



UTAH FOUNDATION

RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

★ UTAH'S ★  
**PROGRESS** REPORT  
— ON —  
**AMERICA'S ANNIVERSARY**

**25**

★ YEARS ★

— 1776 ★ 2026 —

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# STATE · OF · THE NATION

## Report 2025

[Explore the Data](#)

What is the state of the nation? This is a fundamental question. Increasingly, we see evidence, from polling data to our own dinner tables, that the answer is “not very strong.” Many feel that things are not going well in the United States. A gnawing sense of angst seems to have descended upon us. We seem polarized and distrustful, worried and pessimistic.

Where exactly are we going wrong? Just as importantly, what might we be overlooking—what is actually going right? And can we agree on any of the answers? These are the questions that we sought to answer with the State of the Nation Project. The wide-ranging authors of this report—the board of the project—have come to agreement on 15 topics and 37 measures that we believe capture crucial elements of the state of the nation. When these measures are going in the right direction, it is something to celebrate. But when they are headed in the wrong direction, or when we fare poorly relative to other countries, we believe it should raise alarm bells about where we are or where we are headed. Taken together, these measures paint a useful and compelling picture of our country that should help guide our future. This is America’s progress report.

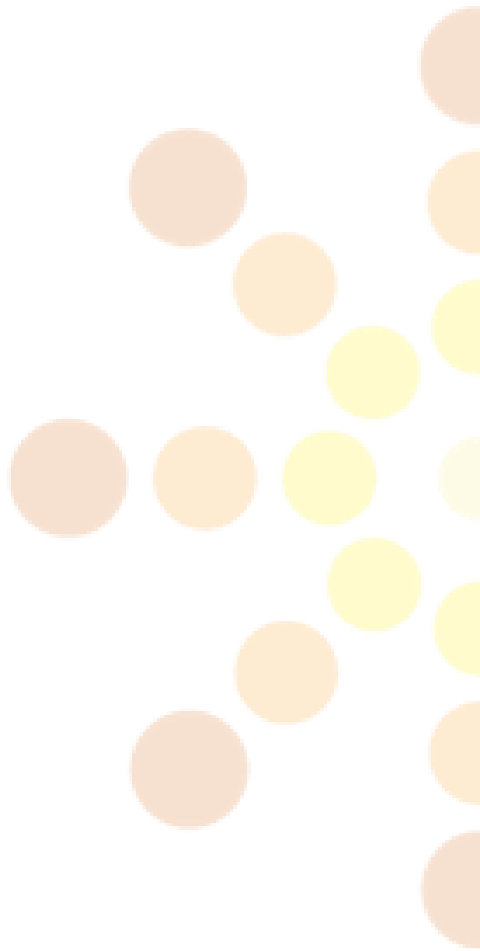
[Download Full Report](#)



**STATE · OF · THE NATION**

**FULL REPORT**

2025



Topics and Measures	National Trend	% of Countries the US Outperforms	International Rank Trend
<b>Children &amp; Families (p)</b>			
Child mortality (p)	Improving	57	Worsening
Low birthweight	Worsening	50	Stable
Youth depression (p)	Worsening	1	Worsening
% with single parent	Stable	3	Stable
<b>Citizenship &amp; Democracy (p)</b>			
Voter participation (p)	Stable	37	Improving
Belief in democracy (p)	Worsening	33	Improving
Neg. views of other party	Worsening	0	Worsening
<b>Civil Liberties (p)</b>			
Press freedom threats (p)	Unclear	66	Worsening
<b>Economy (p)</b>			
Output/GDP (p)	Improving	98	Stable
Productivity	Improving	88	Improving
<b>Education (p)</b>			
Test scores (8th grade)	Mixed	62	Improving
Avg year of educ.	Improving	86	Stable
% in school/working	Improving	56	Improving
<b>Environment</b>			
Greenhouse gas emissions	Mixed	1	Stable
Air quality (p)	Improving	73	Worsening
<b>Inequality (p)</b>			
Income inequality	Worsening	22	Worsening
Poverty (p)	Improving	25	Stable
<b>Life Satisfaction</b>			
Current life satisfaction	Worsening	70	Worsening
Social isolation	Worsening	66	Worsening

Topics and Measures	National Trend	% of Countries the US Outperforms	International Rank Trend
<b>Mental Health (p)</b>			
Depression/anxiety	Worsening	11	Worsening
Fatal overdoses (p)	Worsening	0	Worsening
Suicide rate (p)	Worsening	16	Worsening
<b>National Security (p)</b>			
[See topic section]			
<b>Physical Health (p)</b>			
Life expectancy	Improving	62	Worsening
<b>Social Capital</b>			
Volunteered for group	Stable	63	NA
Trust in other people	Worsening	73	Stable
<b>Trust... (p)</b>			
...in local government (p)	Stable		NA
...in federal government (p)	Worsening	6	Worsening
...in police (p)	Worsening	66	Stable
...in criminal justice (p)	Stable	39	Worsening
...in colleges/universities	Worsening	11	Worsening
...in science (p)	Stable	32	Improving
<b>Violence (p)</b>			
Murder rate (p)	Improving	30	Worsening
Shootings (p)	Unclear	10	Improving
<b>Work &amp; Labor Force (p)</b>			
Employment/population ratio	Mixed	26	Worsening
Labor force participation	Worsening	23	Worsening
Long-term unemployment (p)	Mixed	84	Stable
Hourly earnings growth	Mixed	70	Improving

# STATE · OF · THE STATES

## Report 2026

In Commemoration of America's 250th Anniversary.

[View our Conclusions](#)

[Explore the State Data](#)

## What is the state of the nation?

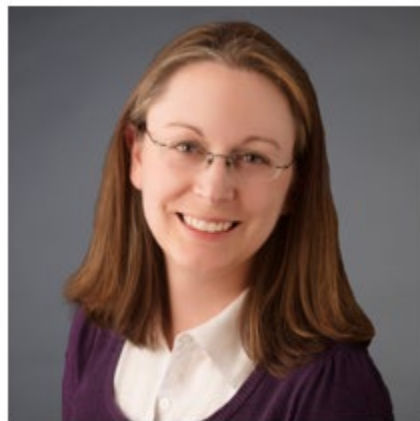
As America marks its 250th anniversary, that question is both urgent and fitting. We cannot hope to get better without a clear-eyed view of what ails us—and where we are excelling. In our first report of the State of the Nation Project, last year, our wide-ranging board voted to focus on 37 measures across 15 topics, from the economy and education to mental health and violence. This year, we turned our lens to individual states and cross-state patterns. We were able to compare states and trends on 31 of the original measures, going back to 1990.



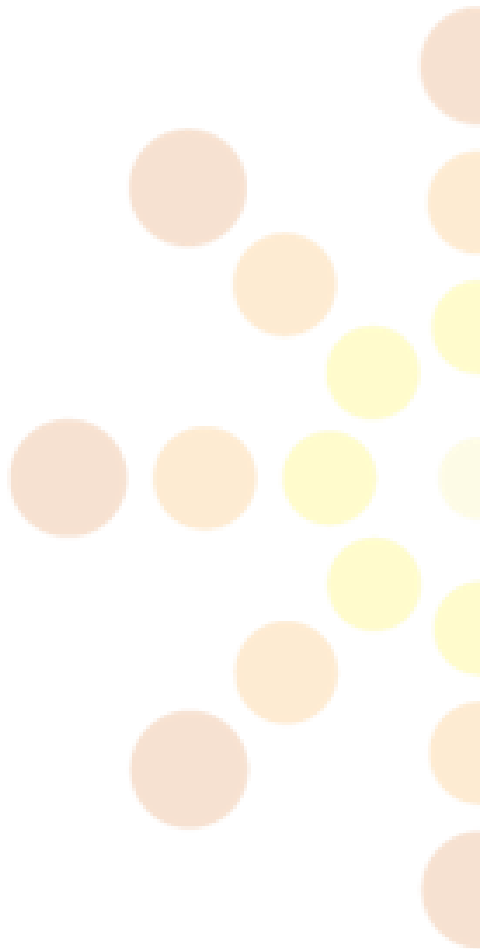
[Download the Executive Summary](#)

