

Civilian Labor Force

The Hickory MSA's unemployment rate was 5.0% in April 2021. Following national and state trends, the Hickory MSA's unemployment rate has dropped to 3.1% as of April 2022 (Figure 1). Between April 2021 and April 2022, the estimated number of employed persons increased from 158,762 to 167,330 (8,568), while the civilian labor force grew from 167,041 to 172,767 (5,726). In April 2022, the Hickory MSA had the fifth lowest (eleventh highest) unemployment rate among North Carolina MSAs (Table 1). April 2022 unemployment rates by county were Alexander 2.9%, Burke 3.0%, Caldwell 3.3% and Catawba 3.2%.

Figure 1. MSA Unemployment, Apr. 2021 - Apr. 2022

Source: NC Labor and Economic Analysis Division, 2022.

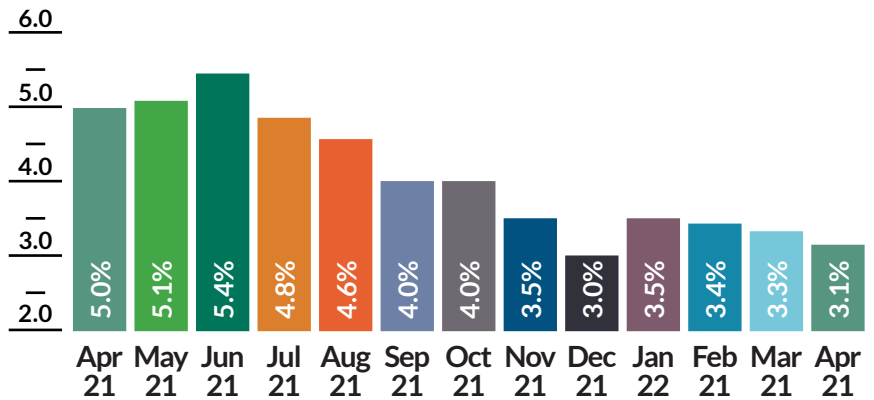


Table 1.

MSA Unemployment Rate, April 2022

Asheville	2.8%
Durham-Chapel Hill	2.8%
Raleigh	2.9%
Wilmington	3.0%
Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton	3.1%
Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia	3.2%
New Bern	3.2%
Winston-Salem	3.3%
Burlington	3.4%
Goldsboro	3.7%
Greenville	3.7%
Greensboro-High Point	3.8%
Jacksonville	3.8%
Fayetteville	5.1%
Rocky Mount	5.8%

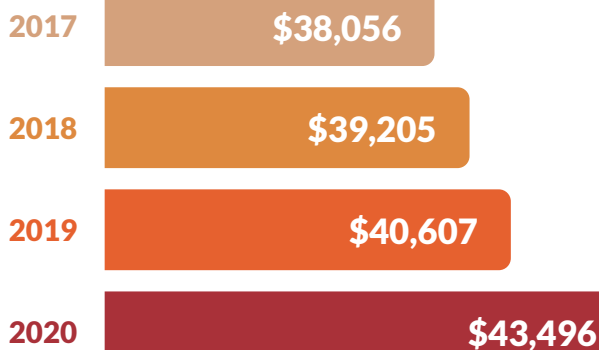
Source: NC Labor and Economic Analysis Division, 2022.

Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI)

Hickory MSA Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) grew from \$38,056 in 2017 to \$43,496 in 2020 (Figure 2). The Hickory MSA's 14.3% PCPI growth was much higher than the United States inflation rate (5.9%) between 2017 and 2020. The Hickory MSA's PCPI growth rate from 2017 to 2020 was higher than the North Carolina PCPI average growth rate (14.1%), but was lower than national average PCPI growth rate (14.9%). In 2020, the Hickory Metro ranked 333 of 384 US metro areas in PCPI with the third lowest PCPI among North Carolina's 15 metro areas. The Fayetteville MSA's PCPI (\$40,972) was the lowest among the State's metro areas in 2020.

Figure 2. Hickory MSA Per Capita Personal Income, 2017-2020

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2021.



PCPI increases occurred in each of the four Hickory MSA counties between 2017 and 2020. Three-year PCPI changes (2017-2020) by County were Alexander 12.6%, Burke 15.1%, Caldwell 14.9% and Catawba 13.9% (Table 2). In 2020, PCPI exceeded \$49,000 in Catawba County.

Table 2. Per Capita Personal Income, 2017 - 2020

Source: US Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2022.

County	2017	2018	2019	2020
Alexander	\$35,671	\$36,539	\$37,758	\$40,176
Burke	\$33,836	\$34,881	\$36,022	\$38,946
Caldwell	\$33,860	\$34,896	\$36,141	\$38,894
Catawba	\$43,207	\$44,528	\$46,184	\$49,193

EIN Spotlight | Hickory MSA Current Employment Statistics

The Current Employment Survey (CES) is produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Each month the program surveys about 144,000 businesses and government agencies across the United States. The survey, which covers approximately 554,000 individual worksites, provides detailed data by industry on employment patterns, as well as hours and earnings of workers on nonfarm payrolls for all 50 states and all metropolitan areas. Please note that CES data is not available at a county or municipal level.

This EIN Spotlight will focus on current employment trends in the Hickory MSA based on Current Employment Statistics results from April 2000 to April 2022. In particular, the analysis will determine the extent of employment changes for both goods-producing and service-providing sectors over the past three years (defined as April 2019 to April 2022) in order to analyze if employment in the Hickory MSA has returned to pre-pandemic levels.

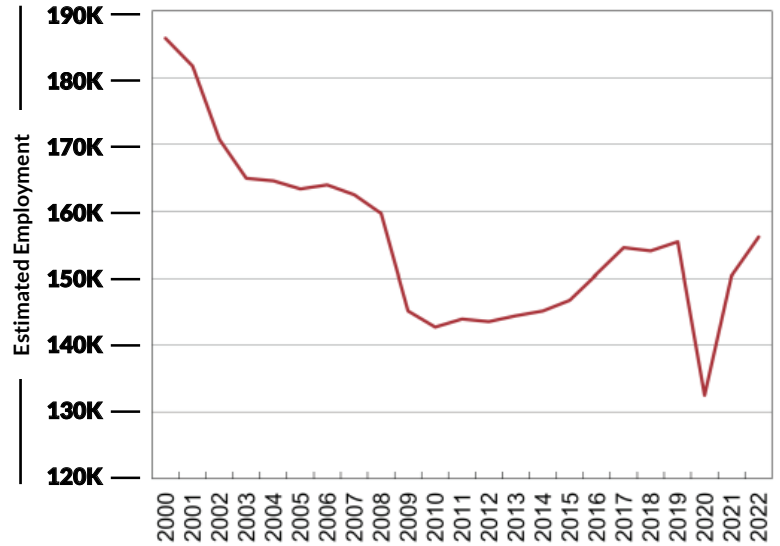
Figure 3 reveals total Hickory MSA employment estimates from the Current Employment Survey from April 2000 to April 2022. In April 2000, the region had an estimated 185,900 jobs. Two economic recessions between 2000 and 2010 lead to a 43,200 decline in regional employment. In other words, the region experienced a loss of nearly one in four workers (23.2% employment decline) during the 2000-2010 decade.

