

# Workforce Landscape Analysis



# About

Lightcast is the world's leading authority on job skills, workforce talent, and labor market dynamics, providing expertise that empowers businesses, education providers, and governments to find the skills and talent they need and enabling workers to unlock new career opportunities. Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Moscow, Idaho, Lightcast is active in more than 30 countries and has offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and India. The company is backed by global private equity leader KKR.

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## **Acknowledgements**

This report is prepared for Claremore Economic Development by Lightcast. The content is solely the responsibility of the author and does not necessarily represent the official views of Claremore Economic Development or other regional partners mentioned within. Proper acknowledgement of Lightcast should be included in publications, presentations, or other developed materials.

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# Project Overview

Claremore Economic Development enlisted Lightcast to provide a workforce landscape analysis of Rogers County, Oklahoma that includes:

- A demographic profile of the region
- Insights on three key industries (1) Manufacturing; (2) Health Care and Social Assistance; (3) Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services
- Virtual engagement with local industry, workforce, and education stakeholders to elicit input on the region’s current workforce dynamics, initiatives, and hiring priorities.
- Recommendations focused on growing the pipeline of skilled talent for high-demand occupations to support business growth and career pathway development for area residents.

While the primary area of analysis is Rogers County, relevant data for the Tulsa Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), comprised of Creek, Okmulgee, Osage, Pawnee, Rogers, Tulsa, and Wagoner Counties, will be used to provide context or comparison.

Lightcast’s strategic recommendations are intended to be actionable for a range of stakeholders including Claremore Economic Development, workforce development partners, employers and industry partners, K-12 and higher education systems, civic leaders and policy makers.

# DEMOGRAPHIC AND EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

## Population Growth

Population growth in Rogers County was a robust 10.2% between 2019 and 2024 and the county’s population is projected to continue to grow at a faster rate (8.8%) than the Tulsa MSA, the state of Oklahoma, and the US overall (Table 1).

**Table 1** Population Growth 2019-29 Rogers County, Compared to Tulsa MSA, State of OK, and US

Area	2019 Population	2024 Population	% Change	2029 Population (projected)	% Change (projected)
Rogers County	92,616	102,087	10.2%	111,036	8.8%
Tulsa MSA	999,348	1,055,849	5.7%	1,114,639	5.6%
State of OK	3,960,676	4,084,158	3.1%	4,249,135	4.0%
US	328,329,953	336,486,167	2.5%	344,329,216	2.3%

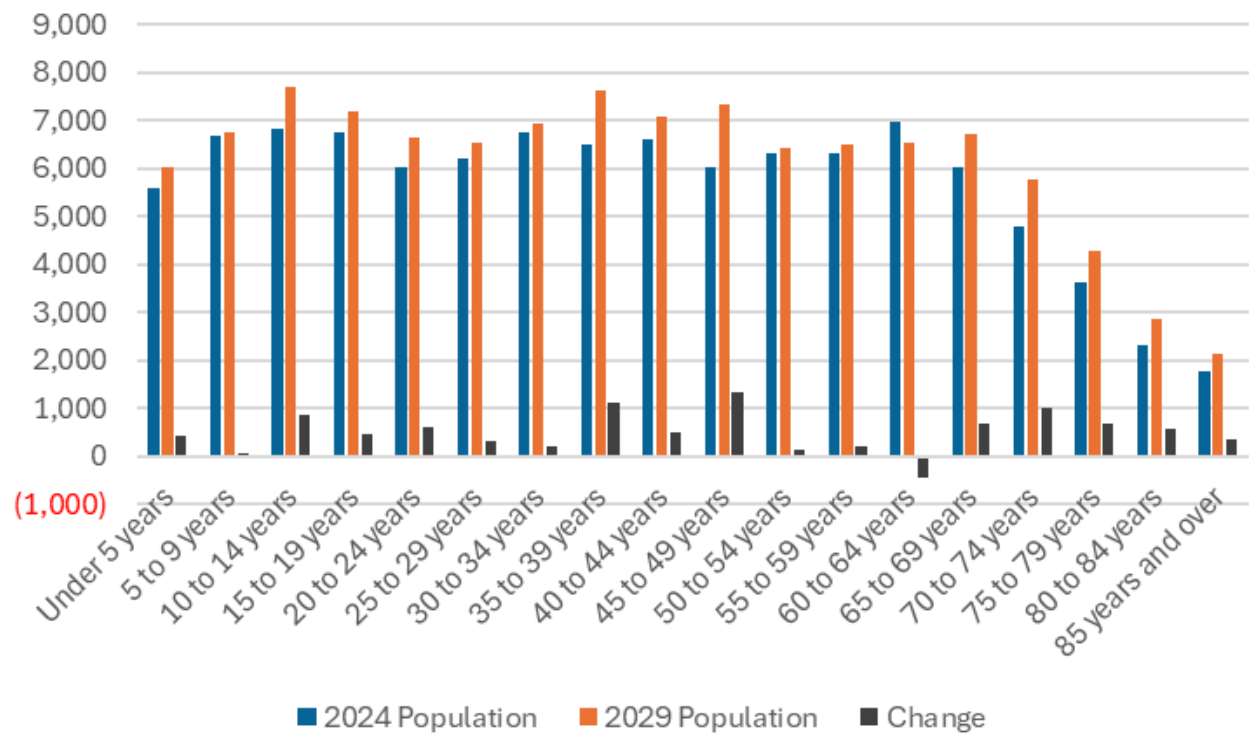
Source: Lightcast

Contrary to national trends, population growth in Rogers County is strong across all age cohorts, including school-age youth and the workforce-age population (Figure 1). In fact, **Rogers County’s prime**

**working-age population (ages 25–54) is expected to grow by over 3,500 people by 2029.**

In many US markets, the proportion of young people relative to the total population is shrinking, while the proportion of older people is increasing – which brings long-term implications. An aging population reduces entry-level talent pipelines and overall labor force participation rates. Also, an aging population requires more services, which can exacerbate existing workforce shortages in healthcare, social assistance, and other industries.

**Figure 1** Population Size by Age Cohort 2024-2029 Rogers County



Source: Lightcast

## Migration

Rogers County experienced a **net gain of 1,591 residents in 2022** (6,228 inbound and 4,636 outbound migrations), drawing and losing residents from/to other Oklahoma counties and southern states. Rogers County drew the highest net new residents from Tulsa County (709) followed by Maricopa County, AZ (54), Creek County (52), Mayes County (43), and Wagoner County (41). The highest net out-migration was to Muskogee County (-31), Pima County, AZ (-28), Seminole County, FL (-26), Bernalillo County, NM (-23), and Ottawa County (-21).

In a trend related to the Covid-19 pandemic and opportunities for remote/hybrid work, 2020 - 23 saw an outflow of families with young children from large urban counties across the US to suburban, exurban, and rural communities.<sup>1</sup> Three counties in the Tulsa MSA benefitted from this trend: Wagoner County, which experienced a 7.3% **increase in families with young children**, Okmulgee County (3.3%), and Rogers County with a slight 0.4% increase. The remaining four MSA counties shed families with young children between 2020 and 2023 (Table 2).

**Table 2** Migration of Families with Young Children – Counties in the Tulsa MSA

Counties Losing Young Families	% Decline 2020-23	Counties Gaining Young Families	% Gain 2020-23
Tulsa County	-5.7%	Wagoner County	7.3%
Pawnee County	-4.8%	Okmulgee County	3.3%
Osage County	-4.6%	Rogers County	0.4%
Creek County	-4.4%		

Source: <https://eig.org/families-exodus/>

## Income & Poverty

Poverty rates are significantly lower in Rogers County as compared to the Tulsa MSA, the state, and the US overall (Table 3). Median household income is also significantly higher in Rogers County than in the MSA and state of Oklahoma, while per capita income is more closely aligned to MSA and state averages (Table 3). Median monthly rent in the county is \$980, \$288 less than the national median but higher than Oklahoma’s state median. Childcare costs consume a large share of family income, with U.S. families spending between 9% and 16% of their median income on full-day care for just one child<sup>2</sup>. In Rogers County, the average annual cost of center-based care for an infant in 2024 is estimated at \$12,636, a 12.4% share of median family income.

**Table 3** Income and Poverty Key Metrics Rogers County, Compared to Tulsa MSA, State of OK, and US

Key Metric	Rogers County	Tulsa MSA	State of OK	US
Median Household Income	\$75,312	\$65,784	\$61,364	\$75,149
Per Capita Income	\$36,885	\$36,669	\$33,630	\$41,261
% Poverty Level	9.5%	13.5%	15.2%	12.5%
% Children under 18 Poverty Level	13.5%	18.9%	20.3%	16.7%
% Seniors 65+ Poverty Level	6.3%	8.3%	9.5%	10.0%
Median Monthly Rent	\$980	\$982	\$934	\$1,268

Source: Lightcast

<sup>1</sup> <https://eig.org/families-exodus/>

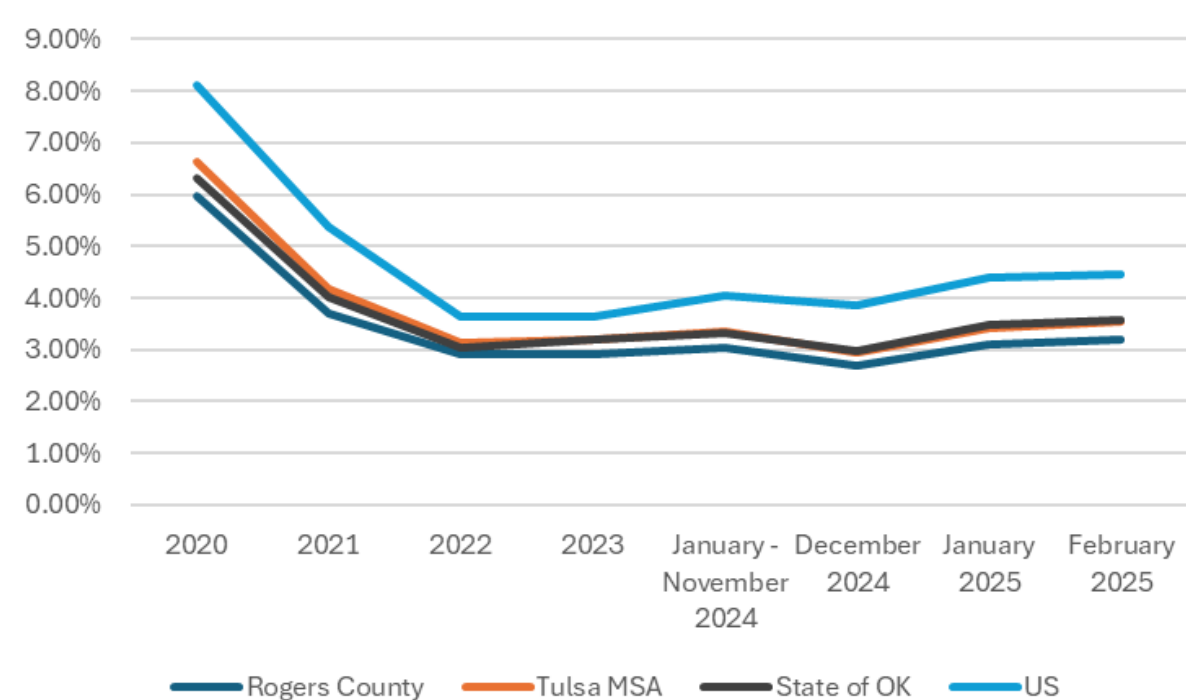
<sup>2</sup> <https://blog.dol.gov/2024/11/19/new-data-childcare-costs-remain-an-almost-prohibitive-expense>  
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/wb/topics/childcare/median-family-income-by-age-care-setting>

## Employment

From 2019 to 2024, jobs increased by 11.6% in Rogers County, from 32,065 to 35,783. This change outpaced the national growth rate of 3.9% by 7.7%.

After a pandemic-related spike in 2020, the unemployment rate in Rogers County declined to 2.91% in 2023 and bottomed out at 2.68% in December of 2024 (Figure 3). Throughout the entire period, Rogers County’s unemployment rate was lower than the MSA, the state, and the US overall.

**Figure 3** Unemployment Rate Trend 2020-2025 Rogers County, Compared to Tulsa MSA, State of OK, and US



Source: Lightcast

## Top Occupations

The top three jobs in Rogers County are Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, and General & Operations Managers. Employment of Truck Drivers and Welders is concentrated in Rogers County at over 3x and 7x the national average, respectively.