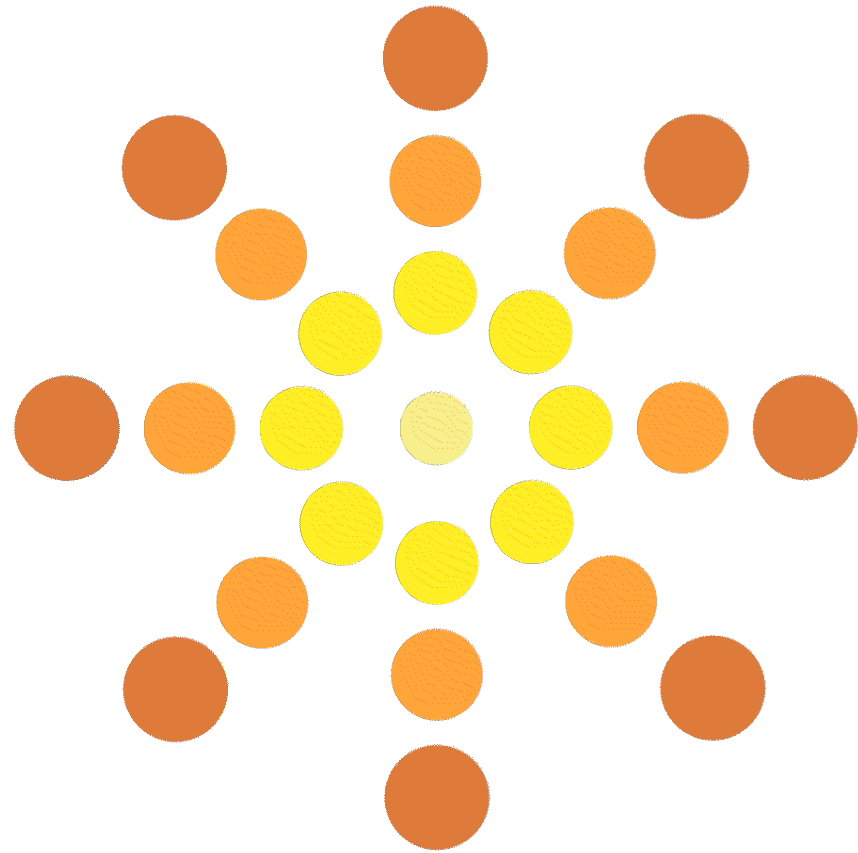


**Robert Spendlove**



**Laura Summers**



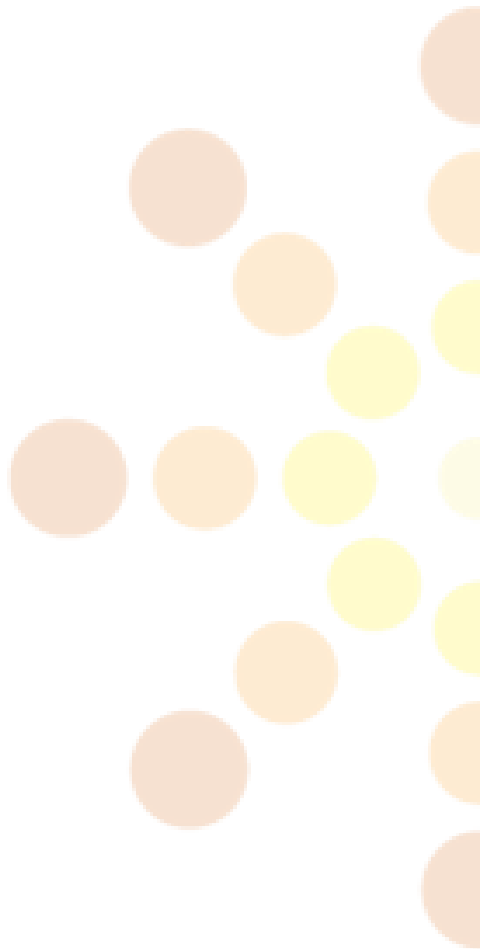


The Nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**STATE · OF · THE STATES**  
Report 2026



**UTAH**



Children & Families	State Trend	State Rank
Child Mortality	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	19
Low Birthweight	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	10
Youth Depression	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	4
Children Living With Single Parent	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	1

Citizenship & Democracy	State Trend	State Rank
Voter Participation	↓	26

Civil Liberties	State Trend	State Rank
Freedom of the Press	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	39

Economy	State Trend	State Rank
Economic Output	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	28
Productivity	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	4

Education	State Trend	State Rank
Academic Test Scores	↓	4
Average Years of Education	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	14
Young Adults Employed or in School	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	13

Environment	State Trend	State Rank
Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	23
Air Quality	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	18

Inequality	State Trend	State Rank
Income Inequality	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	1
Poverty	↓	14

Life Satisfaction	State Trend	State Rank
Satisfaction with Current Life	NA	NA
Social Isolation	*	6

Mental Health	State Trend	State Rank
Depression	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	48
Fatal Overdoses	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	9
Suicide Rate	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	45

Physical Health	State Trend	State Rank
Life Expectancy	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	9

Social Capital	State Trend	State Rank
Volunteerism	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	1
Trust in Other People	NA	NA

Trust	State Trend	State Rank
Trust in the Federal Government	NA	NA
Trust in Science	NA	NA

Violence	State Trend	State Rank
Murder Rate	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	12
Shootings	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	26

Work & Labor Force	State Trend	State Rank
Employment-to-Population Ratio (EPOP)	↓	31
Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)	↓	33
Long-Term Unemployment Rate	↓	15
Hourly Earnings Growth	↓	31

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Children Living With Single Parent	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	1

Citizenship & Democracy	State Trend	State Rank
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Civil Liberties	State Trend	State Rank
Freedom of the Press	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	39

Economy	State Trend	State Rank
Economic Output	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	28
Productivity	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	4

Education	State Trend	State Rank
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Average Years of Education	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	14
Young Adults Employed or in School	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	13

Environment	State Trend	State Rank
Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	23
Air Quality	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	18

Inequality	State Trend	State Rank
Income Inequality	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	1
Poverty	↓	14

Life Satisfaction	State Trend	State Rank
Satisfaction with Current Life	NA	NA
Social Isolation	*	6

Mental Health	State Trend	State Rank
Depression	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	48
Fatal Overdoses	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	9
Suicide Rate	<span style="color: red;">●</span>	45

Physical Health	State Trend	State Rank
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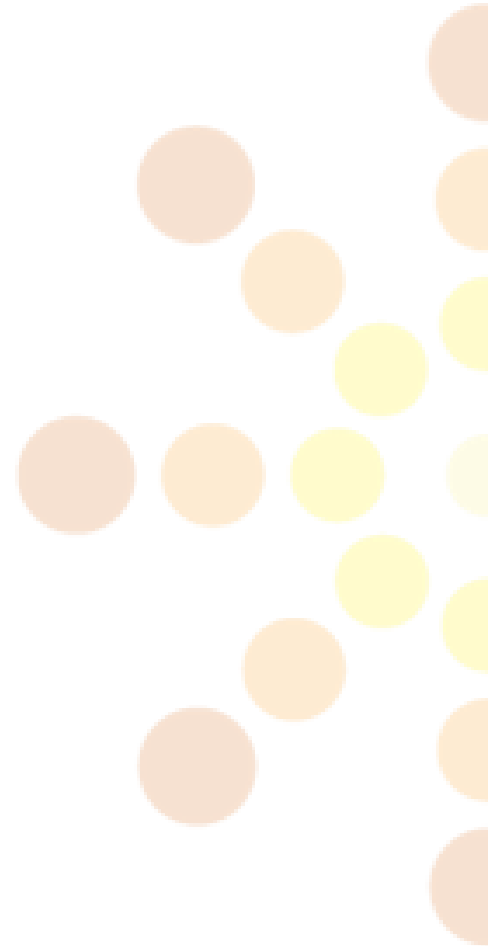
Social Capital	State Trend	State Rank
Volunteerism	<span style="color: orange;">●</span>	1
Trust in Other People	NA	NA

Trust	State Trend	State Rank
Trust in the Federal Government	NA	NA
Trust in Science	NA	NA

Violence	State Trend	State Rank
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# Social Capital



DECEMBER 2025

PART IX

# Scores and Successes

## How Utah Leads in Social Capital



UTAH FOUNDATION  
RESEARCH • ANALYZE • INFORM

SOCIAL  
CAPITAL  
INDEX



# Social Capital

“In 2025, Utah had the highest Social Capital Index score in the nation and has consistently been among the top states over the previous 12 years.”