CES results reveal that estimated Hickory MSA total employment increased from 142,700 in April 2010 to 155,400 in April 2019 (Figure 4). Most employment growth occurred during the economic expansion between April 2015 and April 2019 (net gain of 8,700 jobs). The Covid-19 pandemic caused employment in the region to decrease by 22,900 jobs from April 2019 (155,400) to April 2020 (132,500). Since April 2020, the region has experienced rapid employment growth as the effects of the pandemic have waned. In fact, as of April 2022, the total number of jobs in the Hickory MSA (156,100) exceeded the number of employed workers in April 2019 (155,400).

Hickory MSA Goods-Producing Employment Trends

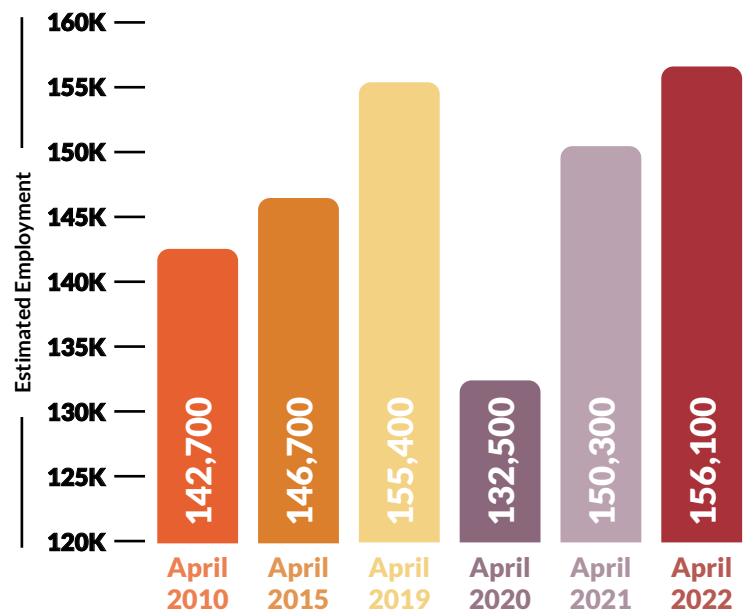
Hickory MSA Current Employment Survey data is divided into “goods-producing” and “service-providing” employment. Goods-producing employment includes jobs in the agriculture, mining, construction, and manufacturing industries. An analysis of Current Employment Survey data shows that goods-producing employment in the Hickory MSA has steadily fallen over the past 20 years (Figure 5, page 3). In April 2000, there were over 85,200 goods-producing workers in the region, with the majority of jobs in furniture and textiles manufacturing. Between 2000 and 2010, two economic recessions led to a loss of more than half of all goods-producing employment in the

Figure 3. Hickory MSA Estimated Employment, April 2000-April 2022*



* Employment numbers shown are not seasonally adjusted.
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Figure 4. Hickory MSA Estimated Employment Totals, April 2010-April 2022*

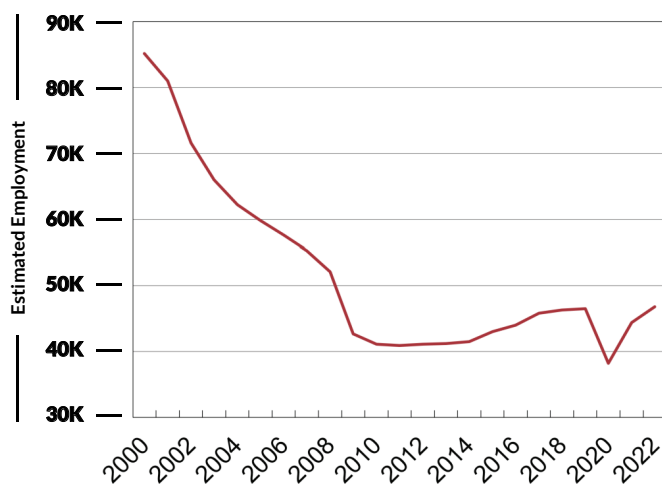


* Employment numbers shown are not seasonally adjusted.
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

region. From 2000 to 2010, more than 44,000 goods-producing jobs (or 51.7% of all goods-producing jobs) were eliminated in the Hickory MSA. Many of the job losses were in furniture and related manufacturing sectors.

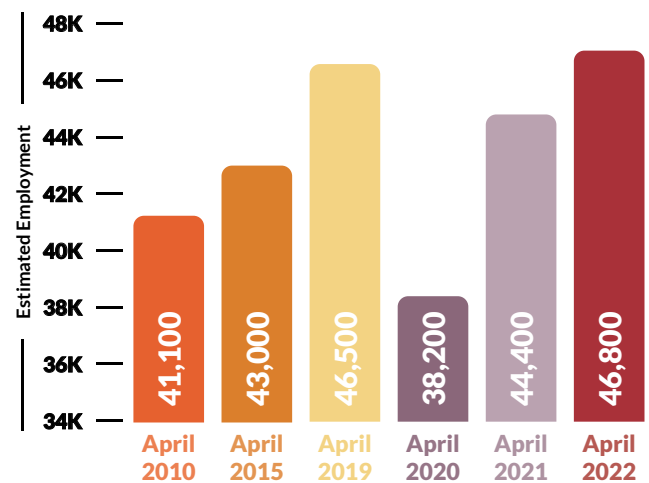
Growth occurred in goods-producing employment between April 2010 and April 2019 as the region's economy recovered from the recessions of the previous decade (Figure 6). From 2010 to 2019, the number of goods-producing jobs grew by 5,400 (or 13.1%) to 46,500. The majority of these gains took place in furniture manufacturing. The shutdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic led to a loss of 8,300 goods-producing jobs between April 2019 and April 2020. Since April 2020, all of the goods-producing jobs lost in the Hickory MSA due to the pandemic have been recovered. Therefore, the April 2022 goods-producing employment estimate (46,800) is actually 300 more than the number of goods-producing jobs in April 2019 (46,500).

Figure 5. Hickory MSA Estimated Goods-Producing Employment Trends, April 2000-April 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Figure 6. Hickory MSA Estimated Goods-Producing Employment Totals, April 2010-April 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

The CES further breaks Hickory MSA goods-producing employment into five categories: mining, logging and construction; furniture and other related products manufacturing; other durable goods manufacturing; textile mills; and other non-durable goods manufacturing. Hickory MSA employment changes by goods-producing industry from April 2019 to April 2022 are displayed in Table 3. All goods-producing industry sectors except one lost employment between April 2019 and April 2020. No net change occurred in mining, logging, and construction during that time. The mining, logging, and construction industry has added 700 positions since April 2020 to 5,200 jobs.