Thirteen of the top 20 occupations in Rogers County earn median wages below the county's MIT living



wage<sup>3</sup> (\$21.28/hour or \$44,262 annually for one adult with no children) while General & Operations Managers, Registered Nurses, First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers, Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers, and First-Line Supervisors of Office & Administrative Support Workers command the highest wages (Table 4). Occupations with the highest retirement risk - estimated by calculating the percentage of the occupation's workforce in Rogers County that is age 55 or over - include Secretaries & Administrative Assistants (36%), Office Clerks (31%), Janitors & Cleaners (31%), and Maintenance & Repair Workers (30%).

**Table 4** Top Occupations (6-digit SOC) Rogers County 2019-24

Occupation	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2024 Hires	Median Hourly Earnings	Employment Concentration	% of Occupation Age 55+
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	468	1,561	234%	1,252	\$26.14	3.20	24%
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	475	849	79%	867	\$18.38	1.36	16%
General & Operations Managers	481	842	75%	387	\$40.09	1.10	24%
Fast Food & Counter Workers	677	753	11%	1,448	\$11.65	0.97	8%
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	611	699	14%	406	\$24.54	7.35	15%
Cashiers	636	657	3%	757	\$12.60	1.00	15%
Customer Service Representatives	414	648	57%	394	\$18.37	1.12	19%
Office Clerks, General	490	640	30%	377	\$18.11	1.14	31%
Retail Salespersons	837	617	(26%)	430	\$13.77	0.76	26%
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	396	521	32%	338	\$19.79	1.72	22%
Stockers & Order Fillers	452	496	10%	416	\$16.39	0.87	19%
Construction Laborers	537	488	(9%)	327	\$18.87	1.64	20%
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	358	459	28%	223	\$20.95	1.34	30%
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	439	406	(8%)	173	\$18.73	0.99	36%
Janitors & Cleaners, Except Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	400	390	(3%)	261	\$16.39	0.76	31%
Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	366	372	2%	110	\$32.86	2.50	8%
First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	310	359	16%	114	\$32.92	2.51	24%
First-Line Supervisors of Office & Administrative Support Workers	313	348	11%	128	\$29.05	1.09	27%
Waiters & Waitresses	491	337	(31%)	467	\$8.83	0.70	5%
Registered Nurses	326	329	1%	193	\$37.59	0.48	26%

Source: Lightcast

<sup>3</sup> The MIT living wage is an estimate of the local wage rate that a full-time worker requires to cover the costs of their family's basic needs where they live. Estimates vary by family size and composition and are available at the state, MSA, and county level. <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>

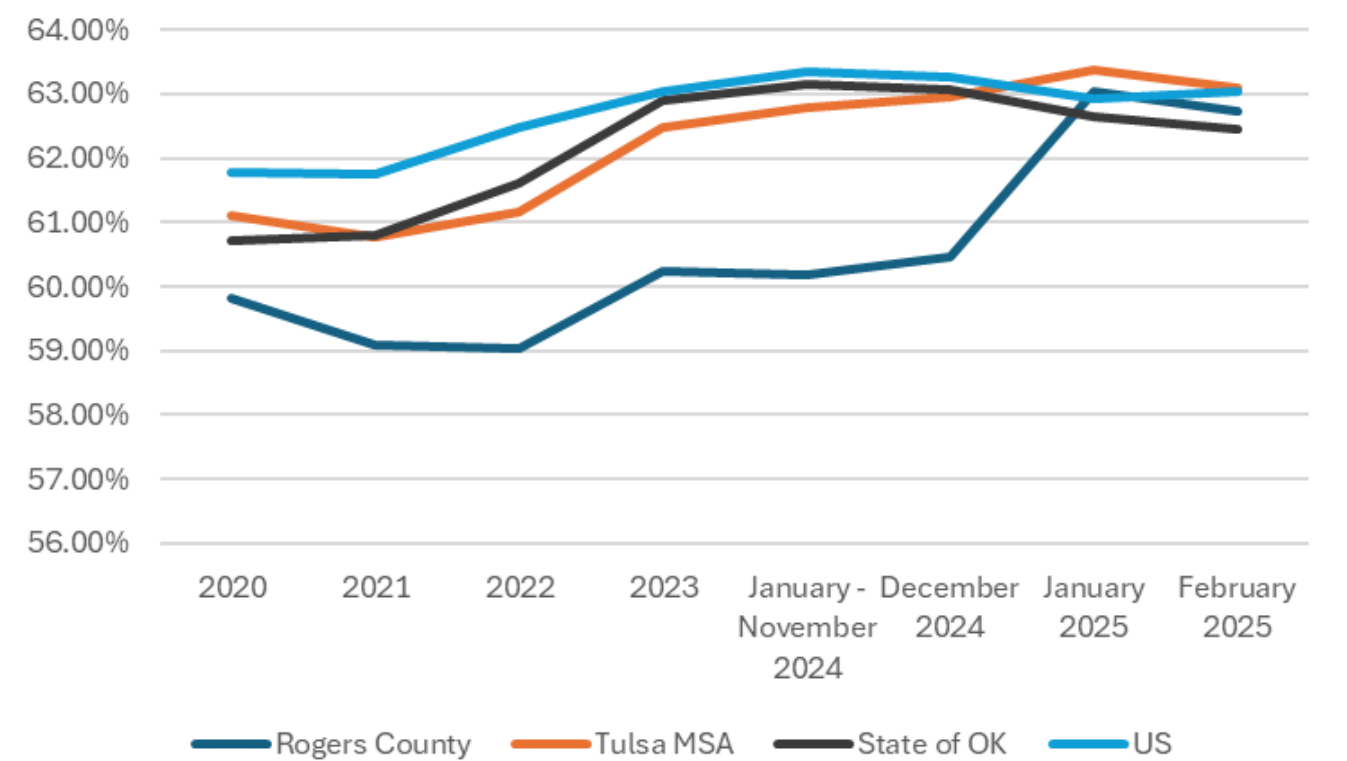


Labor Force Participation

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) measures the proportion of working-age individuals who are employed or actively seeking work. A high LFPR typically indicates a strong economy with ample job opportunities. However, demographic factors like an aging population can lower the LFPR.

Consistent with state and national trends, Rogers County’s labor force participation rate (LFPR) declined in 2020 and 2021, bottoming out at 59.10% - a disruption related to the Covid-19 pandemic. While **LFPR in Rogers County lagged the MSA, state, and national rates** throughout 2024, there has been a notable uptick to 62.74% in February 2025 putting the county’s LFPR in line with the MSA, state, and US overall (Figure 4).

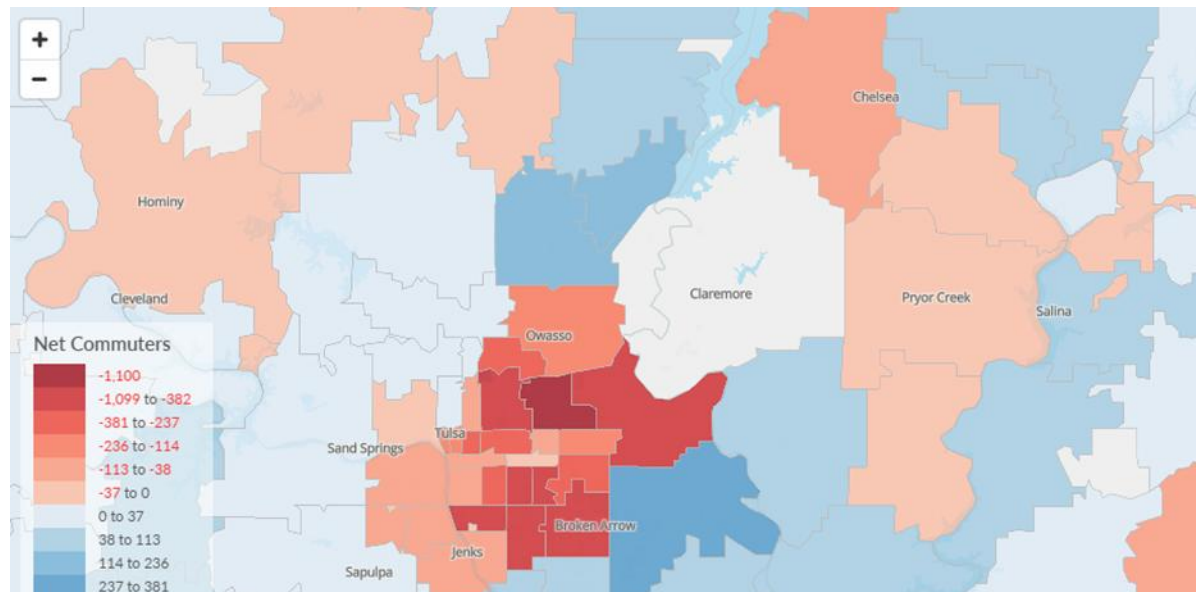
Figure 4 Labor Force Participation Trend 2020-2025 Rogers County, Compared to Tulsa MSA, State of OK, and US



Source: Lightcast

## Commuting Patterns

**Figure 5** 2024 Net Commuting Map, Claremore



Source: Lightcast

As of 2024, 15,604 Claremore residents commuted to jobs outside the city while 10,469 non-residents commuted into Claremore from surrounding cities (**-5,135** overall net). The five top zip codes for net out-commuting are 74116, 74115, 74146, and 74133 in Tulsa and 74015 in Catoosa. The five top zip codes for net inbound commuting are 74014 in Broken Arrow, 74021 in Collinsville, 74053 in Oologah, 74429 in Coweta, and 74301 in Vinita (Figure 5).

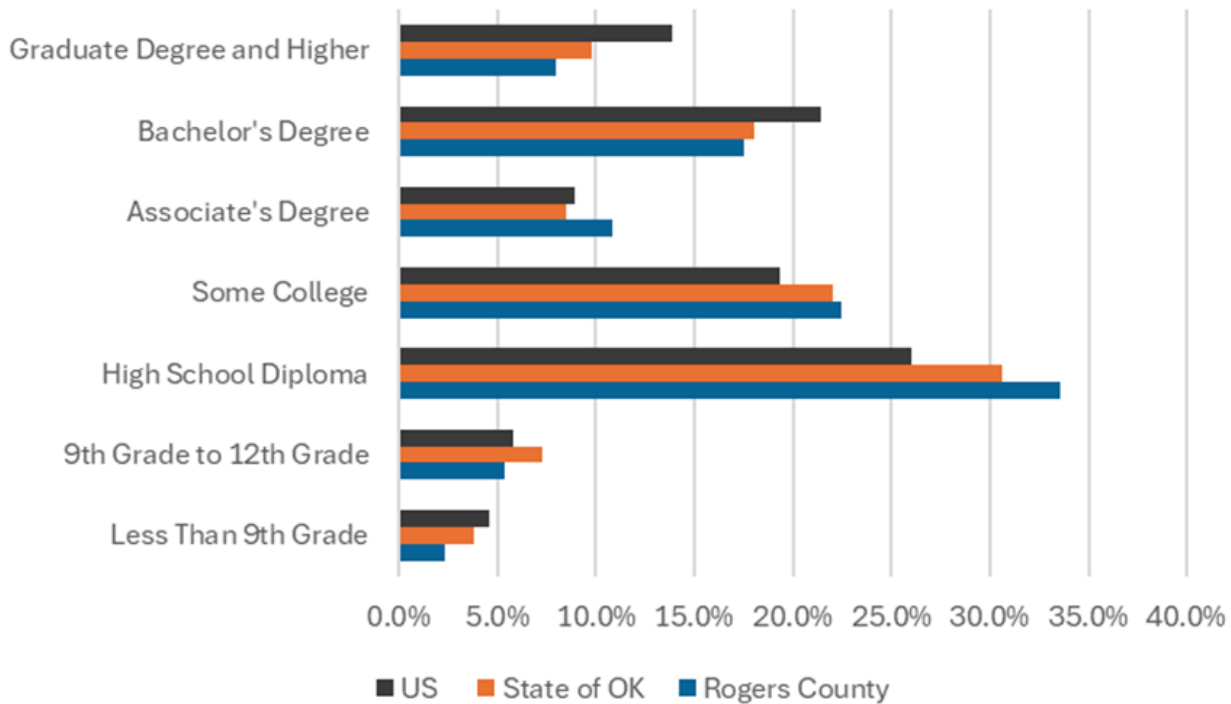
The mean commute time in Rogers County is 25.8 minutes, which is higher than the Tulsa MSA (21.9 minutes) and the state average (22.3 minutes).

