

Best Cities For Jobs In 2008

Matthew Kirdahy, 01.10.08, 12:00 PM ET



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The Lone Star State shines brilliantly in a list of the best places to work in the U.S. when some economists peer into their crystal balls for 2008.

Austin, Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio all rank high on the latest forecast data from **Moody's** (nyse: [MCO - news - people](#)) Economy.com. McAllen, Texas, is expected to have the highest job growth rate, as its leisure and hospitality, educational and health services and commercial construction jobs flourish.

"While the economy is cooling, Texas continues to generate more jobs than the national average," said Krista Piferrer, deputy press secretary to Gov. Rick Perry. "Unemployment is low in Texas, thanks in large part to a favorable business climate that encourages businesses to expand or relocate to our state."

In Pictures: [Best Cities For Jobs 2008](#)

Even still, Salt Lake City, in all its tech-job abundance, looks like it will remain No. 1 since Forbes.com's most recent ranking ([see last year's story](#)).

To compile the rankings for the Best Cities For Jobs list forecast, we used five data points, weighted equally: the state's unemployment rate, job growth, income growth, median household income and cost of living for full-year 2006 (only partial data is available so far for 2007). We measured the largest 100 metropolitan areas, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, and obtained the data from Moody's [Economy.com](#).

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The numbers are compiled based on greater metropolitan areas; it's also important to note that this list doesn't weigh specifics like job composition or job stability, two significant characteristics that will appeal to any job seeker.

Mark Zandi, chief economist and co-founder of Moody's Economy.com, acknowledged the housing market depression the company is facing and said the destinations that prevail on this list weren't as heavily vested in the real estate development boom, which ultimately led to a historic bust.

That's not to say the highest-ranking cities on this list are completely in the clear, though: "If we have a national recession, if problems intensify nationwide, these economies are going to struggle," Zandi said.

The top cities on this list also include Atlanta, plentiful in transportation, distribution and financial services careers. Indianapolis has a strong showing in agriculture, too. Omaha, Neb., Warren Buffet's hometown, offers jobs at opposite ends of the spectrum, in financial services and agriculture as well. The Emerald City--Seattle--brings aerospace and global trade professions to the table.

Kurt Ronn, president and founder of [HRworks](#), an Atlanta-based job recruitment and consulting firm, said Americans gravitate to certain locales based on opportunity and affordability, both offered right in his backyard.

He noted that, on a broad scale, the employment picture has been strong in the areas of technology and logistics, such as in distribution and sales.

Some notables: Honolulu is the best in the pack for low unemployment, a good sign that tourism there remains healthy. Edison, N.J., ranked the highest in the median income category. Buffalo, N.Y., has the lowest cost of living, while San Jose, Calif., has the highest. New York sits at No. 58 on the list, while Los Angeles is No. 87.