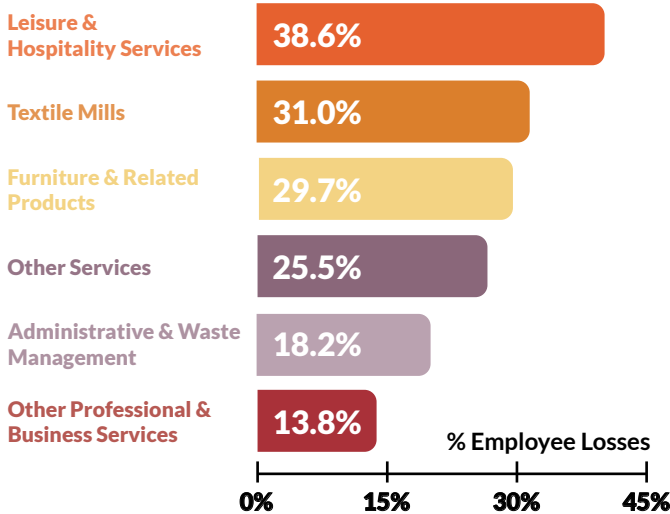
Table 3. Hickory MSA Goods-Producing Employment, April 2019 – April 2022*

Industry	April 2019	April 2020	April 2022	Change April 2019-20	% Change April 2019-20	Change Apr 2020 - Apr 2022	% Change Apr 2020 - Apr 2022
Mining, Logging & Construction	4,500	4,500	5,200	0	0.0%	700	15.6%
Manufacturing	42,000	33,700	41,600	-8,300	-19.8%	7,900	23.4%
Durable Goods Manufacturing	27,400	20,600	26,800	-6,800	-24.8%	6,200	30.1%
Furniture and Related Products	14,500	10,200	14,300	-4,300	-29.7%	4,100	40.2%
Other Durable Products	12,900	10,400	12,500	-2,500	-19.4%	2,100	20.2%
Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing	14,600	13,100	14,800	-1,500	-10.3%	1,700	13.0%
Textile Mills	2,900	2,000	2,600	-900	-31.0%	600	30.0%
Other Non-Durable Goods	11,700	11,100	12,200	-600	-5.1%	1,100	9.9%
Goods-Producing Employment	46,500	38,200	46,800	-8,300	-17.8%	8,600	22.5%

*Durable Goods are products that do not quickly wear out and are not consumed in one use. Durable goods usually last for three or more years. Examples include cars, furniture, and refrigerators. Non-durable goods, on the other hand, either are consumed in one use, or have a lifespan of fewer than three years. Examples include cleaning supplies, food products, paper products and textiles. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

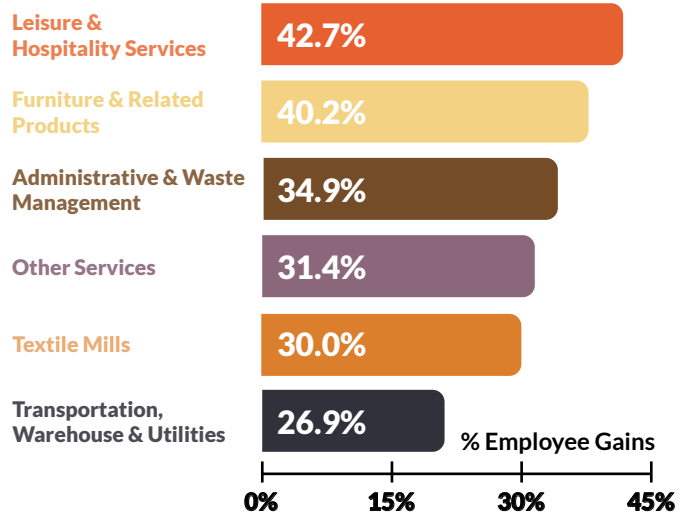
The Hickory MSA textile industry lost the second greatest percentage of employment between April 2019 and April 2020 than any other Hickory MSA sector (Figure 7). During the pandemic, textile employment declined to just 2,000 employees. Since April 2020, the textile industry has gained 600 of the 900 positions lost during the pandemic. From April 2019 to 2020, the Hickory MSA lost 29.7% of its furniture manufacturing labor force as the number of jobs fell from 14,500 to 10,200. Over the past two years, the region’s furniture industry has regained nearly all of the jobs lost during the pandemic. The furniture industry has experienced a 40.2% increase in employment, the most of any goods-producing sector and the second most among all Hickory MSA sectors (Figure 8). Likely, the furniture industry would even have larger employment gains if not for the region’s current labor shortage.

Figure 7. Hickory MSA Industries with Biggest Percentage Job Losses April 2019-2020



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Figure 8. Hickory MSA Industries with Biggest Percentage Job Gains April 2020-2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

The “other durable goods” category in the Current Employment Survey estimates shown in Table 3 on page 3 refers to goods-producing manufacturing other than furniture manufacturing. Durable goods are manufacturing products that do not quickly wear out (last three or more years) and are not consumed in one use. Examples include parts for cars, cables, computers, and appliances. Between April 2019 and April 2020, the number of Hickory MSA employees in other durable goods manufacturing fell by 2,500 workers to 10,400. Note that the percentage loss in “other durable products” was significantly less than the percentage drop in furniture and related products manufacturing. This is due to the Governor deciding that furniture was not an essential manufacturing sector during the 2020 COVID-19 shut, while some sectors in the “other durable products” category were declared essential. From April 2020 to 2022, the number of jobs in “other durable products” grew by 2,100 to 12,500. As of April 2022, there were 400 fewer jobs in “other durable products” than before the pandemic in April 2019.

The number of Hickory MSA jobs in “other (non-textiles) non-durable goods manufacturing”, decreased by only 600 workers from 11,700 in April 2019 to 11,100 in April 2020. Non-durable goods last less than three years or are consumed in one use. Examples include food, paper products, and cleaning supplies. Not surprisingly, many manufacturing sectors in the “other non-durable goods” category were considered “essential,” so the percent job loss (-5.1%) was much lower than the percent job loss in textile mills manufacturing (-31.0%). Employment in the “other non-durable goods” manufacturing has grown 9.9%, from 11,100 in 2020 to 12,200 jobs as of April 2020. The “other non-durables goods” industry group has 500 employees more in April 2022 than in April 2019.

Hickory MSA Service-Providing Employment Trends

Hickory MSA service-providing jobs provide help and assistance to local residents or tourists, as opposed to goods-producing jobs, such as furniture and textile manufacturing. Service-providing jobs include many fields such as education, finance, government, health care, retail sales, and warehousing. In 2000, the Hickory MSA service-providing sector had employment of 100,700 workers. Between 2000 and 2010, despite two economic recessions, the region’s service-providing sector grew slightly to 101,600.

Estimates displayed in Figure 10 show significant service-providing employment growth from April 2010 to April 2019. From April 2010 to April 2019, employment in the Hickory MSA service sector gained 7.2% to 108,900. Between April 2019 and April 2020,

a significant job loss of 16,600 occurred in the service-providing sector as a statewide stay-at-home order was put in place. One year later, as the impacts of the pandemic started to fade, service-providing employment in the region recovered to 105,900. From April 2021 to April 2022, the number of service-providing jobs in the Hickory MSA increased by 3,400 to 109,300. The estimated number of service-providing jobs in April 2022 is the highest ever recorded in the region and is 400 higher than in April 2019.