## Educational Attainment

As Figure 6 shows, 17.5% of Rogers County residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (3.9% below the national average), and Rogers County also lags the state and US overall in the proportion of graduate degree holders. 10.8% of Rogers County residents hold an Associate's Degree, which is nearly 2% above the national average.

For a higher proportion (33.5%) of Rogers County residents than the state or US overall, the highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma.

**Figure 6** Educational Attainment of Population Age 25 and Over – Rogers County



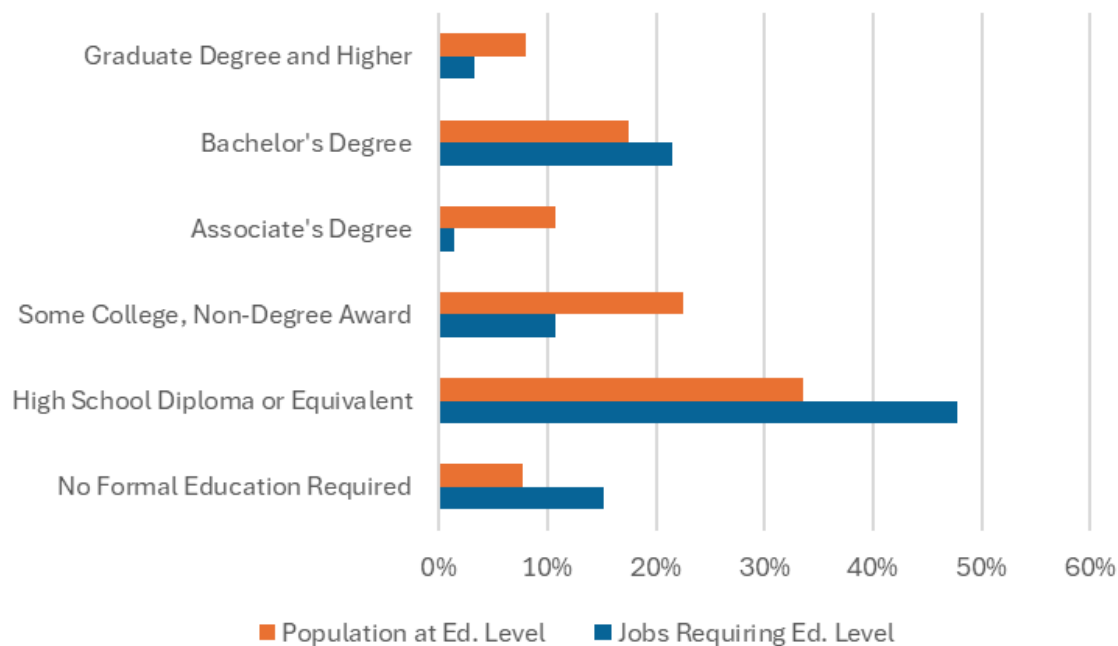
Source: Lightcast

## Alignment of Education with Job Demand

In Rogers County, there is a surplus of individuals with Associate and graduate degrees, and those with some college/no degree, alongside a shortage of Bachelor's degree holders relative to regional job requirements (Figure 7). This suggests **overqualification**, with graduate degree holders potentially employed in roles requiring only a Bachelor's degree, and Associate degree holders or those with some college/no degree potentially employed in positions requiring only a high school diploma. To address underemployment, Claremore Economic Development and partners can work with employers to identify roles where skills or experience can substitute for a Bachelor's degree requirement.

The county also experiences a **mismatch between the supply and demand of lower-skilled labor**, with a higher proportion of jobs requiring no formal education or only a high school diploma than the percentage of the population with no post-secondary education - further contributing to potential overqualification and underemployment.

**Figure 7** Education Levels of Workforce Relative to Jobs Available Rogers County



Source: Lightcast

**Postsecondary Completions in Rogers County**

In 2023, there were **607 postsecondary completions**<sup>4</sup> from Rogers State University – 411 Bachelor’s degrees, 115 Associate’s degrees, 41 Master’s degrees, and 40 certificates awarded across a variety of disciplines. The top three programs by number of awards were: Business Administration and Management, Nursing Science, and Applied Engineering Technologies/ Technicians. Table 5 shows the breakdown of 2023 completions by type and by program.

**Table 5** Rogers State University 2023 Completions

CIP Code	Program	2023 Total Completions	2023 Certificates	2023 Associate Degrees	2023 Bachelor’s Degrees	2023 Master’s Degrees
52.0201	Business Administration & Management, General	133	0	18	81	34
51.3808	Nursing Science	57	0	0	57	0

<sup>4</sup> Lightcast integrates data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to find the output for all public and private education institutions in the region.

CIP Code	Program	2023 Total Completions	2023 Certificates	2023 Associate Degrees	2023 Bachelor's Degrees	2023 Master's Degrees
15.0001	Applied Engineering Technologies/Technicians	55	37	1	17	0
45.0101	Social Sciences, General	53	0	24	29	0
51.3801	Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	52	0	0	52	0
26.0101	Biology/Biological Sciences, General	38	0	4	34	0
13.1202	Elementary Education and Teaching	28	0	28	0	0
30.9999	Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other	20	0	6	14	0
42.2802	Community Psychology	19	0	0	19	0
50.0101	Visual and Performing Arts, General	18	0	0	18	0
09.0799	Radio, Television, and Digital Communication, Other	17	0	0	17	0
24.0101	Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	13	0	5	8	0
31.0504	Sport and Fitness Administration/Management	12	0	0	12	0
43.0103	Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement Administration	12	0	0	12	0
51.0899	Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services, Other	12	0	0	12	0
54.0101	History, General	11	0	0	11	0
40.0801	Physics, General	9	0	9	0	0
52.1299	Management Information Systems and Services, Other	8	0	0	8	0
51.1504	Community Health Services/Liaison/Counseling	7	0	0	0	7
24.0199	Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities, Other	6	0	0	6	0
43.0107	Criminal Justice/Police Science	6	0	6	0	0
52.0301	Accounting	6	0	6	0	0
13.1205	Secondary Education and Teaching	5	0	5	0	0
44.0401	Public Administration	4	0	0	4	0
11.0101	Computer and Information Sciences, General	3	0	3	0	0
11.0301	Data Processing and Data Processing Technology/Technician	3	3	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>607</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>41</b>

Source: Lightcast

Across four **Northeast Tech** campuses, there were a total of 1,716 program completions in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years, combined. Table 6 below lists reported 2023 and 2024 program completions, from highest to lowest, by Northeast Tech campus. Programs with the highest number of completers include Nursing – CNA, Welding, Licensed Practical Nurse, Electrical Trades, and Cosmetology.

**Table 6** *Northeast Tech – All Campuses 2023 and 2024 Completions, Combined*

Program	2023 and 2024 Combined Total Completions	Afton Campus	Claremore Campus	Kansas Campus	Pryor Campus
Nursing Services - C N A	160	51	48	6	55
Welding	153	42	-	51	60
Licensed Practical Nurse	147	27	35	44	41
Electrical Trades	118	28	-	41	49
Cosmetology	115	36	-	29	50
Culinary Arts	77	42	-	-	35
Automotive Service Technology MLR	73	-	-	31	42
Pre-Engineering Program - Advanced	71	10	61	-	-
Automotive Collision Repair and Refinishing	62	22	-	-	40
Medium/Heavy Diesel Service General	62	24	-	-	38
Health Studies	48	-	-	48	-
Medical Services - Phlebotomy	40	36	-	-	4
Multimedia Technology - Advanced	37	14	-	-	23
Nursing Services - Advanced	34	-	-	28	6
Teacher Prep Year 1	33	13	-	-	20
Business Information Management	32	-	32	-	-
Criminal Justice	29	-	29	-	-
CNC Machining	26	-	26	-	-
Early Care and Education Teacher	25	-	25	-	-
Veterinary Services	25	20	5	-	-
Teaching/Training	24	13	-	-	11
Electrical Lineman	23	-	-	-	23
Mechatronics Production and Automation	22	-	-	-	22
Administrative Support - Advanced	21	12	-	9	-
Medical Services - Medical Assisting	19	-	-	-	19
Digital Design and Publishing	19	-	-	12	7
Heavy Equipment Operator Beginning	19	19	-	-	-
Rehabilitation Services	17	14	-	-	3
Electricity	16	-	-	16	-
Service Careers - Facilities, Grounds and Service	15	-	-	-	15
Marine Repair Technology	14	14	-	-	-
Early Care and Education Teacher Assistant	14	-	14	-	-
Pre-Engineering Program	13	13	-	-	-
Digital Design and Publishing - Advanced	13	-	-	2	11
Metal Fabrication	12	2	-	-	10
Customer Service	11	11	-	-	-
Service Careers - Explorer	10	-	-	-	10
Computer / Network Support	10	10	-	-	-
Animation Technology	10	8	-	2	-
Game Design / Development	9	9	-	-	-
Customer Service - Advanced	6	6	-	-	-
Computer / Network Support	6	6	-	-	-
Administrative Support Medical	4	4	-	-	-
Animation Technology - Advanced	4	-	-	4	-

Program	2023 and 2024 Combined Total Completions	Afton Campus	Claremore Campus	Kansas Campus	Pryor Campus
Biomedical Science and Medicine Program	4	4	-	-	-
Carpentry	3	3	-	-	-
Manual Machinist	3	-	3	-	-
Accounting	2	2	-	-	-
Game Design / Development - Advanced	2	2	-	-	-
Administrative Support	2	-	-	2	-
Administrative Support Legal - Advanced	1	1	-	-	-
Master Instructor	1	1	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>594</b>

Source: Oklahoma CareerTech





## KEY INDUSTRIES

At the 2-digit NAICS level, Government (which includes public education and protective services) is the largest industry in Rogers County, employing over 7,005 people with a concentration above the national average (Table 7). Manufacturing and Health Care & Social Assistance have added jobs since 2019, growing 9% and 15% respectively. Transportation & Warehousing has witnessed substantial growth in recent years, likely driven by the surge in e-commerce activity following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Average earnings in Government and Manufacturing surpass the county's **median salary of \$63,687** and exceed the county's MIT living wage (\$21.28/hour or \$44,262 annually for one adult with no children). This wage premium may serve as an incentive for workers in lower-paying sectors to consider employment opportunities within the Government or Manufacturing industry, particularly in periods of labor market tightness. In contrast, wages in Retail Trade and Health Care & Social Assistance are significantly lower than the county average, which may have implications for talent attraction and retention.

**Table 7** Top Industries (2-digit NAICS) Rogers County

2-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2023 Payrolled Business Locations	2024 Employment Concentration	Average Earnings Per Job
Government	6,992	7,005	0%	108	1.36	\$78,851
Manufacturing	5,118	5,557	9%	143	2.04	\$90,102
Retail Trade	3,160	3,110	(2%)	236	0.93	\$41,663
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,700	3,098	15%	246	0.66	\$53,946
Construction	3,332	2,736	(18%)	299	1.32	\$64,702
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,487	2,581	74%	154	1.22	\$59,641
Transportation and Warehousing	583	2,508	330%	63	1.62	\$73,958
Accommodation and Food Services	2,338	2,273	(3%)	127	0.76	\$22,742
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,613	1,830	13%	119	1.03	\$34,825
Wholesale Trade	1,240	1,139	(8%)	149	0.88	\$87,500

Source: Lightcast

It is important to note that Cherokee Nation, a major employer in Rogers County, has diverse operations spanning government, healthcare, retail, and accommodation and food services. However, its overall employment is predominantly classified within the Government sector, specifically under NAICS 921150, *American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Governments*. This classification is due to the unique political status of federally recognized tribes as sovereign entities, which provide a range of

governmental services (e.g., administration, public safety, and infrastructure) in addition to overseeing economic enterprises. Consequently, while individual tribal businesses function similarly to private sector counterparts, the organization's aggregate employment falls under the governmental framework for classification purposes.

### Growth Industries

At a more granular 5-digit NAICS classification, industries adding the most jobs in Rogers County since 2019 include Long-Distance Freight Trucking, Telephone Call Centers, Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing, Crop Production, and Plate Work and Fabricated Structural Product Manufacturing (Table 8). Table 8's **competitive effect** column shows that a large share of these industries' employment growth can be attributed to a unique competitive advantage<sup>5</sup> in Rogers County.

