

Total nonfarm employment in the Wichita metropolitan area¹ declined by approximately 2,500 workers in 2017, a 0.8 percent contraction of the workforce, after the Wichita area had posted five consecutive years of job gains from 2012 through 2016. The area experienced a sharper downturn in employment than occurred at the state level in 2017, following stronger than state-average employment growth for the Wichita area in 2015 and 2016. The Wichita area's unemployment rate declined to 4.2 percent in 2017, the seventh consecutive year of decline in unemployment in the area.

Wichita's employment growth is expected to flatten in 2018, with a modest contraction of fewer than 200 jobs. In 2019, growth is projected to resume at 0.8 percent, adding almost 2,500 jobs, which would return the Wichita area to near its 2016 level of employment.

- Wichita's production sector declined in employment in both 2016 and 2017, collectively losing almost 700 jobs in that time, but positive growth is forecast in 2019 in both the manufacturing sector and natural resources and construction sector. After five years of employment declines in the manufacturing sector, renewed local investment by major manufacturing firms will help encourage growth. Manufacturing employment is expected to rise 0.3 percent in 2019, with growth in both the durable and non-durable manufacturing subsectors, adding more than 150 jobs in total. The natural resources and construction sector is forecast to add more than 500 jobs in 2019, based on positive indicators in both residential and non-residential building permits in the area. With its projected growth of 3.1 percent, the sector would add the most jobs in a single year since 2014.
- Employment in the trade, transportation, and utilities sector declined by more than 1,300 jobs in 2017. Job losses were concentrated in retail trade sector employment, which declined by more than 900 workers, as taxable retail sales in the Wichita area declined by 3.5 percent after adjusting for inflation. In 2019, Wichita's trade, transportation and utilities employment is expected to grow by 0.6 percent, creating almost 300 new jobs. Taxable retail sales are also projected to rebound with growth of 0.4 percent.
- The service sectors are projected to add more than 1,000 jobs in 2019, with a projected growth rate of 0.8 percent. The leisure and hospitality sector and the professional and business services sector are forecast to be the fastest growing service sectors. Leisure and hospitality employment is projected to grow 1.2 percent, which would be the sector's eighth consecutive year of faster than average employment growth in the area. Professional and business services are expected to recover some of their 2017 job losses in 2019, with more than 200 new jobs added. The information sector is the only service sector projected to lose jobs in 2019, with a 0.1 percent contraction in employment. Financial activities employment is forecast to gain less than 100 jobs, and education and health services employment is projected to expand 0.7 percent.
- Wichita's governmental sector employment is projected to increase by more than 400 jobs in 2019, for 1.1 percent growth. Local government employment is forecast to add more than 300

¹ The Wichita metropolitan consists of Sedgwick, Butler, Harvey, Kingman, and Sumner counties.

jobs, while employment in the state government is expected to increase by approximately 150 workers.

Wichita MSA Employment by Industry Summary*					
	2017 (a)	2018 (e)	2019 (f)	2018-2019 Level Change	2018-2019 Percent Change
Total Nonfarm	294,718	294,522	296,979	2,456	0.8%
Production Sectors	67,732	67,970	68,640	670	1.0%
Natural Resources, Mining & Cons.	16,265	16,344	16,851	507	3.1%
Manufacturing	51,467	51,627	51,789	162	0.3%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	51,200	49,994	50,283	290	0.6%
Service Sectors	134,993	135,052	136,071	1,019	0.8%
Information	14,609	14,594	14,582	-12	-0.1%
Financial Activities	11,508	11,581	11,623	42	0.4%
Professional & Business Services	32,579	32,474	32,733	260	0.8%
Education & Health Services	43,620	42,960	43,275	315	0.7%
Leisure & Hospitality & Other	32,676	33,443	33,858	415	1.2%
Government	40,793	41,507	41,984	477	1.1%
*Annual values are derived from average quarterly observations and projections.					
(a) actual (e) estimated (f) forecasted					