Figure 9. Hickory MSA Estimated Service-Providing Employment Trends, April 2000-April 2022

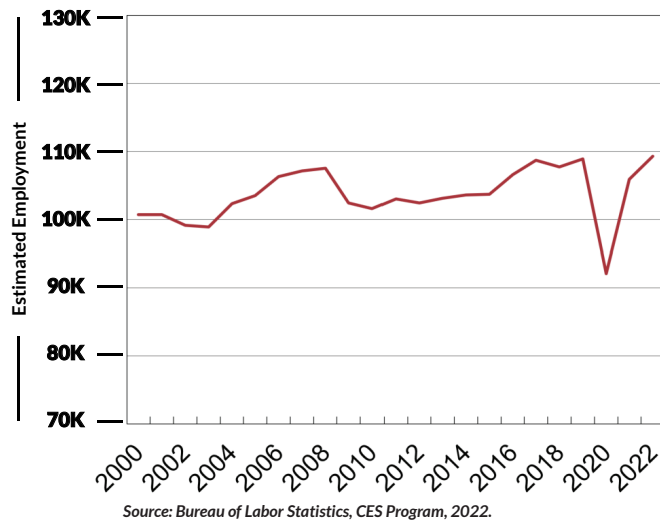
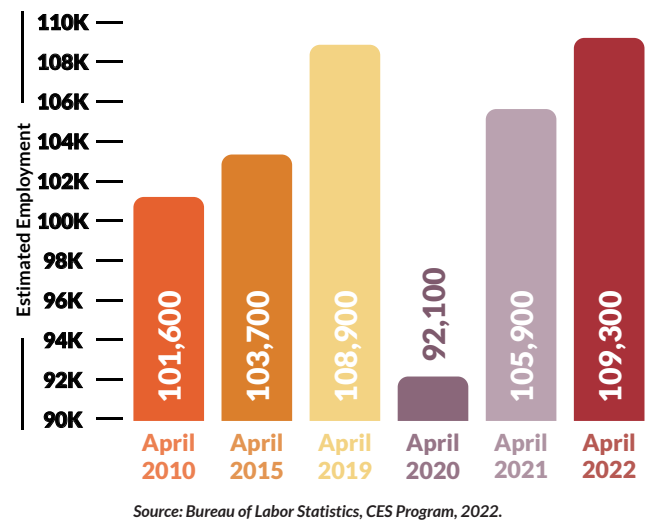


Figure 10. Hickory MSA Estimated Service-Providing Employment Totals, April 2010-April 2022



The Current Employment Survey separates Hickory MSA service-providing employment into 14 subcategories: wholesale trade; retail trade; transportation, warehousing, and utilities; information; financial services; administrative and waste management; other professional and business services; education (private sector); health care; leisure and hospitality services; other services (private sector); federal government; state government; and local government. Hickory MSA employment changes by service-providing industry since April 2019 are displayed in Table 4 on page 6.

The service-providing employment group, “leisure and hospitality services”, includes several subsector categories, including accommodations, restaurants, museums, event centers, and other tourist attractions. No other service-providing sector in the region suffered more employment losses between April 2019 and April 2020 than the leisure and hospitality industry (Figure 7, page 4). At the height of the pandemic in April 2020, the number of leisure and hospitality jobs was 5,600 less (-38.1%) than in April 2019. In other words, nearly two in five positions in the leisure and hospitality sector were lost between April 2019 and 2020. Over the past two years, the Hickory MSA’s leisure and hospitality sector has steadily been adding employment. The number of jobs in the leisure and hospitality group has grown from 8,900 in April 2020 to 12,700 as of April 2022. By percentage, the leisure and hospitality industry has gained the highest percentage of jobs since April 2020 (Figure 8, page 4). Despite the increase of 3,800 jobs, however, the number of employees in the region’s leisure and hospitality sector remains 1,800 less than before the pandemic began in April 2019.

Both wholesale and retail trade employment experienced job losses from April 2019 to April 2020, but not as much as other service sectors such as health care and leisure and hospitality. The lower loss of jobs may be due to many retailers, wholesale and regular retail, being declared essential businesses and allowed to stay open. While some retail establishments were ordered to close, others hired workers. In total, 1,800 retail trade jobs and 600 wholesale trade jobs were lost from April 2019 to April 2020. As of April 2022, Hickory MSA retail and wholesale trade employment exceeded the number of jobs in both sectors as of April 2019.

Included in the “administrative and waste management” service sector are jobs from temporary job agencies, which are lower paying positions with limited benefits. Even this sector, which has generally been immune to economic downturns, has experienced job losses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of jobs in administrative job services has declined 18.2% from April 2019 to 2020 to just 8,500 jobs. However, new temp agency employment has surged since the end of the pandemic. This trend has led to the number of jobs in the administrative and waste management sector increasing 34.9% (2,200 jobs) since April 2020 to 8,500, or 800 more positions than in April 2019.

Table 4. Hickory MSA Service-providing Employment, April 2019-2022

Industry	April 2019	April 2020	April 2022	Change April 2019-20	% Change April 2019-20	Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022	% Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	29,400	26,700	31,100	-2,700	-9.2%	4,400	16.5%
Wholesale Trade	6,800	6,200	7,100	-600	-8.8%	900	14.5%
Retail Trade	17,100	15,300	17,400	-1,800	-10.5%	2,100	13.7%
Transportation, Warehouse &	14,500	10,200	14,300	-4,300	-29.7%	4,100	40.2%
Utilities	5,500	5,200	6,600	-300	-5.5%	1,400	26.9%
Information	700	700	700	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Financial Activities	3,100	3,100	3,100	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Professional & Business Services	14,200	11,900	15,400	-2,300	-16.2%	3,500	29.4%
Administrative & Waste Management	46,500	38,200	46,800	-8,300	-17.8%	8,600	22.5%
Management	7,700	6,300	8,500	-1,400	-18.2%	2,200	34.9%
Other Professional & Business Services	6,500	5,600	6,900	-900	-13.8%	1,300	23.2%
Education & Health Services	19,200	17,100	18,900	-2,100	-10.9%	1,800	10.5%
Education	1,100	1,100	1,100	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Health Care & Social Services	18,100	16,000	17,800	-2,100	-11.6%	1,800	11.3%
Leisure & Hospitality Services	14,500	8,900	12,700	-5,600	-38.6%	3,800	42.7%
Other Services	4,700	3,500	4,600	-1,200	-25.5%	1,100	31.4%
Government	23,100	22,400	22,800	-700	-3.0%	400	1.8%
Federal Government	700	700	600	0	0.0%	-100	-14.3%
State Government	6,600	6,600	6,300	0	0.0%	-300	-4.5%
Local Government	15,800	15,100	15,900	-700	-4.4%	800	5.3%
Service-Providing Employment	108,900	94,300	109,300	-14,600	-13.4%	15,000	15.9%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Other professional and business services like accounting/bookkeeping, architecture/engineering, legal services, and management and technical services were not immune from job losses associated with the pandemic. Between April 2019 and 2020, employment in the “other professional and business services” sector fell by 900 workers to 5,600. Over the past 24 months, the sector has added 1,300 jobs. This trend is a good indicator for the Hickory MSA economy, as many businesses in this category are classified as “small businesses” with fewer than 50 employees and higher wages.

The number of jobs in the education sector (private sector jobs only) has remained the same (1,100 jobs) over the past three years. Some people might have believed that the “Health Care and Social Services” sector would benefit from the pandemic. The reality is, however, that the sector has suffered significant losses during the pandemic as many health care services such as outpatient elective surgeries and dental checkups were deemed “nonessential.” Between April 2019 and 2020, the sector lost 11.6% of all health care and social service jobs. Fortunately, as of April 2022, the health care and social service industry has gained 1,800 of the 2,100 positions that were cut during the pandemic.