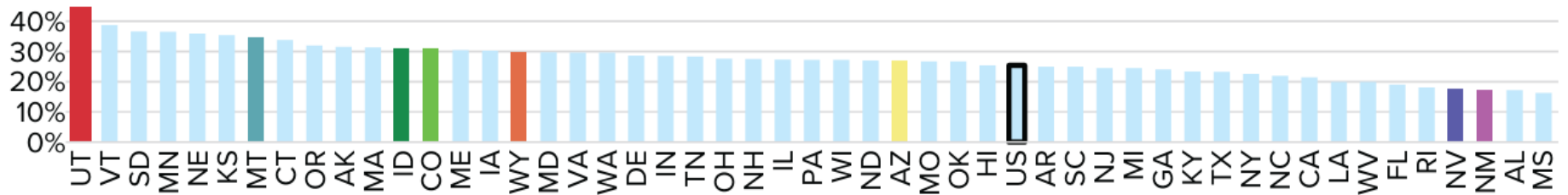






## Utah was the top state in volunteerism.

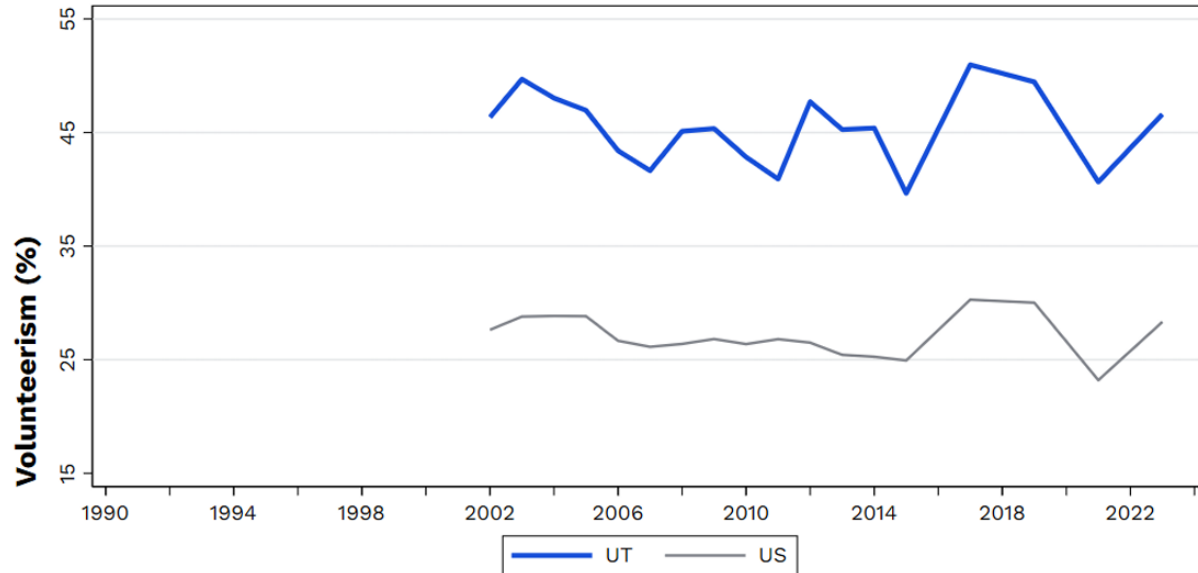
Figure 2.4: Share of Adults Who Report Volunteering by State, 2023



# Volunteerism



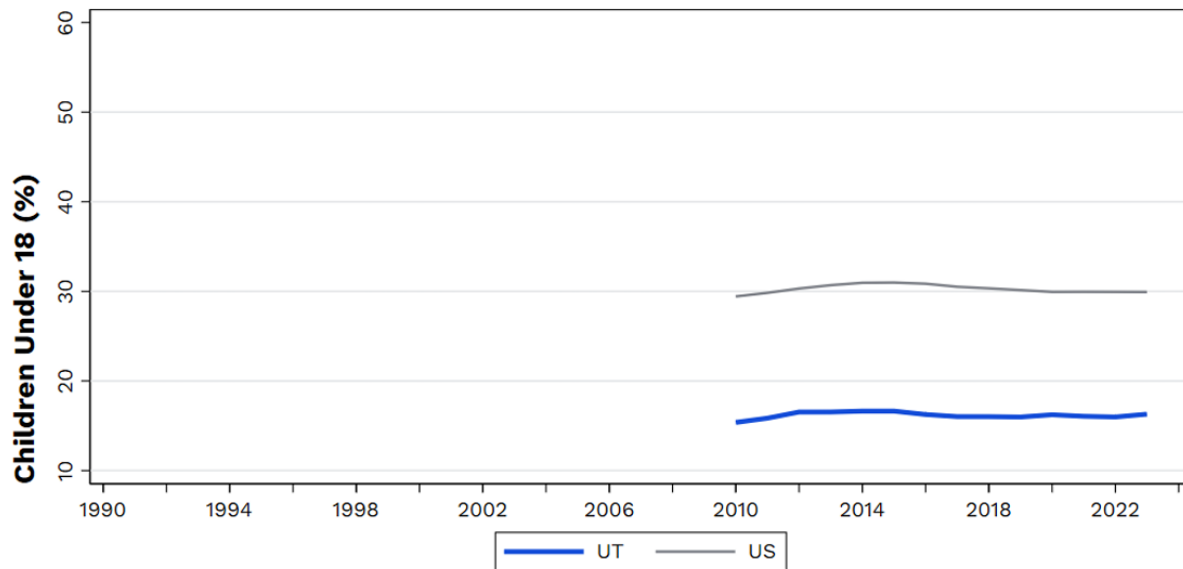
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# Children Living With Single Parent