**Table 8** Top Industries for Employment Growth 2019-24 (5-digit NAICS) Rogers County

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	# Change	Competitive Effect	2024 Employment Concentration	Average Earnings Per Job
General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance	141	1,879	<b>1,738</b>	<b>1,737</b>	9.65	\$76,071
Telephone Call Centers	30	605	<b>575</b>	<b>583</b>	7.89	\$59,983
Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing	793	1,280	<b>487</b>	<b>480</b>	276.38	\$94,272
Crop Production	74	379	<b>305</b>	<b>300</b>	2.09	\$44,006
Plate Work and Fabricated Structural Product Manufacturing	465	716	<b>250</b>	<b>219</b>	18.65	\$85,208
Temporary Help Services	345	571	<b>225</b>	<b>260</b>	1.05	\$68,798
Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	137	312	<b>175</b>	<b>142</b>	4.53	\$74,369
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	347	489	<b>142</b>	<b>164</b>	1.58	\$42,734
Other Plastics Product Manufacturing	18	156	<b>138</b>	<b>139</b>	2.40	\$67,873
Private Households	97	228	<b>131</b>	<b>146</b>	0.74	\$17,826

Source: Lightcast

<sup>5</sup> Competitive effect indicates how much of the job change within a given region is the result of some unique competitive advantage of the region. The competitive effect measures the job change that occurs within a regional industry that cannot be explained by broader trends (i.e. the National Growth Effect and the Industrial Mix Effect). To measure competitive effect, we subtract Expected Change from the actual regional job change in the industry of interest. <https://kb.lightcast.io/en/articles/6957549-understanding-shift-share>

Lightcast worked with Claremore Economic Development to establish three primary industries of focus, that align to regional workforce and economic growth priorities:

1. Manufacturing
2. Health Care and Social Assistance
3. Retail Trade combined with Accommodation and Food Services

# Manufacturing

5,557	143	+9%	2.04	\$90,102	23%
2024 Employment	Payrolled Business Locations	Employment Growth Since 2019	Employment Concentration	Average Industry Salary	Percent of Industry Workforce 55+

Manufacturing is the **second-largest industry** in Rogers County, employing 5,557 individuals in 2024. The Manufacturing industry’s employment concentration (or location quotient)<sup>6</sup> of **2.04** indicates a concentration of employment over two times the national average in this sector in Rogers County.

The average wage of \$90,102 in Manufacturing in Rogers County is substantially higher than the region’s average (\$65,697) across all industries. This wage premium may serve as an incentive for workers in lower-paying sectors to consider employment opportunities within the Manufacturing industry, particularly in periods of labor market tightness. The industry’s average wages are also significantly higher than the MIT Living Wage threshold<sup>7</sup> for Rogers County, which is \$21.28/hour or \$44,262 annually.

In Rogers County, 23% of the Manufacturing workforce is age 55 or higher, nearing retirement age. Employers should consider proactive succession planning programs as well as robust training programs to upskill younger employees and develop the leadership and supervisory skills that will be lost when experienced workers retire.

## Manufacturing Industry Subsectors

Rogers County exhibits significant employment concentrations in certain 5-digit NAICS manufacturing industry subsectors (Table 9). For example, the region's employment in Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing is **nearly 262** times higher than the national average. A Location Quotient (LQ) above 1.0 indicates a higher concentration of employment in that industry relative to the national average. The extremely high LQs for subsectors listed signify that **Rogers County is a specialized hub for these**

<sup>6</sup> Location quotient (LQ) is a way of quantifying how concentrated a characteristic of a particular region is compared to the nation. For example, if a particular industry accounts for 2% of jobs in your area but 1% of jobs nationally, then the area's industry has an LQ of (0.02 / 0.01) = 2.0 in your area (as compared to the nation). In your area, the industry accounts for a larger than average share of total jobs and is "concentrated" in the area.

<sup>7</sup> MIT's Living Wage Calculator determines the minimum hourly wage necessary for a full-time worker to cover essential living expenses for their household in a specific location. The calculator incorporates geographically specific costs for essential goods and services, including food, childcare, healthcare, housing, taxes, transportation, clothing, personal care items, and internet access. <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>

**industries**, with the potential to attract more jobs, skilled workers, and to stimulate local economic growth. This specialization can offer economic advantages, such as economies of scale and a highly skilled workforce. However, it can also expose the region to **economic shocks** if these industries experience downturns, especially when employment is concentrated in just a few payrolled business locations, as is the case for Fertilizer Manufacturing, Spring and Wire Product Manufacturing and others.

**Table 9** Manufacturing Industries (5-digit NAICS) With Highest Employment Concentration - Rogers County

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2024 Payrolled Business Locations	2024 Employment Concentration (LQ)	Average Earnings Per Job
Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing	796	1,203	51%	4	261.97	\$97,250
Pump and Compressor Manufacturing	759	471	(38%)	3	47.54	\$142,632
Fertilizer Manufacturing	264	214	(19%)	1	43.76	\$180,172
Mining and Oil and Gas Field Machinery Manufacturing	188	233	24%	4	19.30	\$76,125
Plate Work and Fabricated Structural Product Manufacturing	467	731	57%	13	19.03	\$82,755
Spring and Wire Product Manufacturing	53	114	114%	2	13.59	\$78,494
Rolling and Drawing of Purchased Steel	37	90	141%	1	13.40	\$61,233
Nonwoven Fabric Mills	15	41	164%	1	12.81	\$54,223
Other Basic Organic Chemical Manufacturing	<10	133	Insf. Data	2	11.44	\$92,876
Ventilation, Heating, Air-Conditioning, and Commercial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing	177	321	82%	2	10.65	\$89,044

Source: Lightcast

Rogers County has experienced robust growth in several Manufacturing subsectors including Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing, Plate Work and Fabricated Structural Product Manufacturing, HVAC and Commercial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing, Other Plastics Product Manufacturing, and Motor Vehicle Body and Trailer Manufacturing – which, together, have **added over 1,000 jobs since 2019** (Table 10). These high-growth subsectors, characterized by high average earnings and promising career mobility opportunities, are prime targets for economic development initiatives and strategic workforce training investments to sustain continued growth.

**Table 10 Manufacturing Industries (5-digit NAICS) Adding the Most Jobs 2019-2024 – Rogers County**

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Change	% Change	Average Earnings Per Job
Power Boiler and Heat Exchanger Manufacturing	796	1,203	<b>407</b>	51%	\$97,250
Plate Work and Fabricated Structural Product Manufacturing	467	731	<b>264</b>	57%	\$82,755
Ventilation, Heating, Air-Conditioning, and Commercial Refrigeration Equipment Manufacturing	177	321	<b>144</b>	82%	\$89,044
Other Plastics Product Manufacturing	17	142	<b>125</b>	742%	\$67,679
Motor Vehicle Body and Trailer Manufacturing	135	241	<b>106</b>	78%	\$67,901
Industrial Machinery Manufacturing	67	136	<b>68</b>	102%	\$94,201
Spring and Wire Product Manufacturing	53	114	<b>61</b>	114%	\$78,494
Rolling and Drawing of Purchased Steel	37	90	<b>53</b>	141%	\$61,233
Mining and Oil and Gas Field Machinery Manufacturing	188	233	<b>46</b>	24%	\$76,125
Bread and Bakery Product Manufacturing	19	63	<b>45</b>	238%	\$31,664

Source: Lightcast

### Manufacturing Industry Staffing Patterns

The two most prevalent occupations within the Manufacturing industry in Rogers County are Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers and Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators - which together make up nearly 19% of employment in the sector (Table 11). First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers comprise 5% of employment in Manufacturing with wages that surpass the median salary – making the occupation an attractive target for upskilling and other workforce development initiatives.

**Table 11 Staffing Patterns for the Manufacturing Industry - Rogers County**

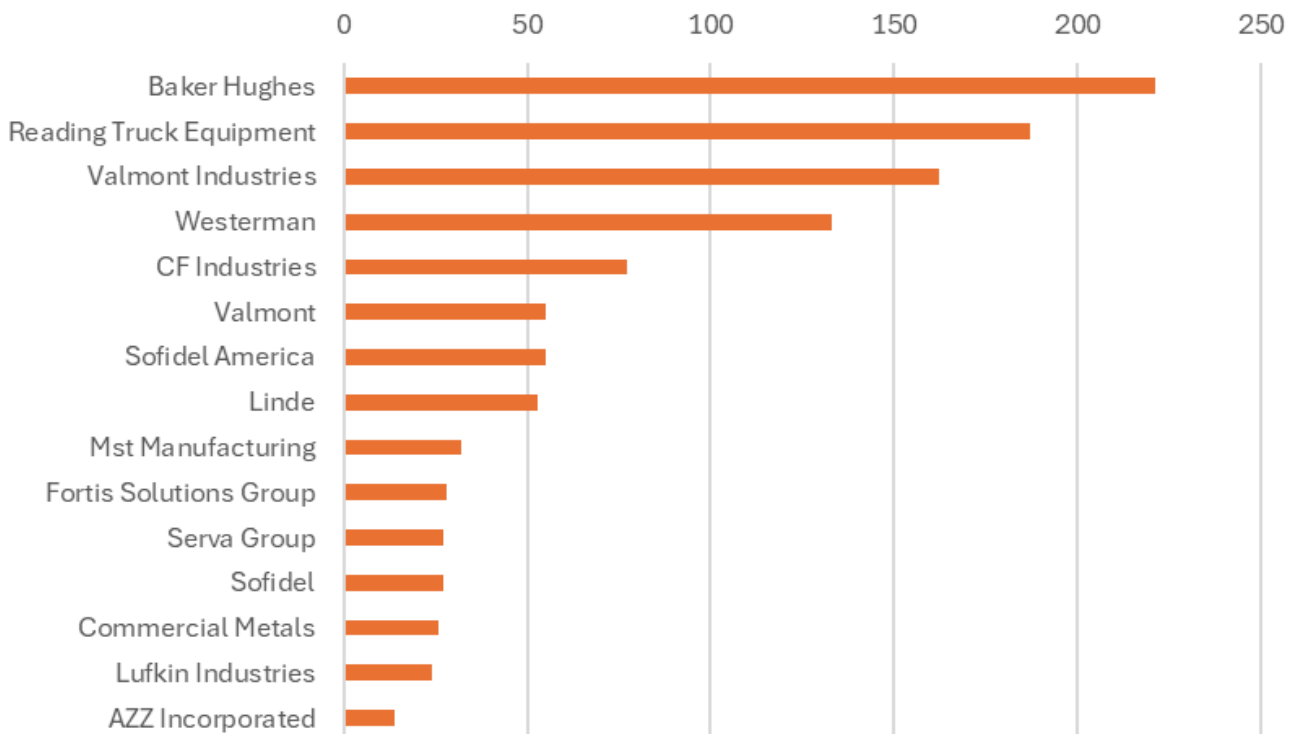
Occupation	2019 Employment	2024 Employment	% Change	% of Total Jobs in Industry	Median Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	524	587	12%	10.6%	\$23.75	HS diploma or equivalent
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	359	451	25%	8.1%	\$19.59	HS diploma or equivalent
First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	253	279	10%	5.0%	\$33.33	HS diploma or equivalent
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	133	217	63%	3.9%	\$18.39	No formal educational credential
Machinists	207	160	(23%)	2.9%	\$24.21	HS diploma or equivalent
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, & Weighers	144	159	11%	2.9%	\$25.81	HS diploma or equivalent

Occupation	2019 Employment	2024 Employment	% Change	% of Total Jobs in Industry	Median Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
General & Operations Managers	105	150	42%	2.7%	\$39.28	Bachelor's degree
Cutting, Punching, & Press Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders, Metal & Plastic	96	125	30%	2.2%	\$19.67	HS diploma or equivalent
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	96	114	18%	2.0%	\$27.79	HS diploma or equivalent
Coating, Painting, & Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders	116	107	(8%)	1.9%	\$21.94	HS diploma or equivalent