Industry sectors in the “other services” category include churches, nonprofit organizations, and close contact personal care services. This sector was particularly hard hit by the impacts of COVID-19 as total employment fell from 4,700 in April 2019 to just 3,500 in April 2020. The 25.1% loss of jobs was the fourth highest between April 2019 and 2020, behind only the leisure and hospitality, furniture, and textile mill industries. Since April 2020, employment in the “other services” group has recovered 31.4% to 4,600, or just 100 jobs less than in April 2019.

The information sector includes establishments in the publishing, sound, and broadcasting industries (both traditional and internet-based), telecommunications industries, web search portals, data processing, and information services. The number of jobs in the Hickory MSA’s “information” industry has remained stable over the past 36 months (700 positions), indicating that the pandemic and the post-pandemic recovery have had little impact on the information sector.

The Current Employment Survey divides the “government” sector into federal, state and local government employment. Federal government employment has hovered between 600 and 700 employees over the past three years. After remaining unchanged at the start of the pandemic, state government employment has fallen by 4.5% since April 2020 due to labor shortages. Local governments cut 4.4% of their workforce from April 2019 to 2020. Since April 2020, local government employment has grown 5.3% to 15,900 jobs.

Summary

There is no question that the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the region’s economy. In April 2020, Hickory MSA employment equaled just 132,500. This is by far the lowest number of jobs in the region over the past 20-plus years. The April 2020 employment was 22,900 less than in April 2019. Data from the Current Employment Survey (CES) indicates that in April 2022, Hickory MSA employment equaled 156,100. This means that the region now has more total employment as of April 2022 than before the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2019 (155,400 jobs).

Hickory MSA goods-producing employment, which includes mining, construction, and manufacturing, declined from 46,500 in April 2019 to 38,200 in April 2020. Most of the goods-producing employment losses occurred in furniture and textiles. The region lost nearly 30% of its furniture jobs and over 30% of its textile jobs between April 2019 and 2020. Fortunately, many of these workers have been reemployed as of April 2022.

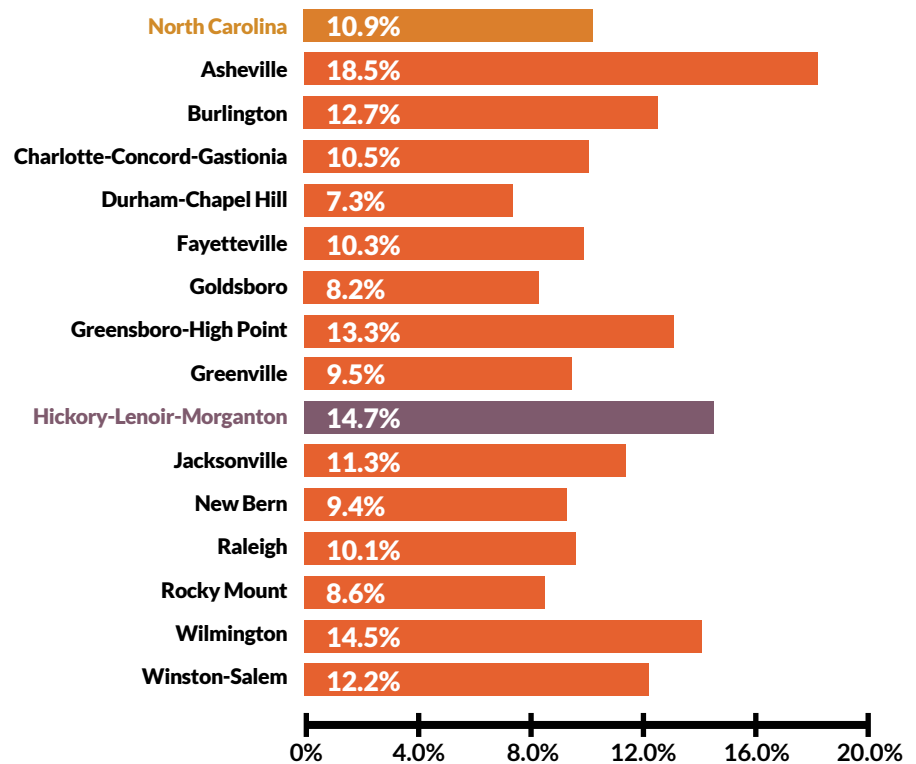
Hickory MSA service-providing employment was also substantially hit by the pandemic. Service-providing employment decreased 13.4% from April 2019 (108,900) to April 2020 (94,300). The biggest service sector employment decrease (-8,100) from April 2019 to 2020 occurred in leisure and hospitality services, which includes accommodations, restaurants, and museums. Nearly 40% of all jobs in the leisure and hospitality sector were lost during the pandemic. Most service-providing sectors now have more employment than two years ago. The major exception would be in the leisure and hospitality services sector, whose employment total in April 2022 (12,700) is still 1,800 less than in April 2019.

CES Comparisons with other North Carolina MSAs

It is important to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery have affected employment across other metro areas in North Carolina. This EIN Article compares employment percentage changes in the Hickory MSA with other North Carolina metropolitan areas between April 2019 and 2020 (employment losses) and April 2020 to 2022 (employment gains). Between April 2019 and April 2020, the Hickory MSA lost 14.7% of its total employment. This was the second most of any Metro area in North Carolina (Figure 11). The Asheville MSA had the greatest percentage of employment loss (18.5%), while the Wilmington MSA lost 14.5% of its workforce. In total, 10 of the 15 metro areas in North Carolina had losses greater than 10%. The State of North Carolina experienced a 10.9% loss of employment from April 2019 to April 2020.

In total, the State of North Carolina lost nearly 500,000 jobs between April 2019 and 2020 (Table 5, page 8). More than 25% of the State’s total job losses occurred in the Charlotte MSA. The Charlotte Metro (North Carolina portion only) lost 129,300 jobs between April 2019 and April 2020. A decrease of nearly 64,500 jobs occurred in the Raleigh MSA, while total

Figure 11. Percentage Loss in NC MSA Employment, Apr. 2019-20



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Table 5. CES Employment Estimates for NC MSAs, April 2019 – April 2022*

NC MSAs	April 2019	April 2020	April 2022	Change April 2019-20	% Change April 2019-20	Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022	% Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022
Asheville	198,800	162,100	200,000	-36,700	-18.5%	37,900	23.4%
Burlington	63,700	55,600	64,700	-8,100	-12.7%	9,100	16.4%
Charlotte	1,230,700	1,101,400	1,283,700	-129,300	-10.5%	182,300	16.6%
Durham	327,600	303,600	345,500	-24,000	-7.3%	41,900	13.8%
Fayetteville	132,400	118,800	133,100	-13,600	-10.3%	14,300	12.0%
Goldsboro	41,600	38,200	41,000	-3,400	-8.2%	2,800	7.3%
Greensboro	366,400	317,600	363,400	-48,800	-13.3%	45,800	14.4%
Greenville	81,700	73,900	81,700	-7,800	-9.5%	7,800	10.6%
Hickory	155,400	132,500	156,100	-22,900	-14.7%	23,600	17.8%
Jacksonville	50,400	44,700	52,400	-5,700	-11.3%	7,700	17.2%
New Bern	44,900	40,700	45,000	-4,200	-9.4%	4,300	10.6%
Raleigh	640,300	575,800	686,700	-64,500	-10.1%	110,900	19.3%
Rocky Mount	55,800	51,000	53,800	-4,800	-8.6%	2,800	5.5%
Wilmington	131,400	112,400	137,900	-19,000	-14.5%	25,500	22.7%
Winston-Salem	272,100	238,900	270,900	-33,200	-12.2%	32,000	13.4%
North Carolina Totals	4,565,200	4,065,900	4,731,100	-499,300	-10.9%	665,200	16.4%