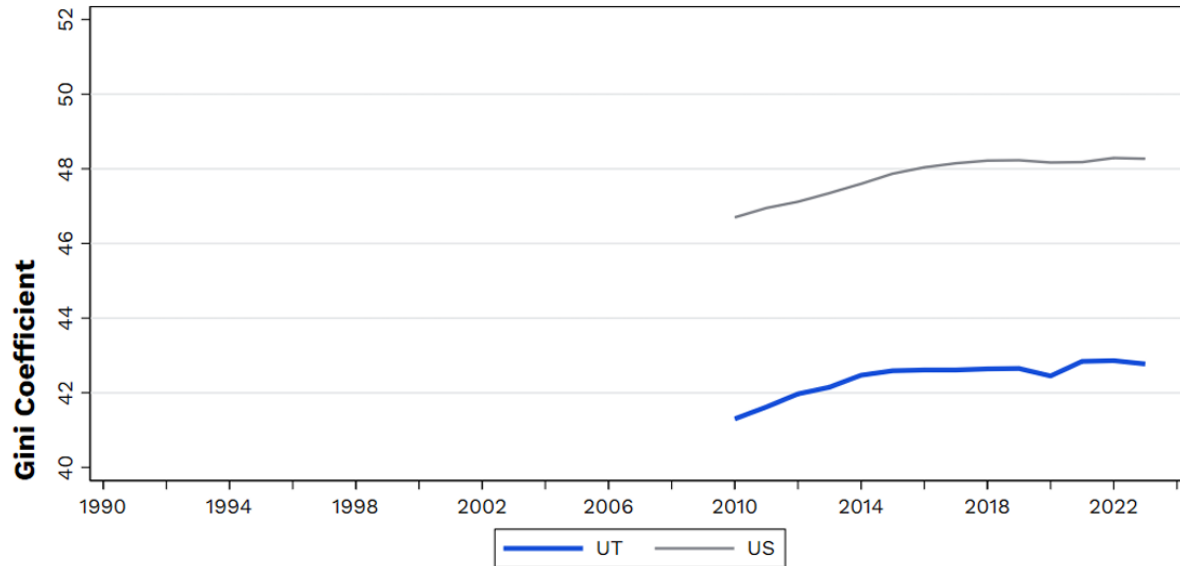
1



# Income Inequality



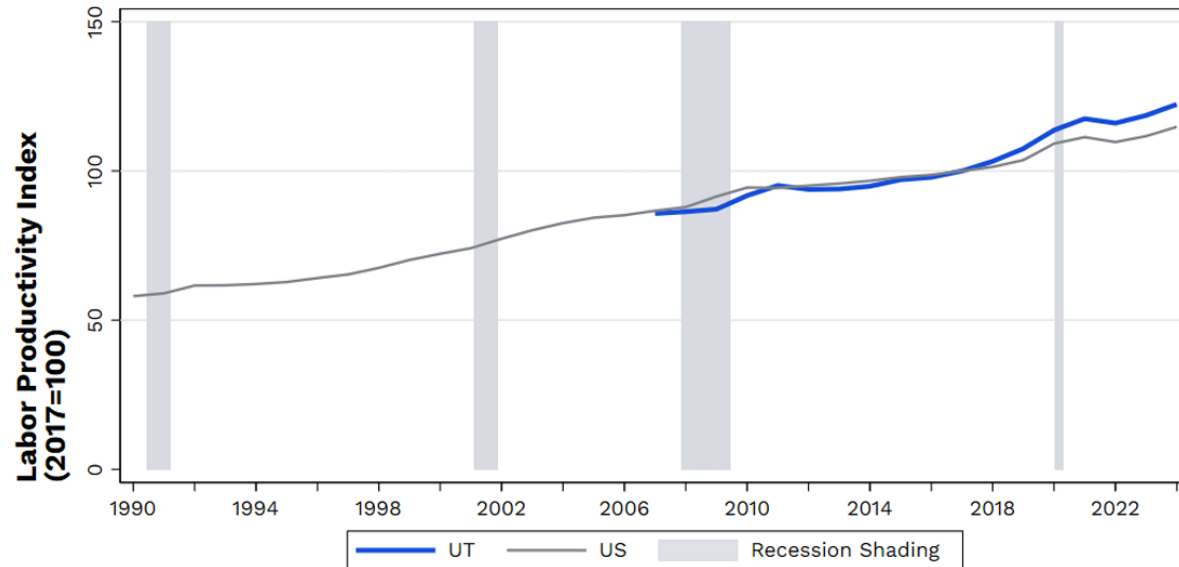
1



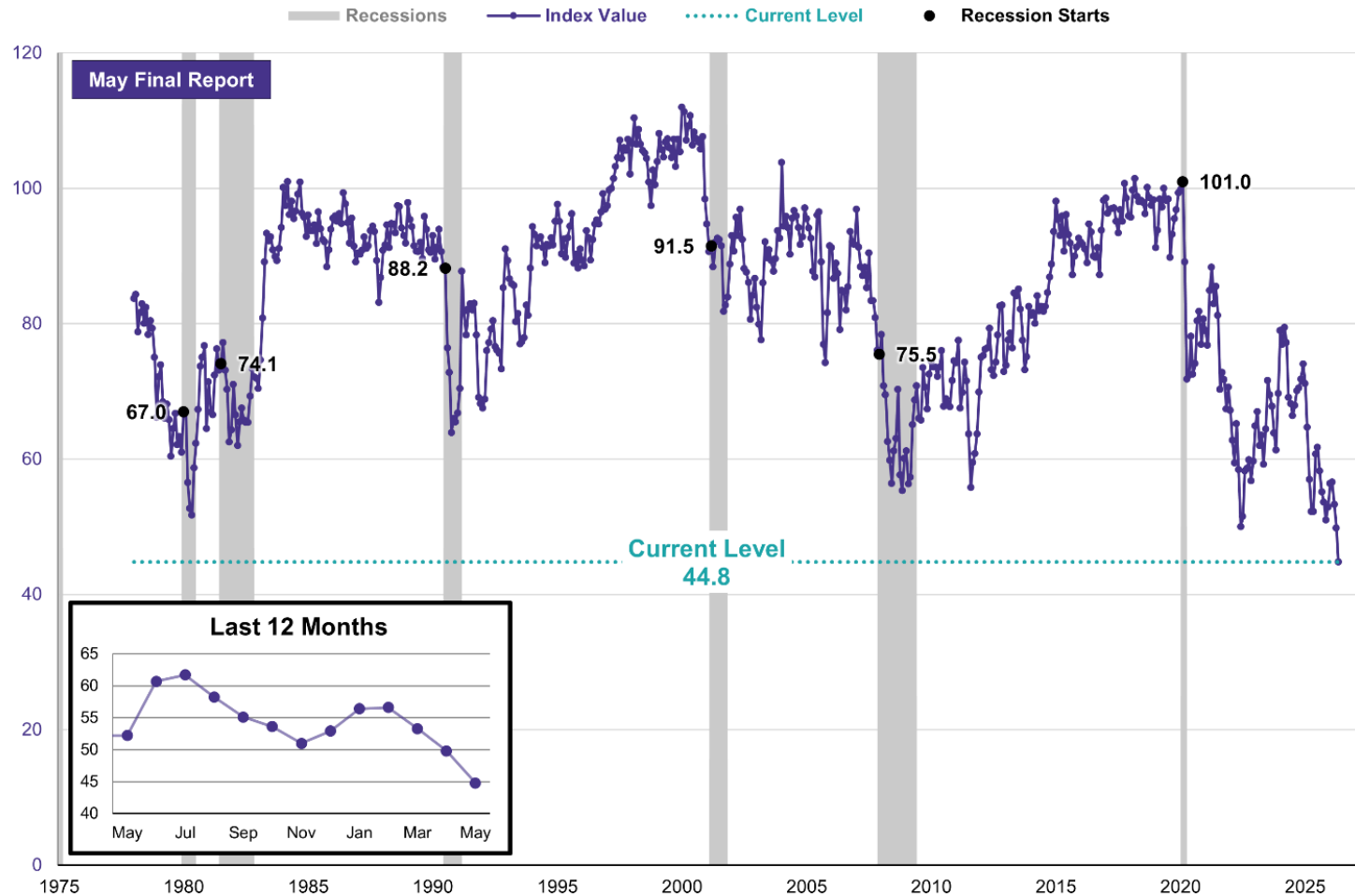
# Productivity



4



# University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index





## RESEARCH REPORTS

- Crime & Security (20)
- Demographics & Population (68)
  - Immigration (13)
  - Infrastructure (8)
  - Transportation (33)
- Economy (98)
  - Poverty (23)
  - Workforce (5)
- Education (95)
- Elderly & Disabilities (7)
- Energy (17)
- Environment (50)
  - Air Quality (8)
  - Water Supply (21)
- Family Issues (9)

## Inflation in Utah

Utah seems to be in a decent economic position. Depending on the measure, its inflation is between 3.2% and 3.6% (below the national rate of 3.8%), and its unemployment rate is 3.8%. Utah's inflation rate is slightly above the national 15-year average (2.6%), while its unemployment rate is well below the national 15-year average (5.4%).

