



Oklahoma's Employment Mix Changes Since COVID

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OKLAHOMA CITY - The Oklahoma City Branch of the Federal Reserve of Kansas City released its latest issue of the quarterly publication the *Oklahoma Economist*, titled "Oklahoma's Changing Employment Mix Since COVID: More Warehouse and Finance Jobs, Fewer Energy and Office Support Jobs."

By summer 2022, Oklahoma's total employment had almost returned to pre-COVID levels, after dropping 10% in the spring of 2020, according to Chad Wilkerson, branch executive, vice president and economist at the Oklahoma City Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

"While nearly the same number of people are now employed in the state as in 2019, the industries in which many of them work have changed," he said. "In some sectors, employment is still more than 10% below pre-pandemic levels, while jobs in other industries are up markedly from three years ago."

Wilkerson said the state's energy sector, despite strong growth over the past year, remains the furthest away from pre-pandemic employment levels, as do some industries related to in-person office work.

"On the other hand, a number of industries now have considerably more workers than prior to the pandemic," he said.

"Warehousing and home delivery services have grown tremendously. While a couple of lower-wage industries—specialty retail and fast-service restaurants—have experienced strong growth, some higher-paying industries have also grown rapidly, including accounting, banking, and insurance."

The complete issue is available at www.kansascityfed.org/oklahomacity/oklahoma-economist.

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