Source: Lightcast

## Job Postings Analytics- Manufacturing Industry

**Figure 8** Manufacturing Industry Employers Unique Job Postings in Rogers County April 2023-March 2025



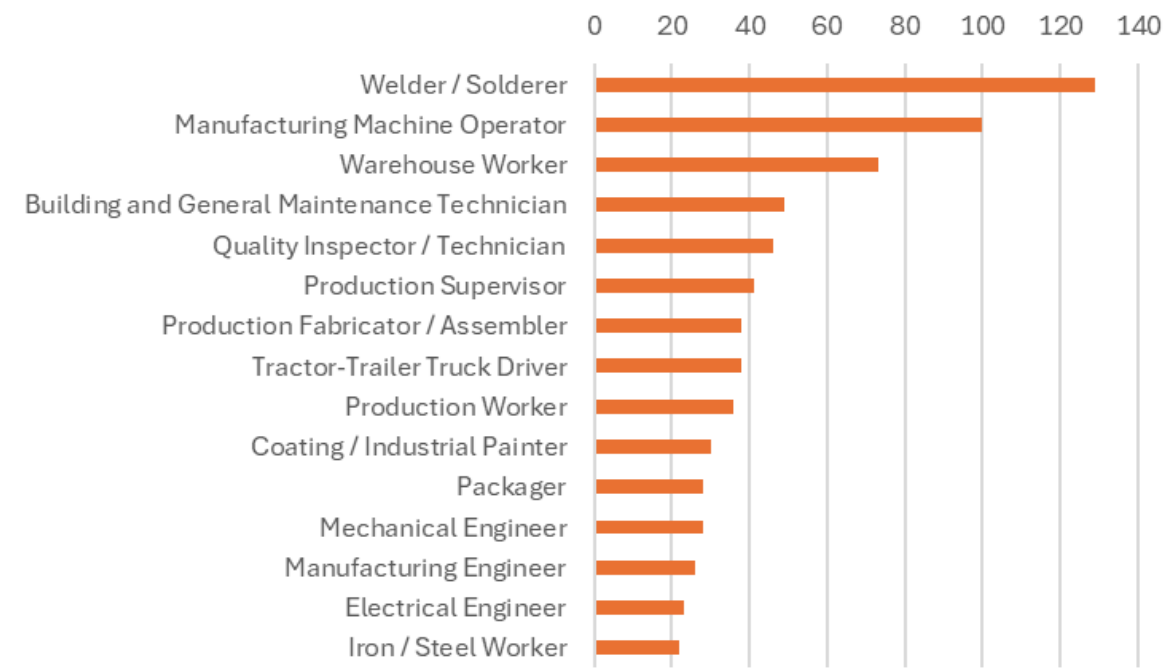
Source: Lightcast



Lightcast supplements traditional survey-based labor market information sources with proprietary real-time job postings data, which provides more timely intelligence on demand for occupations, skills, and levels of education within a selected geography. The forward-looking nature of job postings data captures current and emerging labor market trends, to better align education and training programs to evolving industry needs.

Manufacturing industry employers posting jobs most frequently in the last 24 months include Baker Hughes, Reading Truck Equipment, Valmont Industries, and Westerman (Figure 8). Positions most frequently posted are Welders, Machine Operators, Warehouse Workers, General Maintenance Technicians, and Quality Inspectors (Figure 9).

**Figure 9** Top Posted Manufacturing Occupations in Rogers County April 2023-March 2025



Source: Lightcast

Understanding the top skills requested by employers in key industries is important for identifying gaps, aligning training and educational programs to meet industry needs, promoting career pathways, and supporting collaborative industry partnership initiatives. Table 12 shows the top specialized skills requested by Manufacturing employers in job postings between April 2023 and March 2025 and forecasts growth in demand for each skill over the next 2 years. Lightcast’s projections are based on trends over the past five years and are derived using machine learning algorithms.

**Table 12** *Top Specialized Skills Requested in Manufacturing Industry Job Postings April 2023–March 2025  
Rogers County*

<b>Skills</b>	<b># of Postings</b>	<b>% of Total Postings</b>	<b>Projected Skill Growth</b>	<b>Skill Growth Relative to Market<sup>8</sup></b>
Forklift Truck	202	15%	5.5%	Stable
Hand Tools	166	12%	6.2%	Stable
General Mathematics	156	11%	14.8%	Growing
Warehousing	146	11%	13.0%	Growing
Project Management	144	10%	19.8%	Rapidly Growing
Artificial Lift	141	10%	13.3%	Growing
Welding	141	10%	20.1%	Rapidly Growing
Housekeeping	127	9%	13.3%	Growing
Continuous Improvement Process	127	9%	23.4%	Rapidly Growing
Machinery	123	9%	8.0%	Stable
Power Tool Operation	118	9%	7.4%	Stable
Overhead Crane Operation	117	9%	25.7%	Rapidly Growing
Auditing	116	8%	21.8%	Rapidly Growing
Fabrication	114	8%	16.9%	Growing
Oil and Gas	103	8%	N/A	N/A

Source: Lightcast

To help understand skills demand related to increasing technological advances, automation, and digitization in the Manufacturing industry, Table 13 shows the top software skills requested by Manufacturing employers in the last two years. In addition to the Microsoft Office suite, employers are seeking experience with SAP applications, SolidWorks (CAD), Inventory management systems, AutoCAD, and APIs.

**Table 13** *Top Software Skills Requested in Manufacturing Industry Job Postings April 2023-March 2025  
Rogers County*

<b>Skills</b>	<b># of Postings</b>	<b>% of Total Postings</b>	<b>Projected Skill Growth</b>	<b>Skill Growth Relative to Market</b>
Microsoft Excel	166	12%	17.7%	Growing
Microsoft Outlook	137	10%	25.0%	Rapidly Growing
Microsoft Office	126	9%	18.5%	Growing
Microsoft Word	76	6%	7.2%	Stable
SAP Applications	62	5%	21.6%	Rapidly Growing
Microsoft PowerPoint	48	3%	26.1%	Rapidly Growing

<sup>8</sup> To calculate a skill's growth relative to market, Lightcast compares the forecasted 2-year change in national demand of an individual skill with the forecasted 2-year change in national demand for all skills.

Skills	# of Postings	% of Total Postings	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
SolidWorks (CAD)	46	3%	24.1%	Rapidly Growing
Inventory Management System	29	2%	12.0%	Growing
AutoCAD	28	2%	16.9%	Growing
Application Programming Interface (API)	25	2%	9.5%	Growing
Communications Protocols	20	1%	11.7%	Growing
Ansys Simulation Software	15	1%	13.2%	Growing
Spreadsheets	15	1%	22.2%	Rapidly Growing
Protractor (Software)	14	1%	(3.1%)	Lagging
Human Resources Information System (HRIS)	11	1%	14.6%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

Table 14 shows the top qualifications or certifications requested in Manufacturing industry job postings. Where possible, education and training providers should consider embedding these industry-recognized credentials in programming and encourage job seekers to include them on resumes and job applications.

**Table 14** *Top Qualifications Requested in Manufacturing Industry Job Postings*  
*April 2023–March 2025 Rogers County*

Qualification	Postings with Qualification
Valid Driver's License	54
American Welding Society Certification	26
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	25
Forklift Certification	19
Advanced Life Support	15
Project Management Professional Certification	12
Certified Welder	11
Master Of Business Administration (MBA)	9
CDL Class A License	7
CDL Class B License	6

Source: Lightcast



# Health Care and Social Assistance

<b>3,098</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>+15%</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>\$53,946</b>	<b>22%</b>
2024 Employment	Payrolled Business Locations	Employment Growth Since 2019	Employment Concentration	Average Industry Salary	Percent of Industry Workforce 55+

Healthcare & Social Assistance is the fourth-largest industry in Rogers County, employing 3,098 individuals in 2024. While not highly concentrated in Rogers County (0.66), the industry saw substantial (15%) employment growth between 2019 and 2024.

The average wage of \$53,946 in Healthcare & Social Assistance in Rogers County is significantly lower than the region’s average (\$65,697) across all industries which reflects the industry’s mix of highly educated, highly paid medical practitioners and managers, and lower-wage support roles like Home Health & Personal Care Aides, Nursing Assistants, and Medical Assistants. While still higher than the MIT Living Wage threshold for Rogers County (\$21.28/hour or \$44,262 annually) the wage penalty in many support roles may drive persistent turnover, as workers continually seek higher-paying opportunities.

In Rogers County, 22% of the Healthcare & Social Assistance workforce are aged 55 or higher, nearing retirement age. Employers should consider proactive succession planning programs as well as robust training programs to upskill younger employees and develop the leadership and supervisory skills that will be lost when experienced workers retire.

## Healthcare and Social Assistance Industry Subsectors

Rogers County exhibits notable employment concentrations in certain 5-digit NAICS Healthcare & Social Assistance industry subsectors (Table 15). For example, the region's employment in Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers is over four times higher than the national average. A Location Quotient (LQ) above 1.0 indicates a higher concentration of employment in that industry relative to the national average.

Rogers County has experienced robust growth in several Healthcare & Social Assistance subsectors including Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers, Skilled Nursing Facilities, and Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists– which, together, have added nearly 400 jobs since 2019 (Table 16).

While Child Day Care Services and Vocational Rehabilitation Services grew 23% and 200% respectively since 2019, the industries may face challenges attracting and retaining the workforce needed to support continued growth as average wages are well below the county's median and the living wage threshold.

**Table 15** *Healthcare & Social Assistance (5-digit NAICS) With Highest Employment Concentration*  
Rogers County

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2024 Payrolled Business Locations	2024 Employment Concentration (LQ)	Average Earnings Per Job
Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	137	307	124%	4	4.48	\$73,964
Ambulance Services	71	113	59%	3	2.99	\$71,363
Community Housing Services	<10	78	Insf. Data	3	2.60	\$37,803
Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	93	186	100%	12	1.79	\$67,281
Offices of Optometrists	30	57	87%	8	1.70	\$45,741
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	32	95	200%	4	1.56	\$27,238
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	347	465	34%	7	1.52	\$44,049
Child Day Care Services	282	347	23%	17	1.36	\$25,674

Source: Lightcast

**Table 16** *Healthcare & Social Assistance Industries (5-digit NAICS) Adding the Most Jobs 2019-2024*  
Rogers County

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Change	% Change	Average Earnings Per Job
Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	137	307	<b>170</b>	124%	\$73,964
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	347	465	<b>119</b>	34%	\$44,049
Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	93	186	<b>93</b>	100%	\$67,281
Child Day Care Services	282	347	<b>65</b>	23%	\$25,674
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	32	95	<b>63</b>	200%	\$27,238
Ambulance Services	71	113	<b>42</b>	59%	\$71,363
Offices of Optometrists	30	57	<b>27</b>	87%	\$45,741
Other Individual and Family Services	30	48	<b>18</b>	60%	\$40,842
Offices of All Other Health Practitioners	25	38	<b>13</b>	53%	\$49,412
Offices of Dentists	235	248	<b>13</b>	6%	\$66,132

Source: Lightcast

### Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry Staffing Patterns

The three most prevalent occupations within the Healthcare & Social Assistance industry in Rogers County are Home Health and Personal Care Aides, Nursing Assistants, Registered Nurses, and Childcare Workers - which together make up nearly 30% of employment in the sector (Table 17). Only three occupations in the top ten provide wages above the MIT living wage threshold of \$21.28. However, many of these roles offer career pathway potential and serve as good entry-points to the industry.

Lightcast identifies career pathway opportunities by calculating skills “relevance” - how closely aligned the skills are between a source (or “feeder”) occupation and potential next-step occupation. For example, relevant “next step” opportunity occupations for Nursing Assistants include Health Technologists and Technicians, which would command a mean salary gain of \$10,157, Registered Nurses with a salary gain of \$59,866, and Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses, with a gain of \$23,028 (Table 18). All of these transitions would be considered lateral advancement for Nursing Assistants - jobs that pay more but require transition to a new occupational group as opposed to the feeder occupation.