Figures 1, 2, and 4 from the [interactive dashboard](#): Current year-over-year inflation rate for all U.S. urban areas and the four primary inflation subcategories.

Figure 1: National Y-o...

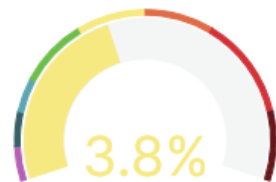


Figure 2 - Western Y-o-Y Inflat... ⓘ



Mid-Sized Western... Urban areas in Mo...

Figure 4: Major Components of Inflation (Y-o-Y, Unweighted)

# Inflation rate over time





SAS **Spurs @ NYK** Knicks

NBA Finals Game 4, Home Game 2

Wed · Jun 10 · 8:30 PM

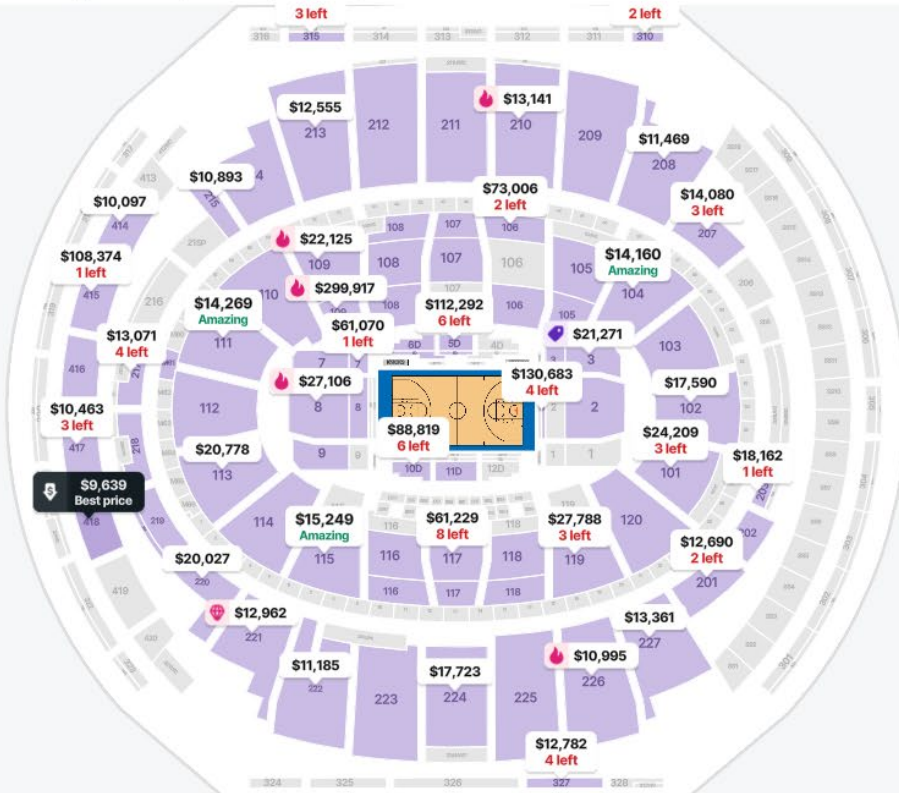
Madison Square Garden, New York, New York, USA



USD | EN ▾

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133 listings



1 ticket ▾



Section 418

Row 2

1 ticket

👁️ Second row of section  
👁️ Clear view

🏆 Best price

🔴 Last tickets

🔴 Only 2 left

\$14,084

Now \$9,639

incl. fees

8.1 Great



Section 414

Row 7

1 ticket

👁️ Clear view

\$10,097

incl. fees



Section 416

Row 6

1 ticket

👁️ Clear view

\$10,178

incl. fees

7.3 Great



Section 417

Row 6

1 ticket

\$10,592

Now \$10,463

incl. fees

Children & Families	State Trend	State Rank
Child Mortality	●	19
Low Birthweight	●	10
Youth Depression	●	4
Children Living With Single Parent	●	1

Environment	State Trend	State Rank
Net Greenhouse Gas Emissions	●	23
Air Quality	●	18

Social Capital	State Trend	State Rank
Volunteerism	●	1
Trust in Other People	NA	NA

Citizenship & Democracy	State Trend	State Rank
Voter Participation	↓	26

Inequality	State Trend	State Rank
Income Inequality	●	1
Poverty	↓	14

Trust	State Trend	State Rank
Trust in the Federal Government	NA	NA
Trust in Science	NA	NA

Civil Liberties	State Trend	State Rank
Freedom of the Press	●	39

Life Satisfaction	State Trend	State Rank
Satisfaction with Current Life	NA	NA
Social Isolation	*	●

Violence	State Trend	State Rank
Murder Rate	●	12
Shootings	●	26

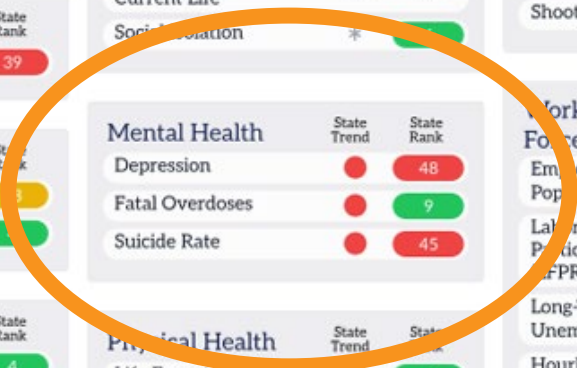
Economy	State Trend	State Rank
Economic Output	●	3
Productivity	●	●

Mental Health	State Trend	State Rank
Depression	●	48
Fatal Overdoses	●	9
Suicide Rate	●	45

Work & Labor Force	State Trend	State Rank
Employment-to-Population Ratio (EPOP)	↓	31
Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR)	↓	33
Long-Term Unemployment Rate	↓	15
Hourly Earnings Growth	↓	31

Education	State Trend	State Rank
Academic Test Scores	↓	4
Average Years of Education	●	14
Young Adults Employed or in School	●	13

