (~10.67 Points)

4. Share of Workers Leaving Vacation Time Unused: Half Weight (~5.33 Points)

5. Share of Engaged Workers: Half Weight (~5.33 Points)

Note: This metric measures the share of employees who are “involved in, enthusiastic about and committed to their work and workplace,” as defined by Gallup.

6. Idle Youth (18-24) Rate: *Half Weight (~5.33 Points)*

Note: This metric measures the rate of residents aged 18-24 who are not currently enrolled in school, not working and have no degree beyond a high school diploma or GED.

Indirect Work Factors – Total Points: 20

7. Average Commute Time: *Full Weight (~5.00 Points)*

8. Share of Workers with Multiple Jobs: *Full Weight (~5.00 Points)*

Note: This metric was calculated as share of employed population with multiple jobs among total employed population.

9. Annual Volunteer Hours per Resident: *Full Weight (~5.00 Points)*

10. Average Leisure Time Spent per Day: *Full Weight (~5.00 Points)*

Sources: Data used to create this ranking were collected as of July 27, 2026 from the U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Travel Association, Gallup, The Annie E. Casey Foundation and AmeriCorps.