**Table 17** Staffing Patterns for the Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry in Rogers County

Occupation	2019 Employment	2024 Employment	% Change	% of Total Jobs in Industry	Median Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	284	278	(2%)	9.0%	\$12.49	HS diploma or equivalent
Nursing Assistants	234	237	1%	7.7%	\$16.55	Postsecondary nondegree award
Registered Nurses	239	230	(4%)	7.4%	\$37.58	Bachelor's degree
Childcare Workers	136	157	16%	5.1%	\$11.63	HS diploma or equivalent
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	105	116	11%	3.7%	\$27.46	Postsecondary nondegree award
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	53	108	105%	3.5%	\$28.00	Bachelor's degree
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	96	91	(4%)	3.0%	\$16.00	Associate's degree
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	77	91	18%	2.9%	\$16.86	HS diploma or equivalent
Dental Assistants	85	84	(2%)	2.7%	\$17.06	Postsecondary nondegree award
Medical Assistants	64	77	21%	2.5%	\$16.23	Postsecondary nondegree award

Source: Lightcast

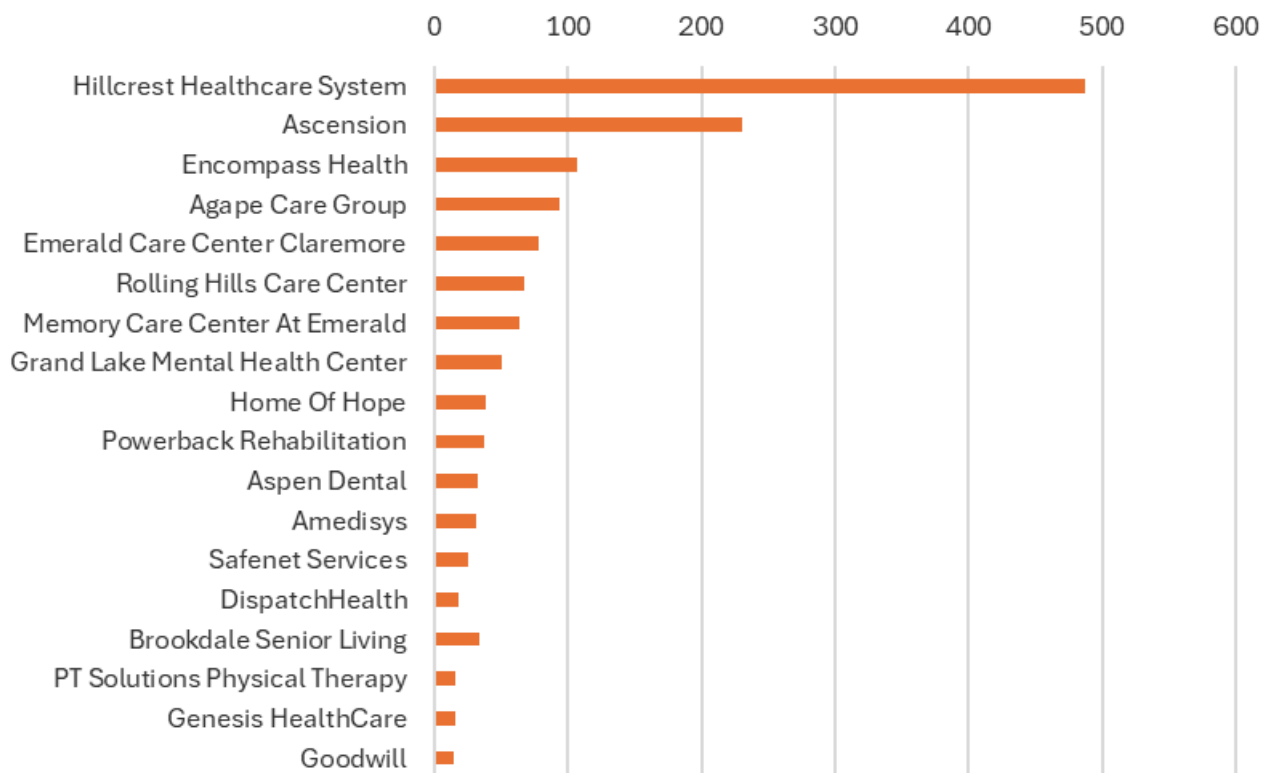


**Table 18** Next-Step Occupations for Nursing Assistants and Salary Differentials

Feeder Occupation		Opportunity Occupations	Mean Salary Difference
<b>Nursing Assistants</b>		Health Technologists and Technicians	+\$10,157
		Registered Nurses	+\$59,866
		Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	+\$23,028
		Psychiatric Technicians	+\$ 2,548
		Medical and Health Services Managers	+\$63,343
		Psychiatric Aides	+\$13,020

### Job Postings Analytics- Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry

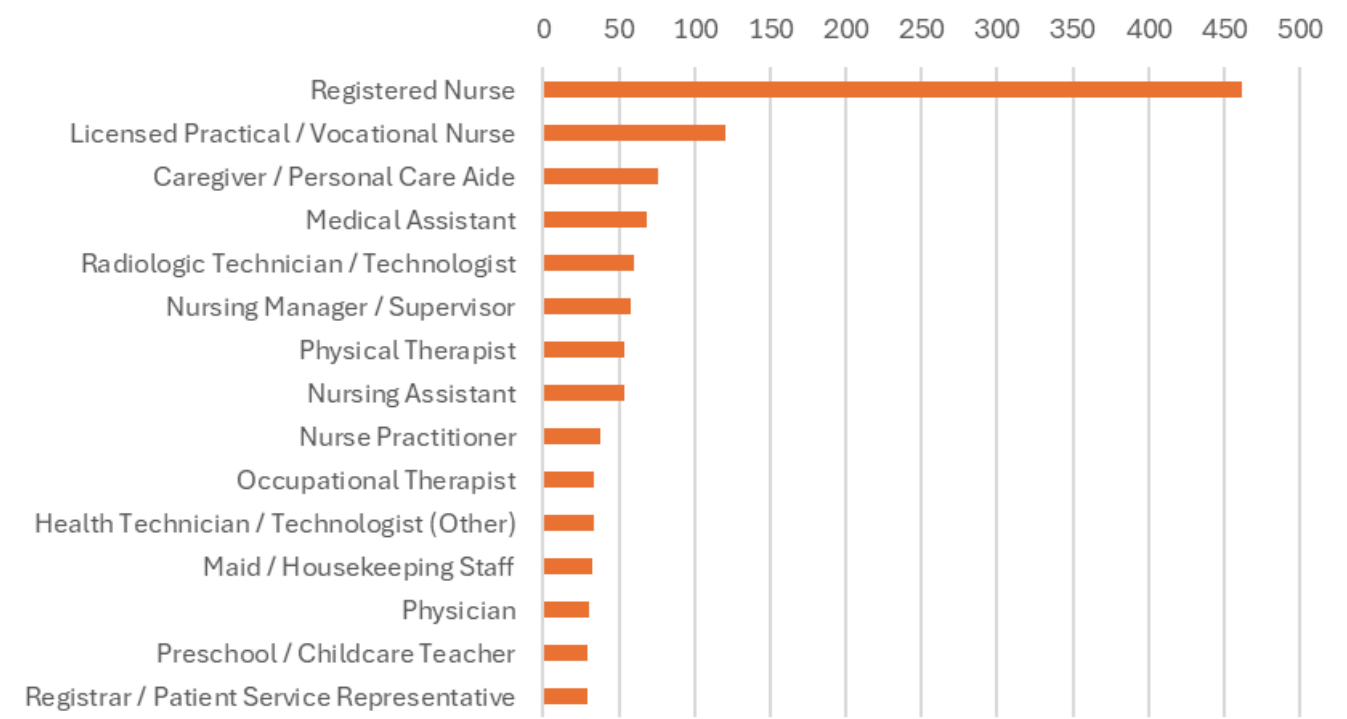
**Figure 10** Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry Employers Unique Job Postings in Rogers County  
April 2023-March 2025



Source: Lightcast

Healthcare & Social Assistance industry employers posting jobs most frequently in the last 24 months include Hillcrest Healthcare System, Ascension, Encompass Health, Agape Care Group, and the Emerald Care Center in Claremore. Baker Hughes, Reading Truck Equipment, Valmont Industries, and Westerman (Figure 10). Positions most frequently posted are Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical / Vocational Nurses, Personal Care Aides, Medical Assistants, and Radiologic Technicians (Figure 11).

**Figure 11** Top Posted Healthcare & Social Assistance Occupations in Rogers County April 2023-March 2025



Source: Lightcast

Table 19 shows the top specialized skills requested by Healthcare & Social Assistance employers in job postings between April 2023 and March 2025 and forecasts growth in demand for each skill over the next 2 years. Nursing skills are requested in one-third of the industry’s job postings and are characterized as *rapidly growing* in Rogers County. Acute Care (7%), Discharge Planning (7%), Vital Signs (6%), and Housekeeping (6%) are top skills also growing in demand in Rogers County.

**Table 19** Top Specialized Skills Requested in Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry Job Postings  
April 2023–March 2025 Rogers County

Skills	# of Postings	% of Total Postings	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Nursing	650	33%	20.1%	Rapidly Growing
Nursing Care	238	12%	19.1%	Growing
Acute Care	138	7%	12.8%	Growing
Discharge Planning	129	7%	14.6%	Growing
Vital Signs	122	6%	17.2%	Growing
Rehabilitation	117	6%	6.4%	Stable
Housekeeping	115	6%	13.3%	Growing
Treatment Planning	114	6%	6.7%	Stable
Home Health Care	103	5%	19.0%	Growing
Hospice	103	5%	15.6%	Growing
Nursing Process	101	5%	24.2%	Rapidly Growing
Meal Planning And Preparation	93	5%	11.2%	Growing
Medical Records	88	5%	12.5%	Growing
Medical Assistance	80	4%	11.9%	Growing
Radiology	80	4%	9.6%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

Software or technology skills are not particularly prevalent in Healthcare & Social Assistance job postings. The top software skill (Microsoft Office) is requested in only 2% of industry postings (Table 20).

**Table 20** Top Software Skills Requested in Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry Job Postings April 2023  
March 2025 - Rogers County

Skills	# of Postings	% of Total Postings	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Microsoft Office	32	2%	18.5%	Growing
Epic EMR	21	1%	16.4%	Growing
Spreadsheets	14	1%	22.2%	Rapidly Growing
Dentrix	11	1%	6.8%	Stable
Microsoft Outlook	11	1%	25.0%	Rapidly Growing
Microsoft Excel	10	1%	17.7%	Growing
MEDITECH EHR	7	0%	1.8%	Lagging
Net Health Optima	6	0%	9.4%	Growing
Microsoft Word	4	0%	7.2%	Stable
Document-Oriented Databases	4	0%	12.2%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

Table 21 shows the top qualifications or certifications requested in Healthcare & Social Assistance industry job postings. Where possible, education and training providers should consider embedding these industry-recognized credentials in programming and encourage job seekers to include them on resumes and job applications.

**Table 21** *Top Qualifications Requested in Healthcare & Social Assistance Industry Job Postings*  
*April 2023 – March 2025 Rogers County*

Qualification	Postings with Qualification
Registered Nurse (RN)	676
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	616
Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) Certification	236
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	235
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	190
Valid Driver's License	145
American Red Cross (ARC) Certification	124
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	106
American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) Certified	77
Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)	76
Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)	67
First Aid Certification	59
Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP)	54
Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)	53
Registered Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist (RCIS)	42

Source: Lightcast

## Retail Trade

<b>3,110</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>(-2%)</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>\$41,663</b>	<b>21%</b>
2024 Employment	Payrolled Business Locations	Employment Growth Since 2019	Employment Concentration	Average Industry Salary	Percent of Industry Workforce 55+

## Accommodation and Food Services

<b>2,273</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>(-3%)</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>\$22,742</b>	<b>12%</b>
2024 Employment	Payrolled Business Locations	Employment Growth Since 2019	Employment Concentration	Average Industry Salary	Percent of Industry Workforce 55+

The Retail Trade industry in Rogers County is comprised of 236 payrolled business locations employing 3,110 workers in 2024, making it the third largest industry in Rogers County. Accommodation & Food Services provides 2,273 jobs (2024) in 127 payrolled business locations.

Both industries in Rogers County have experienced job losses since 2019. Between 2019 and 2024, employment in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services declined 2% and 3% respectively, shedding a combined 115 jobs.

Average wages in both industries are significantly lower than the county's average (\$65,697) and, on average, do not provide a "living wage" (using the MIT Living Wage threshold for Rogers County of \$44,262 annually). Low wages may deter applicants who are seeking work to support a household and may also indicate a shortage of opportunities to advance on a career path toward higher-paying opportunities within the industry. This wage penalty **may also drive persistent turnover**, as workers continually seek higher-paying opportunities.

While 21% of the Retail Trade workforce is nearing retirement age, the Accommodation & Food Services workforce skews notably younger. A younger demographic in Accommodation & Food Services suggests that certain roles might be appealing employment options for students or young adults - potentially with less sensitivity to wages if the roles are part-time and not intended to support a household.

### Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry Subsectors

Rogers County exhibits employment concentrations in several 5-digit NAICS Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services industry subsectors which may indicate a higher need for the types of goods and services they provide in Rogers County compared to the US overall (Table 22). For example, the county's employment in Recreational Vehicle Dealers is over seven times higher than the national average. A Location Quotient (LQ) above 1.0 indicates a higher concentration of employment in that industry relative to the national average.