*Employment numbers shown are not seasonally adjusted. Charlotte MSA data includes only the North Carolina portion of the MSA. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

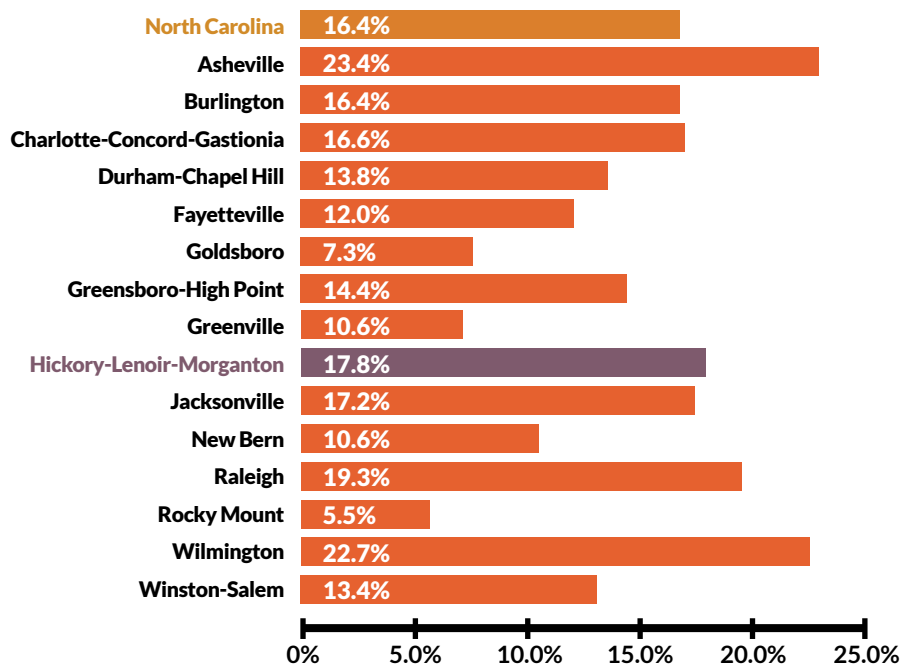
employment dropped by 48,800 workers in the Greensboro MSA. The smallest job losses occurred in the Goldsboro (-3,400) and New Bern (-4,200) MSAs.

North Carolina has gained more than 665,000 between April 2020 and April 2022. The Asheville MSA had the greatest percentage job gain from April 2019 to April 2020 (23.4%), followed by the Wilmington MSA with a percentage job loss of 22.7% (Figure 12). These percentage increases occurred as a result of employment recoveries tourism and hospitality-related industries in both regions. The Hickory MSA, meanwhile, had the fourth highest percentage job gains among North Carolina Metro areas between April 2020 and April 2022. The 17.8% employment increase was greater than the percentage job growth in the Jacksonville (17.2%), Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia (16.6%), Burlington (16.4%), or Greensboro-High Point (14.4%) MSAs. An analysis of job growth across North Carolina Metro areas between April 2020 and April 2022 reveals that 13 of 15 MSAs had employment increases of greater than 10%, and seven MSAs had job gains of 15% or more. Only the Goldsboro and Rocky Mount MSAs had employment percentage gains of less than 10%. Statewide the percentage job growth between April 2020 and 2022 was 16.4%. This result means that the percentage job gain in the Hickory MSA over the past two years was higher than the State average.

April 2019 to April 2022 trends in North Carolina MSA goods-producing employment are revealed in Table 6 on page 9. North Carolina totals reveal an 8.1% goods-producing job loss between April 2019 and April 2020.

The statewide percentage job decline was much less than the Hickory MSA, which lost more

Figure 12. Percentage Gain in NC MSA Employment, Apr. 2020-2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

than 17% of its goods-producing employment between April 2019 and April 2020. The Hickory MSA, in fact, had the greatest percentage decrease in goods-producing jobs (-17.8%) among the NC MSAs, followed by the Greensboro (-12.3%) and Fayetteville MSAs (-12.2%). It appears these MSAs had a higher percentage of manufacturing employment that was deemed nonessential, including furniture and textile mills. In terms of numbers, the Charlotte MSA lost the most workers between April 2019 and April 2020 (-14,600), followed by the Greensboro (-8,500) and the Hickory (-8,300) MSAs.

Table 6. Goods-Producing Employment Estimates for NC MSAs, April 2019 – April 2022*

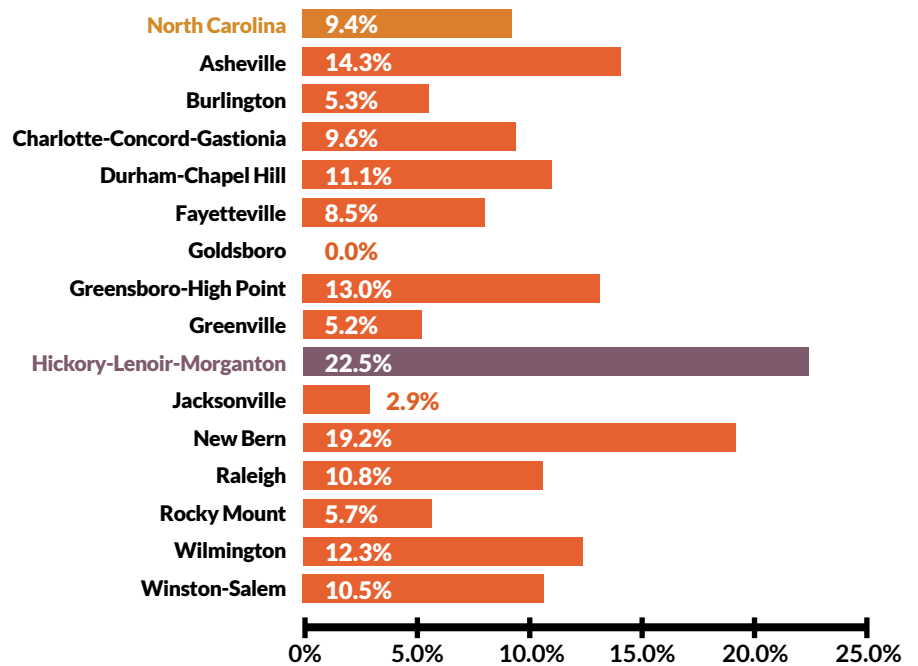
NC MSAs	April 2019	April 2020	April 2022	Change April 2019-20	% Change April 2019-20	Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022	% Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022
Asheville	32,300	28,600	32,700	-3,700	-11.5%	4,100	14.3%
Burlington	12,600	11,400	12,000	-1,200	-9.5%	600	5.3%
Charlotte	177,900	163,300	179,000	-14,600	-8.2%	15,700	9.6%
Durham	42,000	39,800	44,200	-2,200	-5.2%	4,400	11.1%
Fayetteville	14,700	12,900	14,000	-1,800	-12.2%	1,100	8.5%
Goldsboro	7,300	7,100	7,100	-200	-2.7%	0	0.0%
Greensboro	69,300	60,800	68,700	-8,500	-12.3%	7,900	13.0%
Greenville	10,100	9,700	10,200	-400	-4.0%	500	5.2%
Hickory	46,500	38,200	46,800	-8,300	-17.8%	8,600	22.5%
Jacksonville	3,600	3,400	3,500	-200	-5.6%	100	2.9%
New Bern	5,800	5,200	6,200	-600	-10.3%	1,000	19.2%
Raleigh	71,500	70,600	78,200	-900	-1.3%	7,600	10.8%
Rocky Mount	12,600	12,200	12,900	-400	-3.2%	700	5.7%
Wilmington	15,200	13,800	15,500	-1,400	-9.2%	1,700	12.3%
Winston-Salem	44,400	41,800	46,200	-2,600	-5.9%	4,400	10.5%
North Carolina Totals	710,100	652,400	713,900	-57,700	-8.1%	61,500	9.4%