Physical Health	State Trend	State Rank
Life Expectancy	●	9



## Mental Health

State  
Trend

State  
Rank

Depression



48

Fatal Overdoses



9

Suicide Rate

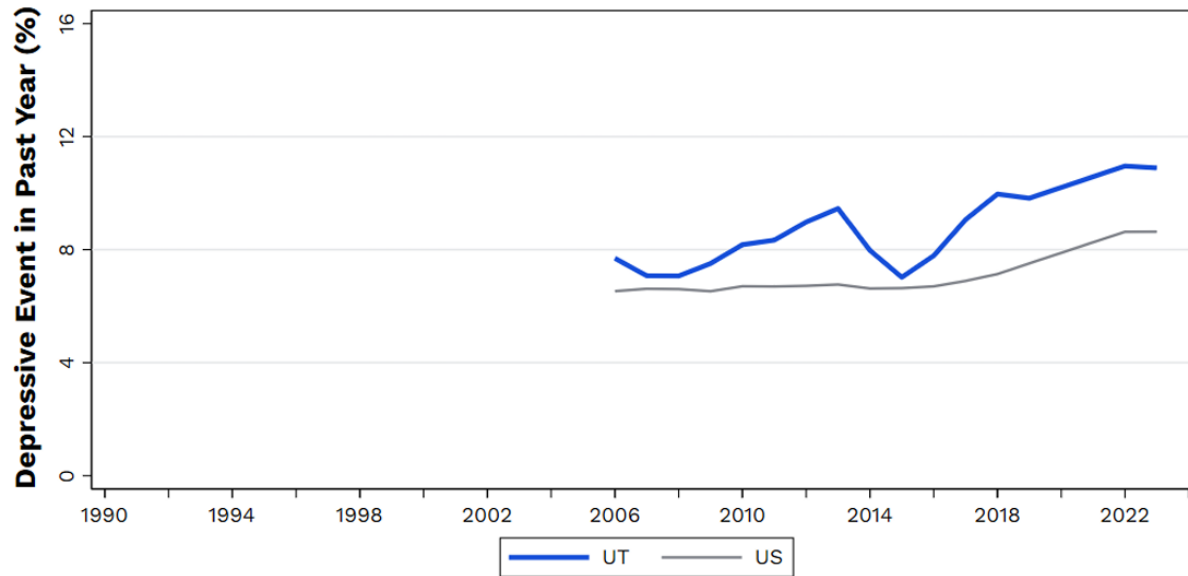


45

Depression



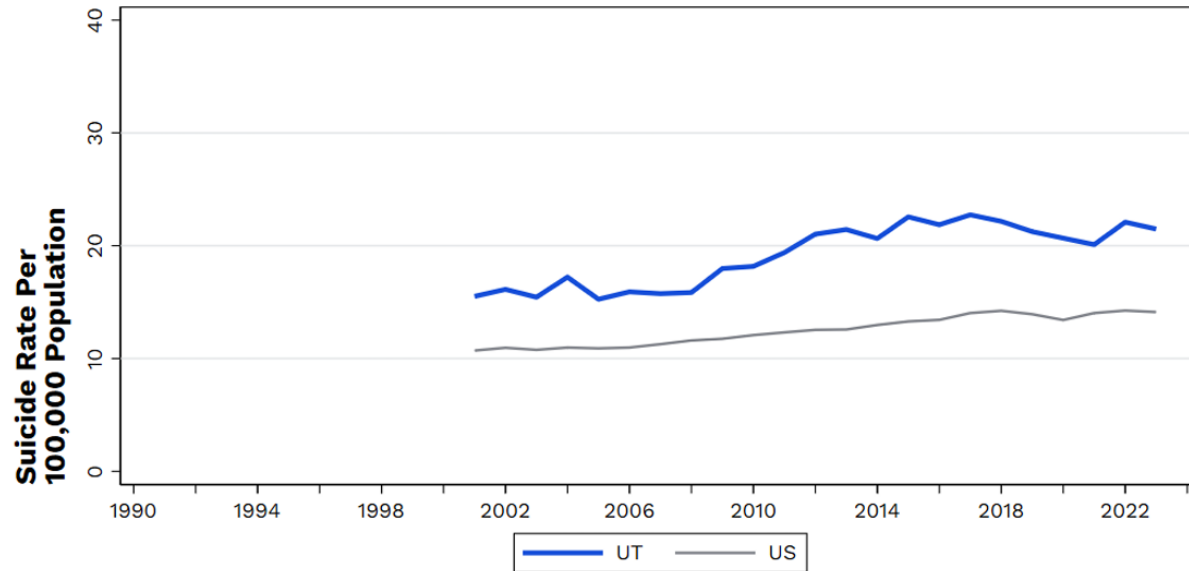
48



# Suicide Rate



45



# May: Mental Health Awareness Month



## In 2026:

- ▶ Suicide replaced COVID-19 as America's 10th leading cause of death

## In 2024:

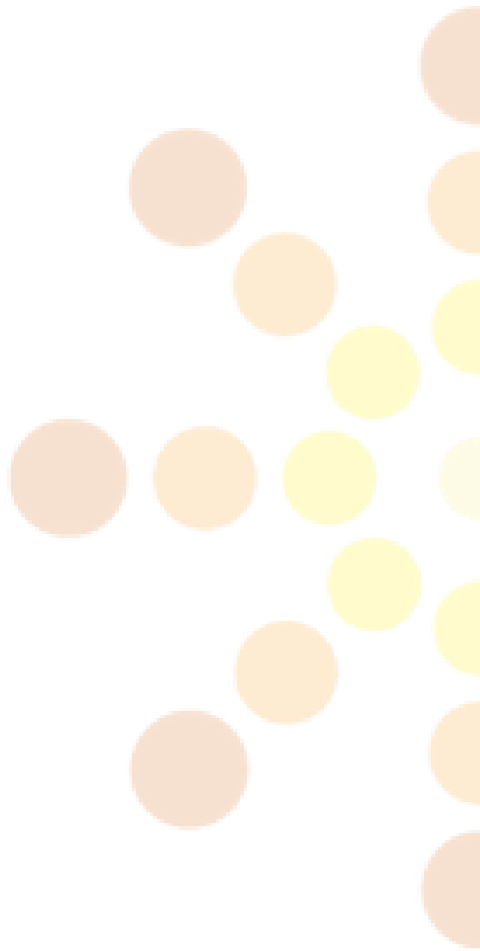
- ▶ 49,000 Americans died by suicide.
- ▶ 14.3 million **adults** thought seriously about suicide.
- ▶ 2.8 million **adolescents** thought seriously about suicide, made suicide plans, or attempted suicide.

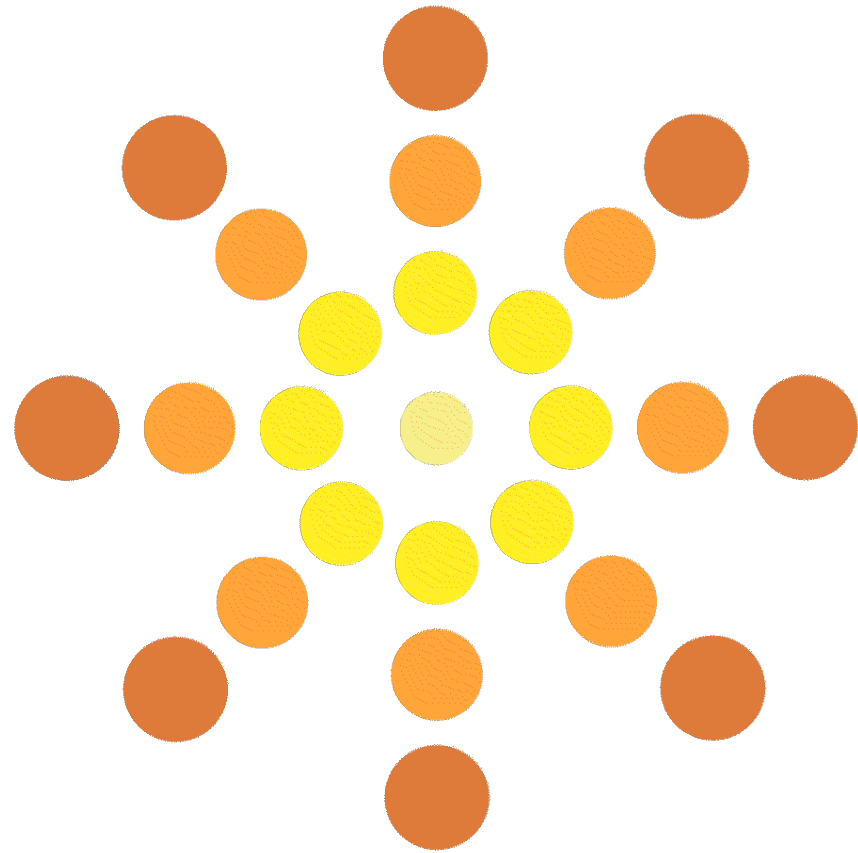
The Nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**STATE · OF · THE STATES**  
Report 2026