**Table 22** Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services (5-digit NAICS) With Highest Employment Concentration - Rogers County

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	% Change	2024 Payrolled Business Locations	2024 Employment Concentration (LQ)	Average Earnings Per Job
Recreational Vehicle Dealers	98	87	(11%)	4	7.56	\$65,607
Fuel Dealers	16	46	189%	3	2.97	\$110,673
Caterers	35	103	194%	2	2.13	\$27,672
Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	295	326	11%	30	1.75	\$39,963
Hardware Retailers	77	66	(14%)	4	1.75	\$31,253
Automotive Parts and Accessories Retailers	70	144	105%	13	1.70	\$51,534
Other Building Material Dealers	120	94	(22%)	10	1.66	\$66,802
All Other Miscellaneous Retailers	71	123	74%	22	1.54	\$33,200
Used Car Dealers	41	61	47%	10	1.40	\$48,385
Nursery, Garden Center, and Farm Supply Retailers	24	46	92%	6	1.34	\$62,465

Source: Lightcast

Rogers County has experienced growth since 2019 in several Retail and Accommodation & Food Services subsectors including Warehouse Clubs, Automotive Parts and Accessories Retailers, Caterers, Miscellaneous Retailers, and Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores. Together, these industries have added over 350 jobs since 2019 (Table 23).

Those subsectors with average wages below the living wage threshold (Caterers, Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores, Hardware Retailers, and others) may face challenges attracting and retaining the workforce needed to support continued growth.

**Table 23** Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industries (5-digit NAICS) Adding the Most Jobs 2019-2024, Rogers County

5-digit NAICS Industry	2019 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Change	% Change	Average Earnings Per Job
Warehouse Clubs, Supercenters, and Other General Merchandise Retailers	499	633	<b>134</b>	27%	\$35,680
Automotive Parts and Accessories Retailers	70	144	<b>74</b>	105%	\$51,534
Caterers	35	103	<b>68</b>	194%	\$27,672
All Other Miscellaneous Retailers	71	123	<b>52</b>	74%	\$33,200
Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	295	326	<b>31</b>	11%	\$39,963
Fuel Dealers	16	46	<b>30</b>	189%	\$110,673
Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels	137	164	<b>27</b>	20%	\$27,981
Nursery, Garden Center, and Farm Supply Retailers	24	46	<b>22</b>	92%	\$62,465
Used Car Dealers	41	61	<b>19</b>	47%	\$48,385
Pharmacies and Drug Retailers	157	175	<b>18</b>	12%	\$53,552

Source: Lightcast

### Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry Staffing Patterns

The three most prevalent occupations within the Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services industries in Rogers County are Cashiers, Fast Food and Counter Workers, Retail Salespersons, and Stockers and Order Fillers - which together make up over 40% of employment in the sector (Table 24). Nine out of the top ten occupations have median hourly earnings below the MIT Living Wage threshold for Rogers County (\$21.28), which may deter applicants, drive employee turnover, and constrain growth in a tight labor market.

Except for General & Operations Managers, all of the top occupations are accessible without post-secondary education. Employers should look to hidden talent pools<sup>9</sup> and the youth pipeline to fill these and other openings and demonstrate career pathway potential via the foundational skills gained in entry-level roles.

Double digit declines in the employment of Retail Salespersons (-32%), Waiters and Waitresses (-23%) and Restaurant Cooks (-30%) could reflect changing consumer preferences away from in-person shopping and dining toward e-commerce and food services delivery through third-party services like Door Dash and Instacart.

<sup>9</sup> <https://lightcast.io/resources/research/crafting-local-talent>



**Table 24 Staffing Patterns for the Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry in Rogers County**

Occupation	2019 Employment	2024 Employment	% Change	% of Total Jobs in Industry	Median Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education
Cashiers	593	633	7%	11.8%	\$12.88	No formal educational credential
Fast Food and Counter Workers	597	606	1%	11.3%	\$11.03	No formal educational credential
Retail Salespersons	802	543	(32%)	10.1%	\$13.47	No formal educational credential
Stockers and Order Fillers	290	391	35%	7.3%	\$16.22	HS diploma or equivalent
Waiters and Waitresses	435	334	(23%)	6.2%	\$9.01	No formal educational credential
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	292	273	(7%)	5.1%	\$19.45	HS diploma or equivalent
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	208	230	10%	4.3%	\$15.95	HS diploma or equivalent
Cooks, Fast Food	198	187	(6%)	3.5%	\$11.89	No formal educational credential
Cooks, Restaurant	251	176	(30%)	3.3%	\$13.57	No formal educational credential
General and Operations Managers	58	120	106%	2.2%	\$39.28	Bachelor's degree

Source: Lightcast

### Job Postings Analytics- Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry

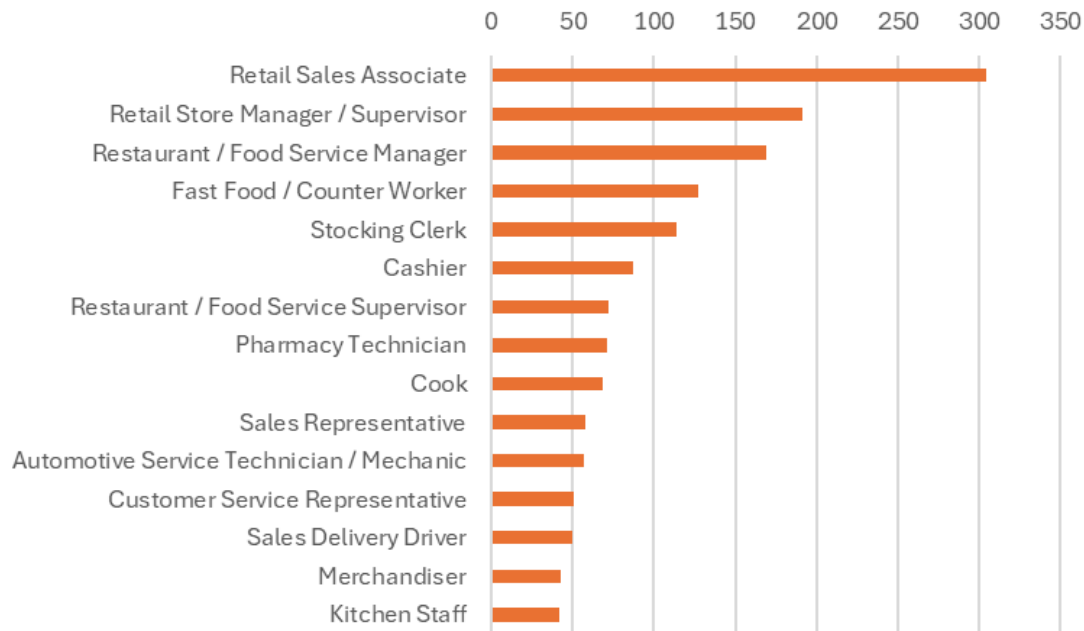
Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services industry employers posting jobs most frequently in the last 24 months include Cherokee Nation, Brookshire Grocery Company, Walmart, Sodexo, and Dollar General. Hillcrest Healthcare System, Ascension, Encompass Health, Agape Care Group, and the Emerald Care Center in Claremore. Baker Hughes, Reading Truck Equipment, Valmont Industries, and Westerman (Figure 12). Positions most frequently posted are Retail Sales Associates, Retail Store Managers, Restaurant/Food Service Managers, Fast Food/Counter Workers, and Stocking Clerks (Figure 13).

**Figure 12** Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry Employers Unique Job Postings in Rogers County April 2023-March 2025



Source: Lightcast

**Figure 13** Top Posted Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Occupations in Rogers County April 2023-March 2025



Source: Lightcast

Table 25 shows the top specialized skills requested by Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services industry employers in job postings between April 2023 and March 2025 and forecasts growth in demand for each skill over the next 2 years. Skills related to the day-to-day operations of retail and food service businesses are in high demand (Merchandising, Food Safety and Sanitation, and Restaurant Operations) as are customer service-related skills like Cash Register and Selling Techniques. “Back-office” skills like General Mathematics, Inventory Management, and Accounting are also in demand, indicating a need for generalist skillsets in managerial roles

**Table 25** *Top Specialized Skills Requested in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry Job Postings, April 2023–March 2025 Rogers County*

<b>Skills</b>	<b># of Postings</b>	<b>% of Total Postings</b>	<b>Projected Skill Growth</b>	<b>Skill Growth Relative to Market</b>
Merchandising	639	29%	15.0%	Growing
Cash Register	481	22%	21.4%	Rapidly Growing
Food Safety and Sanitation	307	14%	11.7%	Growing
Restaurant Operation	288	13%	28.0%	Rapidly Growing
Selling Techniques	268	12%	(1.2%)	Lagging
General Mathematics	244	11%	14.8%	Growing
Cash Handling	241	11%	8.9%	Growing
Safety Procedures	216	10%	0.0%	
Stocking Merchandise	200	9%	18.0%	Growing
Food Services	170	8%	16.4%	Growing
Inventory Management	149	7%	12.6%	Growing
Retail Operations	140	6%	11.0%	Growing
Visual Merchandising	140	6%	12.9%	Growing
Product Promotion	135	6%	17.0%	Growing
Accounting	110	5%	24.0%	Rapidly Growing

Source: Lightcast

Software or technology skills are not particularly prevalent in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services job postings. The top software skill (Microsoft Office) is requested in only 4% of industry postings (Table 26). Common skills, or what are sometimes referred to as “soft” skills are much more likely to be included in Retail and Accommodation & Food Services job postings. For example, as Table 27 shows, Customer Service skills are requested in over half of industry postings (54%). Sales (42%) and Communication skills (30%) are also highly in-demand. Common skills are transferable across industries and can provide a durable foundation for future career pathways.

**Table 26** Top Software Skills Requested in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry Job Postings April 2023 March 2025 - Rogers County

Skills	# of Postings	% of Total Postings	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Microsoft Office	77	4%	18.5%	Growing
Web Browsers	41	2%	9.5%	Growing
Spreadsheets	36	2%	22.2%	Rapidly Growing
Safari (Web Browser)	35	2%	16.7%	Growing
Firefox	35	2%	7.9%	Stable
Microsoft Edge	35	2%	8.0%	Stable
Inventory Management System	33	2%	12.0%	Growing
Microsoft Excel	24	1%	17.7%	Growing
Software Systems	21	1%	11.9%	Growing
Enterprise Application Software	20	1%	11.6%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

**Table 27** Top Common Skills Requested in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry Job Postings April 2023 March 2025 - Rogers County

Skills	# of Postings	% of Total Postings	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Customer Service	1,173	54%	5.2%	Stable
Sales	920	42%	7.8%	Stable
Communication	648	30%	3.6%	Lagging
Management	573	26%	5.3%	Stable
Operations	443	20%	8.1%	Stable
Leadership	402	18%	8.5%	Stable
Greeting Customers	371	17%	4.6%	Stable
Cleanliness	308	14%	11.1%	Growing
English Language	308	14%	15.3%	Growing
Multitasking	251	11%	18.4%	Growing
Teamwork	243	11%	16.5%	Growing
Lifting Ability	229	10%	10.6%	Growing
Detail Oriented	203	9%	7.1%	Stable
Scheduling	192	9%	16.4%	Growing
Accountability	189	9%	18.7%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

Finally, Table 28 shows the top qualifications or certifications requested in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services industry job postings. Where possible, education and training providers should consider embedding these industry-recognized credentials in programming and encourage job seekers to include them on resumes and job applications.

**Table 28** Top Qualifications Requested in Retail Trade and Accommodation & Food Services Industry  
Job Postings April 2023 – March 2025 Rogers County

Qualification	Postings with Qualification
Valid Driver's License	199
Food Handler's Card	126
Certified Pharmacy Technician	55
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification	38
Registered Pharmacist (RPh)	32
Food Safety Certification	24
ServSafe Certification	12
CDL Class A License	10
ASE Parts Specialist	8
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	7

Source: Lightcast



# LOCAL STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Claremore Economic Development provided Lightcast with a list of 47 individuals representing 10 employers from manufacturing and healthcare and 11 regional partners representing a Tribal Nation, economic development, workforce development, higher education, and local government. Of the 47 invitations that were sent 11 organizations responded representing a 52% organizational response rate. Interviews were conducted in March and April of 2025 with consistent questions across interviewees related to education, talent development and attraction, community conditions, and partnerships. Several key themes emerged:

## Talent Attraction and Retention

- Vocational and higher education programs are available that address the key needs of local employers. Continued partnerships between Claremore Public Schools, Northeast Tech, Rogers State University and Claremore Economic Development will expand success.
- Most talent in Rogers County is either from the county or commutes in from the broader laborshed in the Tulsa region. While developing talent and helping to facilitate career opportunities for local residents should remain the priority, Claremore Economic Development and partners should consider a talent attraction campaign or lasting program to address gaps between skilled and educated talent identified in this Workforce Landscape Analysis.
- There was a consistent sentiment from interviewees that talent attraction can occur without detriment to the existing workforce or residents. If Claremore Economic Development implements a talent attraction campaign or program it should simultaneously leverage the career opportunities available in the county with the quality-of-life assets that are attractive to current talent.