*Employment numbers shown are not seasonally adjusted. Charlotte MSA data includes only the North Carolina portion of the MSA. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Since April 2020, the State has steadily been adding goods-producing jobs. Results seen in Figure 13 show that the percentage of goods-producing job increases has varied widely across North Carolina MSAs. The largest percentage goods-producing gain was the Hickory MSA, which saw a greater than 22% increase in goods-producing employment between April 2020 and 2022 as furniture and textile manufacturing came back online. The New Bern MSA had the second highest percentage growth (19.2%), followed by the Asheville (14.3%) and Greensboro MSAs (13.0%). In terms of numbers, the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia MSA gained the most workers between April 2020 and April 2022 (15,700), followed by the Hickory MSA (8,600) and the Greensboro MSA (7,900).

In contrast to the Hickory MSA, seven of the 15 MSAs in North Carolina experienced an increase of less than 10% of goods-producing jobs between April 2020 and April 2022. No net growth occurred in the Goldsboro MSA. Less than 3% of goods-producing growth occurred in the Jacksonville MSA from April 2020 to April 2022. Between 5% and 10% employment increases took place in the Burlington, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Greenville, and Rocky Mount MSAs.

Figure 13. Percentage Gain in NC MSA Goods-Producing Employment, April 2020 to April 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Table 7. Service-Providing Employment Estimates for NC MSAs, April 2019 – April 2022*

NC MSAs	April 2019	April 2020	April 2022	Change April 2019-20	% Change April 2019-20	Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022	% Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022
Asheville	166,500	133,500	167,300	-33,000	-19.8%	33,800	25.3%
Burlington	51,100	44,200	52,700	-6,900	-13.5%	8,500	19.2%
Charlotte	1,052,800	938,100	1,104,700	-114,700	-10.9%	166,600	17.8%
Durham	285,800	263,800	301,300	-22,000	-7.7%	37,500	14.2%
Fayetteville	117,700	105,900	119,100	-11,800	-10.0%	13,200	12.5%
Goldsboro	34,300	31,100	33,900	-3,200	-9.3%	2,800	9.0%
Greensboro	297,100	256,800	294,700	-40,300	-13.6%	37,900	14.8%
Greenville	71,600	64,200	71,500	-7,400	-10.3%	7,300	11.4%
Hickory	108,900	94,300	109,300	-14,600	-13.4%	15,000	15.9%
Jacksonville	46,800	41,300	48,900	-5,500	-11.8%	7,600	18.4%
New Bern	39,100	35,500	38,800	-3,600	-9.2%	3,300	9.3%
Raleigh	568,800	505,200	608,500	-63,600	-11.2%	103,300	20.4%
Rocky Mount	43,200	38,800	40,900	-4,400	-10.2%	2,100	5.4%
Wilmington	116,200	98,600	122,400	-17,600	-15.1%	23,800	24.1%
Winston-Salem	227,700	197,100	224,700	-30,600	-13.4%	27,600	14.0%
North Carolina Totals	3,855,100	3,413,500	4,017,200	-441,600	-11.5%	603,700	17.7%

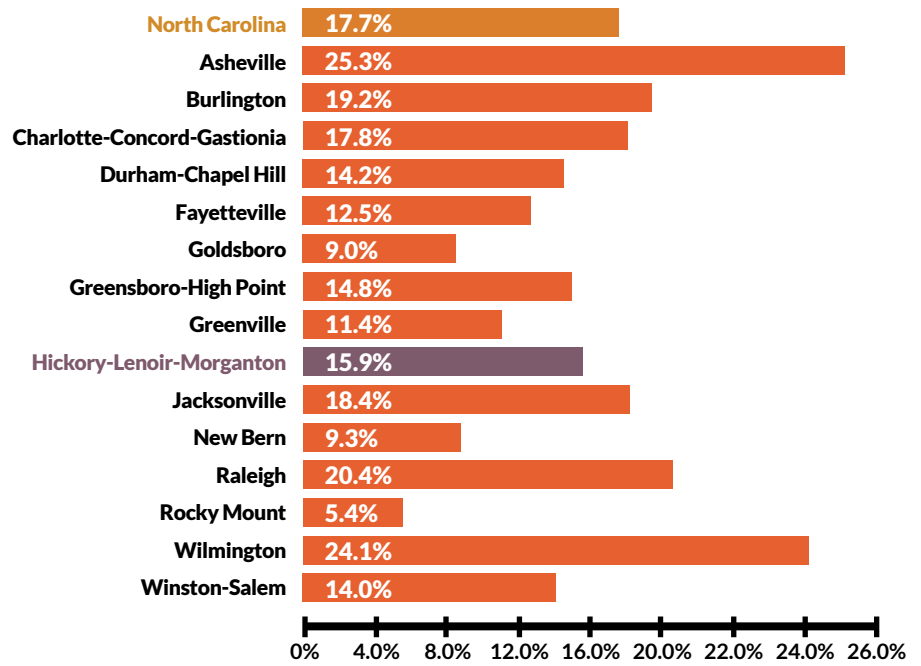
*Employment numbers shown are not seasonally adjusted. Charlotte MSA data includes only the North Carolina portion of the MSA. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

North Carolina MSA service-providing employment trends from April 2020 to April 2022 are revealed in Table 7. North Carolina totals show a greater than 11% decline in service-providing employment (or a loss of 1 in 9 service-providing positions) from April 2019 to April 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic led to a loss of over 441,000 service-providing jobs across the State. The Hickory MSA had a higher percentage of service-providing job loss (-13.4%) than the State (-11.5%) between April 2019 and April 2020. The biggest percentage drops in service-providing employment happened in the Asheville and Wilmington MSAs, which lost 19.8% and 15.1% respectively. This result is due to job cuts related to tourism and restaurants, which are significant parts of Asheville’s and Wilmington’s regional economies.

Similar to the pattern seen with goods-producing employment, North Carolina MSAs varied widely with the percentage gain of service-providing jobs from April 2020 to April 2022 (Figure 14). The Asheville (25.3%) and Wilmington (24.1%) MSAs had the largest percentage increases as the service-providing economy opened back up. The Hickory MSA tallied a 15.9% gain in service-providing employment. The Hickory Metro was one of seven MSAs in the State that have experienced a greater than 15% growth in service-providing employment over the past two years.