**UTAH**





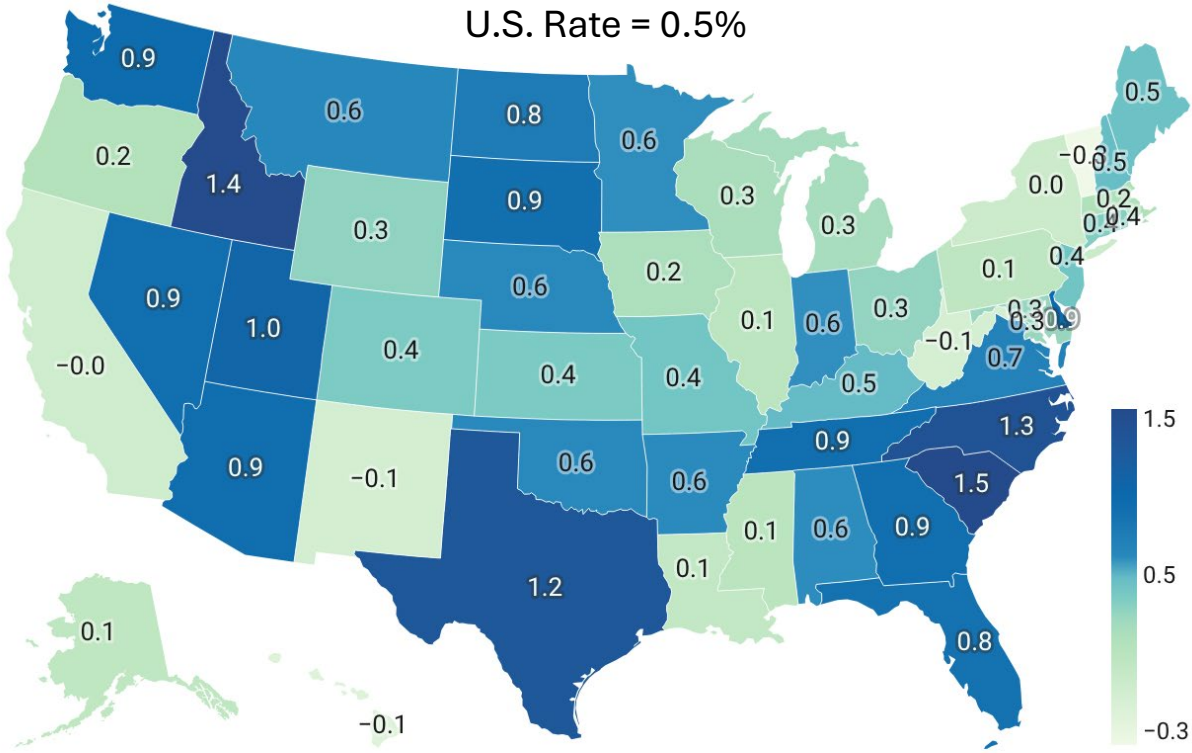
# ZIONS BANK ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

## Utah's Progress Report on America's Anniversary

Utah Foundation

ZIONS BANK®

# Utah Population Growth Among Top In Nation

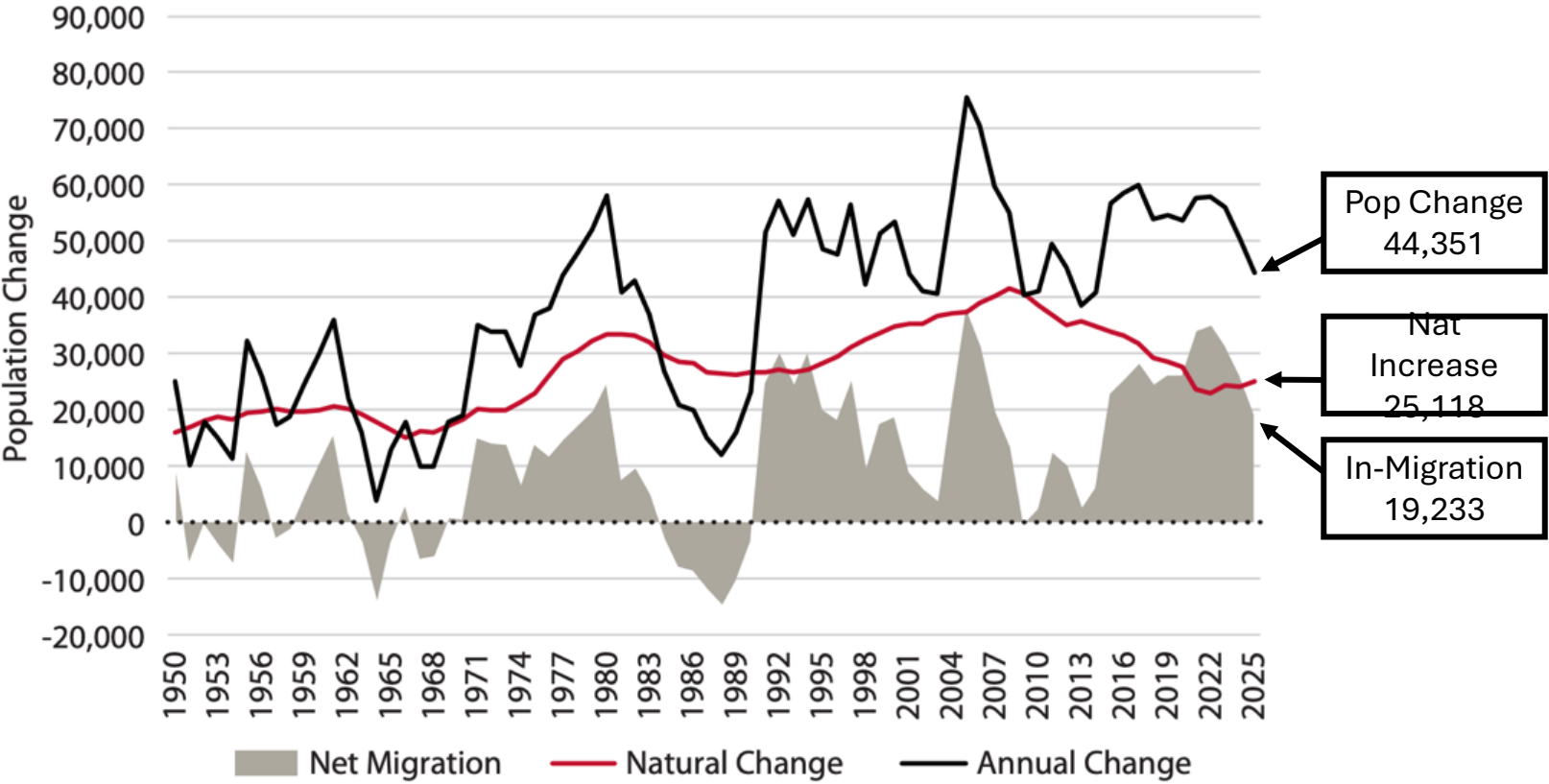


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# Utah Population Growth Slowing