## Apprenticeships, Co-ops, Internships, and On-the-Job Training

- Apprenticeships are either minimal or non-existent in Rogers County. Previous efforts to create formal apprenticeship programs had begun but the efforts dissipated due to slow or low adoption, interest, and support. There are also perspectives by the local business community that apprenticeship programs may be too regulatory, restrictive, and bureaucratic in nature.
- While apprenticeship programs do not appear to be active nor a mid-term fit for the community, many companies and regional partners are collaborating on cooperative education, internships,

and on-the-job training. There is tremendous opportunity for Claremore Economic Development to expand its role as a key convenor in connecting formal training programs and support from vocational and higher education partners with the needs of the youth, workers in transition, and those of employers.

## Infrastructure and Housing

- Interviewees consistently expressed that most of the infrastructure in Rogers County met the needs of businesses and the community. Yet, every individual interviewed mentioned that historic train infrastructure and daily trains passing through the county blocked traffic causing issues ranging from commuting and supply chain delays to critical situations involving emergencies. While the new SH-20 bridge over SH-66 is a significant first step in addressing this critical infrastructure need, county and state partners should continue to plan for and construct additional infrastructure to enhance safety and the flow of commuters and supplies.
- The lack of available and affordable housing was also consistently mentioned by interviewees. Addressing the demand for housing helps to support a stable laborshed, which in turn helps to retain, expand, and attract businesses to the county. Claremore Economic Development, county and regional partners, and developers should continue to focus on implementing the recommendations found in the Claremore Housing Market Analysis from 2023 and the Cherokee Nation Housing Assessment Phase 1 White Paper from September 2024.

## Quality of Life

- Interviewees consistently emphasized that Rogers County provided a great quality of life for residents and workers, but also the importance of the county developing and attracting additional amenities that are attractive to the vibrancy of the community.
- Those interviewed explained that Rogers County was safe, provided great opportunities for education, had the benefit of natural recreation - including the lakes, and offered a small-town or rural setting that was attractive to many people. Yet, most interviewees mentioned that the county lacks dining, entertainment, and recreational opportunities for youth.
- Claremore Economic Development can continue to be supportive partners to Rogers County, Cherokee Nation, local governments - and especially planning partners - to facilitate or encourage development that provides expansive amenities to the community, while maintaining the positive small-town quality of life that residents and workers have enjoyed.

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1. Rogers County is experiencing robust population growth across age cohorts (including the prime working-age population) and positive migration trends. However, in Claremore, more residents commute to jobs outside the city than commute into Claremore from surrounding cities.
2. Rogers County is also experiencing rapid job growth, particularly in specialized manufacturing subsectors. New economic development project announcements are projected to accelerate job growth in the next several years.
3. Unemployment is low in Rogers County, which makes it challenging for employers to fill open roles and plan for growth/expansion. The county's labor force participation rate has seen a recent uptick, aligning with state and national levels, but there are challenges related to a misalignment of job demand with education levels in the county.
4. The Manufacturing industry in Rogers County has a high concentration of employment compared to the national average, indicating its importance to the local economy. Manufacturing offers high wages, significantly above the regional average and the living wage, which is a major draw for workers. However, the industry faces the challenge of an aging workforce, with nearly a quarter of workers nearing retirement.
5. Manufacturing subsector specialization can offer economic advantages, such as economies of scale and a highly skilled workforce. However, it can also expose the local workforce to economic shocks if these industries experience downturns - especially when regional employment is dependent on a small number of payrolled business locations.
6. The Healthcare & Social Assistance industry is expanding in Rogers County, but it is characterized by a wage disparity. Highly educated professionals (e.g., doctors, managers) are paid well, but support roles (e.g., aides, assistants) have lower wages. The lower wages in support roles can lead to high turnover as workers seek better-paying opportunities. Like manufacturing, this sector also has a notable portion of its workforce approaching retirement age.
7. Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services have seen declines in employment in recent years as well as changes in staffing patterns due to consumer preferences for e-commerce/delivery services over in-person shopping/dining. A significant challenge is the low



wages offered in this sector, often below the living wage threshold. Low wages can make it difficult to attract and retain workers and to advance workers' careers within the industry.

8. Infrastructure in Rogers County is generally adequate, but train traffic creates commuting and supply chain issues. There's a need for more affordable housing and enhanced amenities to attract and retain talent.



# STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The walls between economic and workforce development have come down as regions recognize that talent drives economic growth, and the availability of skilled talent is a top concern for companies considering whether to locate or expand in an area. Alongside efforts to attract business to locate and expand, regions must also focus on the drivers of talent retention and attraction, with a compelling value proposition around high-demand career pathways, community assets, and quality of life.

Successful regions are promoting the capacity of their current workforce in addition to a **cohesive strategy** for building a sustainable and adaptable talent pipeline - giving employers the confidence they can grow. It is important to shorten the feedback loops between economic and workforce development and align around shared targets for attracting high-quality jobs to the region while simultaneously building a skills development pipeline that fuels continued growth.

Advancing a cohesive regional strategy requires **coordinating and collaborating** across organizations - understanding that the work cannot be accomplished in siloes and following the lead of employers, the end-users of your region's talent "supply chain." The following strategic recommendations are crucial to capitalize on Rogers County's strengths and proactively address its challenges to ensure continued economic prosperity and workforce advancement

## Population growth and positive migration trends require proactive development of community assets to enhance quality of life and mitigate potential disruptions.

- Strategically invest in **diverse community amenities** to enhance the quality of life for all residents, addressing gaps in dining, entertainment, and youth-oriented recreation, to attract and retain a vibrant workforce and preserve the county's small-town character.
- Proactively expand **affordable housing supply and options**, implementing recommendations from relevant housing assessments, to mitigate housing price increases and prevent the displacement of existing community members through policies that incentivize mixed-income development and support affordability.
- Enhance **public services and infrastructure** (e.g., schools, utilities, public safety) through long-term planning and investment to meet the demands of continued population growth, ensuring the maintenance or improvement of service quality and accessibility for all residents.

## Low unemployment and a robust job market requires active and sustained partnerships between employers and organizations assisting job seekers

- Encourage employers to examine **job descriptions** and confirm that skills and experience requirements match job responsibilities. Where there are gaps between skills requested by employers in job postings and talent profiles, assess whether the gaps are legitimate workforce skills deficits or omissions on jobseekers' resumes.
- **Coach jobseekers** to include in-demand specialized skills and qualifications, as well common skills and digital skills on their resume and online profiles.
- Seek immediate labor force participation gains by **reducing fragmentation in job search and career support services across the region**; develop centralized ways to market job opportunities and promote programs available to support immediate employment (i.e. childcare subsidies, short term reskilling programs).
- Leverage **commuting patterns** to inform a two-pronged recruitment strategy: first, target markets where workers are likely to commute into Rogers County to fill open jobs, and second, implement initiatives to attract the significant number (over 15,000) of Claremore residents who currently commute elsewhere back to opportunities within the city.
- Help employers widen their talent pools by considering **non-traditional or “hidden” talent** - for example, veterans transitioning back into civilian life or the formerly incarcerated - and promote **skills-based hiring**<sup>10</sup> as a better measure to assess whether a candidate can successfully perform a job. Promote on-the-job, and short-term training resources that can bridge the gap for new hires with some, but not all the skills required to be successful in a role.
- Work with industry partners to market local retail, food service, and personal care jobs as **“launchpads”** where workers can build in-demand transferable skills. Promote employers in those industries that provide upskilling, career development, and/or tuition reimbursement for further education.
- Work with employer/industry partners to benchmark job quality, wages, and advancement potential against other industries and pilot solutions focused on the key drivers of employee

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2023/rise-of-skills-based-hiring>

retention. In order to retain **frontline and hourly employees** in Manufacturing, Healthcare & Social Assistance, and Retail, Accommodation & Food Services it will be necessary for employers to keep pace with compensation in adjacent industries and address workplace policies that affect employee engagement<sup>11</sup>.

- Tap into the **youth pipeline** for hard-to-fill openings by leveraging youth workforce funds to provide earn and learn opportunities that combine hourly work with foundational skills development and career counseling.
- For high-demand roles, a tandem strategy may be necessary: a grow-your-own (pipeline) strategy alongside a strategy to attract skilled talent to relocate from another market. Leverage migration trends data to identify competitive markets for talent attraction, especially markets where relocating to Rogers County may provide a comparative wage gain.

## Higher education programming is aligned to industry needs, but capacity and completions need to increase to meet future demand

- Collaborate with employers to advocate for the establishment or expansion of programs aligned to industry needs and help **drive enrollment** in these programs through dedicated marketing campaigns and providing support or incentives for instructors and students.
- Identify prospective talent pools for education and upskilling to meet future demand, where public workforce development funds can be best leveraged. In Rogers County, there are nearly **40,000 residents with a high school diploma only, or some college credits, but no degree** - that could be targeted for middle skill technical roles or incentivized to complete a degree program.
- Improve attachment to job opportunities in Rogers County by supporting employers' capacity to offer **internships and other work-based learning experiences** for current Northeast Tech & Rogers State students. Work with career services departments to drive employer participation in career fairs, corporate/ university partnerships, career networking, information sessions, and internship programs.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.mercer.com/en-us/insights/talent-and-transformation/attracting-and-retaining-talent/2024-2025-inside-employees-minds-survey-report/>

- Understand the most viable “next step” jobs/pathways for frontline and support roles, where mobility is limited or job declines are expected. Create incentives to **upskill/reskill** by prioritizing programs that are short-term, low or no cost, provide stackable credentials and rolling enrollment opportunities. Incentivize employers to offer upskilling to incumbent workers on-the-job or to hire an employee before training commences.

## **A strong, specialized, and growing manufacturing industry in Rogers County requires centralized support**

- Establish and implement a collaborative and centralized **rapid-response** system to streamline workforce support for new or expanding manufacturing operations by providing a single point of contact, conducting comprehensive needs assessments, expediting resource deployment (including talent attraction, customized training, funding access, and workforce planning), and fostering proactive inter-agency collaboration and communication to enhance efficiency and accelerate business growth.
- Establish a Manufacturing Skills Collaborative involving key employers to identify and address **shared skills gaps and training needs**, and to collaboratively invest in developing a robust talent pipeline through initiatives such as industry-led training programs, apprenticeships, shared training facilities, and talent attraction campaigns, thereby reducing individual company costs and ensuring a sustainable supply of qualified workers for the entire sector.
- Develop and implement an industry-recognized Manufacturing “101” certificate program, in collaboration with the Manufacturing Skills Collaborative, to establish a **baseline of common foundational skills required for entry-level manufacturing roles** across diverse companies and subsectors in Rogers County. This credential will enhance worker mobility and resilience by providing individuals with transferable skills that increase their employability across the region's manufacturing sector, mitigating economic risk associated with reliance on a small number of large employers and enabling smoother transitions between companies or subsectors.
- Promote more intentionality around **succession planning** and the **phasing-out of retiring workers**. A well-designed program can leverage experienced workers' knowledge, reduce training costs for new hires, and improve employee morale and productivity. Offer flexible ways to engage such as part-time schedules, remote/Zoom engagement, or short-term project-based assignments to accommodate the preferences of retiring workers while ensuring their continued contributions.

## Industries that provide essential frontline services in Rogers County face challenges attracting and retaining workers at wages below the median

- Develop **structured career pathway programs** that provide frontline workers with opportunities for advancement and higher earnings within their respective industries. In healthcare, establish programs that help Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) advance to Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) or Registered Nurses (RNs) through tuition assistance, mentorship, and flexible scheduling options. In retail and food services, offer management training, customer service certifications, or culinary skills development programs that can lead to supervisory or higher-paying specialized roles.
- Work with employers to improve the overall quality of frontline jobs by **enhancing benefits and addressing factors that contribute to high turnover**. This could include promoting the adoption of more predictable scheduling practices to improve work-life balance and reduce employee stress, encouraging employers to offer more comprehensive benefits packages, including childcare assistance, transportation subsidies, or student loan repayment programs, and developing training programs focused on improving workplace culture and management skills, fostering a more supportive and respectful work environment.
- Enhance **worker support services**, partnering with community organizations to provide access to affordable childcare, transportation assistance, and financial literacy programs for frontline workers. Explore the development of affordable housing options near major employment centers to reduce commuting costs and time for workers. Establish an emergency assistance fund to help workers facing unexpected financial hardships, promoting job stability.

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