Three of the 15 MSAs in North Carolina had a less than 10% increase in service-providing jobs between April 2020 and April 2022. The Rocky Mount MSA experienced service-providing growth of only 5.4% from April 2020 to 2022, with just a 9.0% gain in the Goldsboro MSA and a 9.3% increase in the New Bern MSA. These

Figure 14. Percentage Gains in NC MSA Service-Providing Employment, April 2020 to April 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

MSAs have a large military presence, meaning that COVID did not cause large swings in service-providing employment totals (neither a large decrease when COVID started or post-COVID service job increases) compared to other NC MSAs.

Table 8. Leisure and Hospitality Services Employment Estimates for NC MSAs, April 2019 – April 2022*

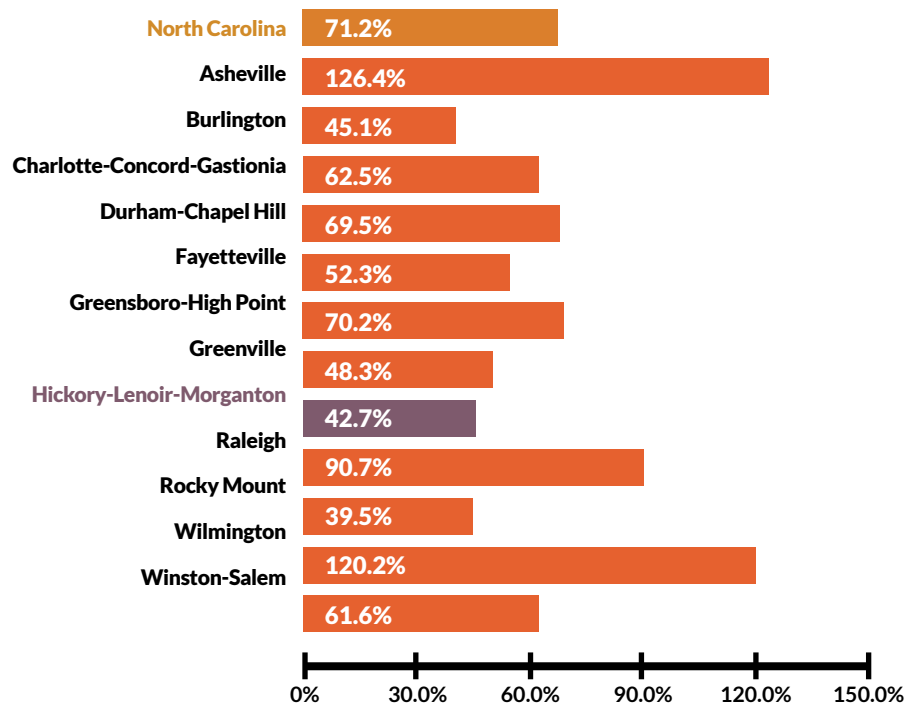
NC MSAs	April 2019	April 2020	April 2022	Change April 2019-20	% Change April 2019-20	Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022	% Change Apr 2020 - Apr2022
Asheville	29,700	12,500	28,300	-17,200	-57.9%	15,800	126.4%
Burlington	8,200	5,100	7,400	-3,100	-37.8%	2,300	45.1%
Charlotte	141,700	81,300	132,100	-60,400	-42.6%	50,800	62.5%
Durham	28,600	15,400	26,100	-13,200	-46.2%	10,700	69.5%
Fayetteville	16,900	10,900	16,600	-6,000	-35.5%	5,700	52.3%
Greensboro	38,000	20,800	35,400	-17,200	-45.3%	14,600	70.2%
Greenville	9,800	6,000	8,900	-3,800	-38.8%	2,900	48.3%
Hickory	14,500	8,900	12,700	-5,600	-38.6%	3,800	42.7%
Raleigh	72,600	37,500	71,500	-35,100	-48.3%	34,000	90.7%
Rocky Mount	5,400	3,800	5,300	-1,600	-29.6%	1,500	39.5%
Wilmington	20,400	9,400	20,700	-11,000	-53.9%	11,300	120.2%
Winston-Salem	29,300	17,200	27,800	-12,100	-41.3%	10,600	61.6%
North Carolina Totals	510,700	287,200	491,800	-223,500	-43.8%	204,600	71.2%

*Employment numbers shown are not seasonally adjusted. Leisure and Hospitality Services employment data was not available for the Goldsboro, Jacksonville, and New Bern MSAs. Charlotte MSA data includes only the North Carolina portion of the MSA. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

A substantial proportion (50.6%) of all service-providing employment losses that North Carolina suffered between April 2019 and 2020 occurred in the leisure and hospitality services. This sector includes several service-providing sectors, including accommodations, restaurants, museums, event centers, and other tourist attractions. Statewide leisure and hospitality services lost 223,500 jobs (43.8% decrease) between April 2019 and 2020 (Table 8). From April 2019 to 2020, the Asheville and Wilmington MSAs lost more than 50% of all leisure and hospitality employment.

As of April 2022, North Carolina had regained 204,600 of the 223,500 leisure and hospitality jobs lost during the pandemic. Leisure and hospitality employment has more than doubled in the Asheville and Wilmington MSAs over the past two years, indicating a strong recovery in both regions' tourism industries. The number of leisure and hospitality jobs in the Raleigh MSA has grown by more than 90% since April 2020 (Figure 15). The Hickory MSA saw a 42.7% increase in leisure and hospitality employment between April 2020 and 2022. Of the MSAs with available leisure and hospitality employment data, only the Rocky Mount MSA had smaller percentage growth between April 2020 and 2022. Only the Wilmington MSA has more leisure and hospitality employment in April 2022 compared to April 2019.

Figure 15. Percentage Loss in NC MSA Leisure and Hospitality Employment, April 2020 to April 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CES Program, 2022.

Summary

Comparisons with other NC MSAs show that the Hickory MSA has the second greatest percentage job decrease among the 15 metro areas in North Carolina between April 2019 and April 2020. From April 2019 to April 2020, the Charlotte MSA lost more than 129,000 jobs, while the Raleigh MSA saw a decrease of more than 64,000 jobs. Among NC MSAs, the Hickory MSA had the fourth highest percentage job growth over the past two years. The Hickory MSA had the highest percentage growth in goods-producing employment between April 2020 and 2022 (22.5%) of the NC MSAs due to recovery and growth in the region's manufacturing industry. The Asheville and Wilmington MSAs had the strongest percentage increase (25.3% and 24.1%, respectively) in service-providing employment from April 2020 to April 2022, mostly due to recovery in leisure and hospitality employment. The Hickory MSA has added 15,000 service-providing jobs since April 2020.

Future EIN Topics

- Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA Employment Trends
- Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA Traffic Counts
- More Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA Census 2020 Results

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P.O. BOX 9026 | Hickory, NC 28603
www.westernpiedmontworks.org

Writer

Taylor Dellinger, GISP, Data Analyst
taylor.dellinger@wpcog.org

Design & Layout

Jason Toney,
Communications Specialist

Contributing Editors

Jason Toney, Communications Specialist
Anthony Starr, AICP, Executive Director

EIN Sustainers



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