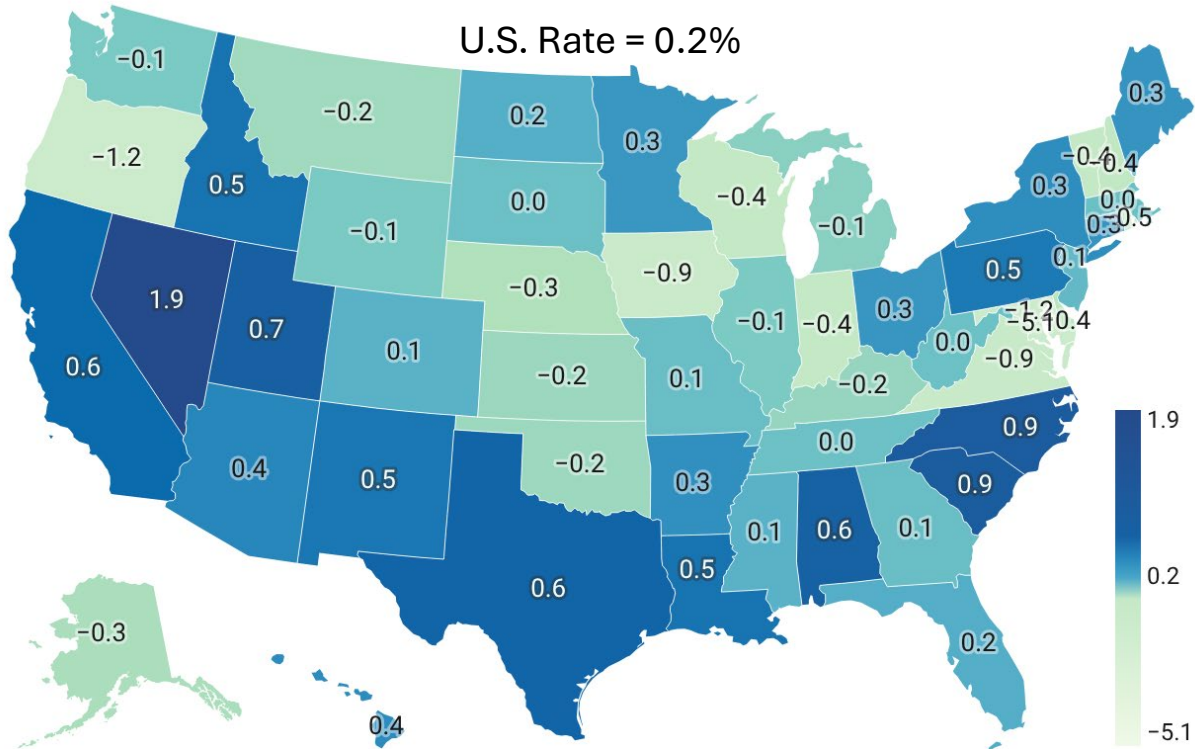


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Source: Utah Population Committee

# Utah Employment Growth Higher Than U.S.



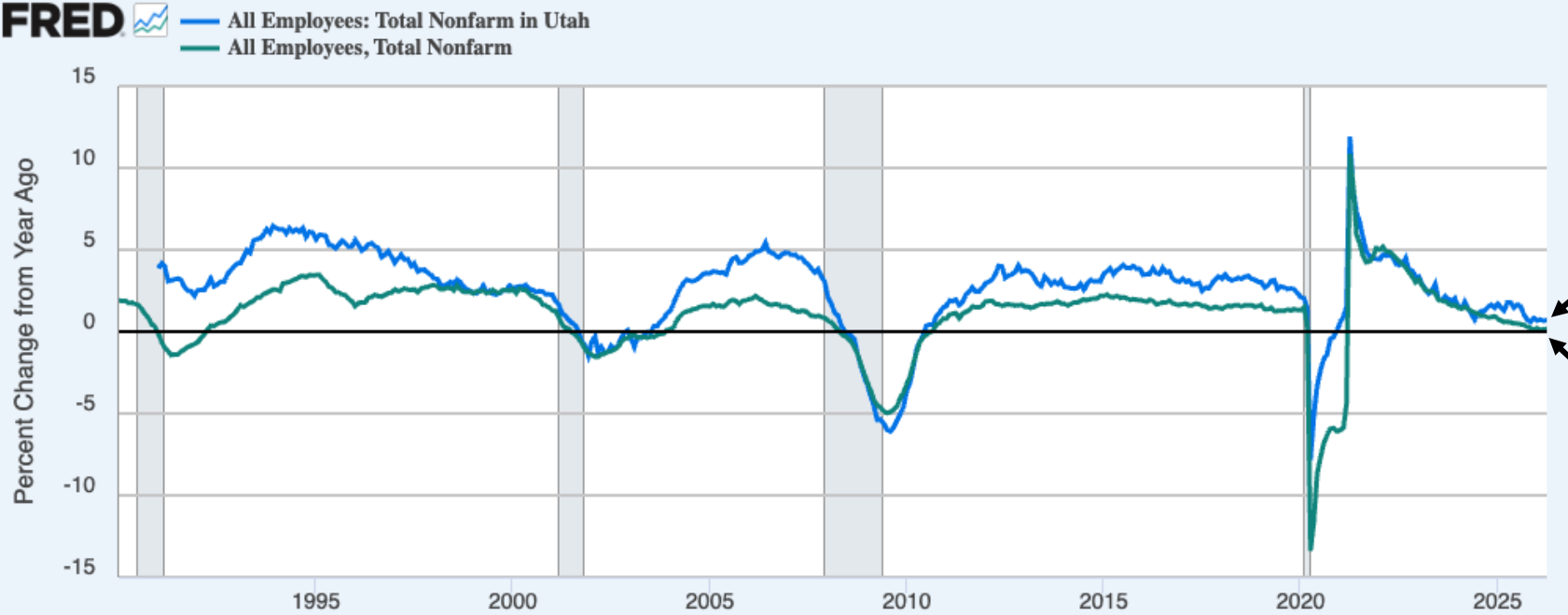
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Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

# Utah Employment Growth Slowing



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics via FRED®  
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

fred.stlouisfed.org

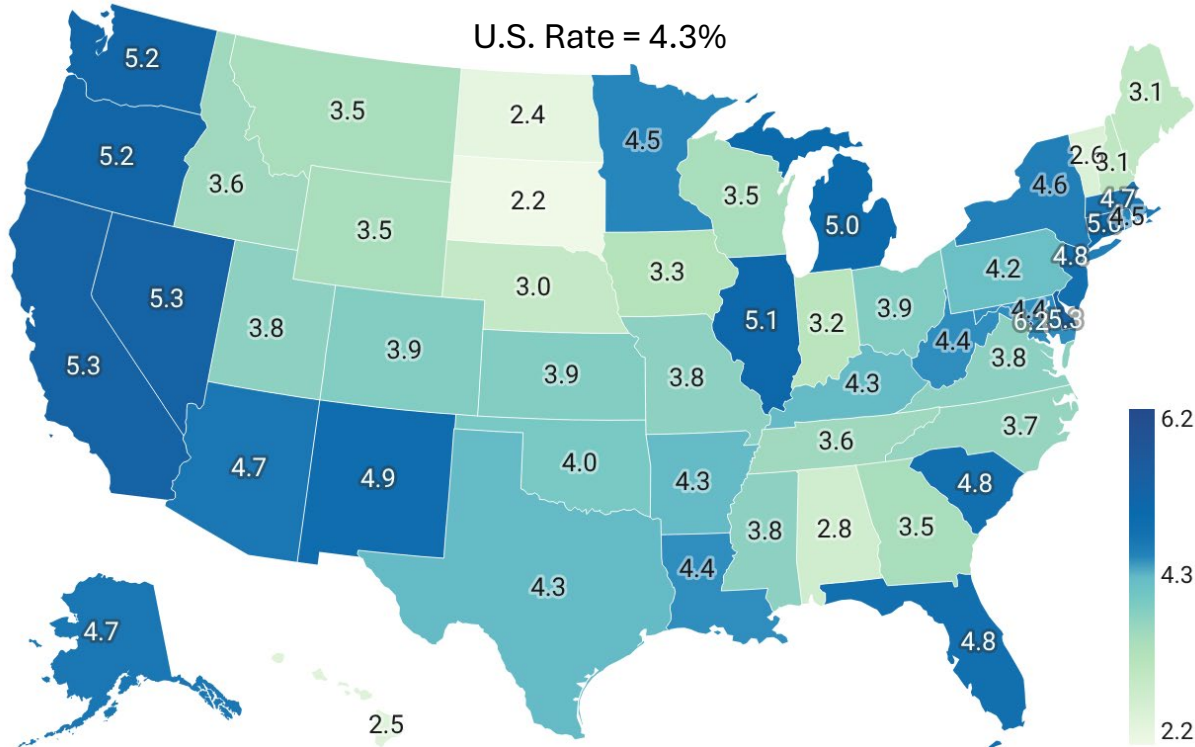
Utah  
0.7%

U.S.  
0.2%

## ZIONS BANK

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# Utah Unemployment Rate Lower Than Average



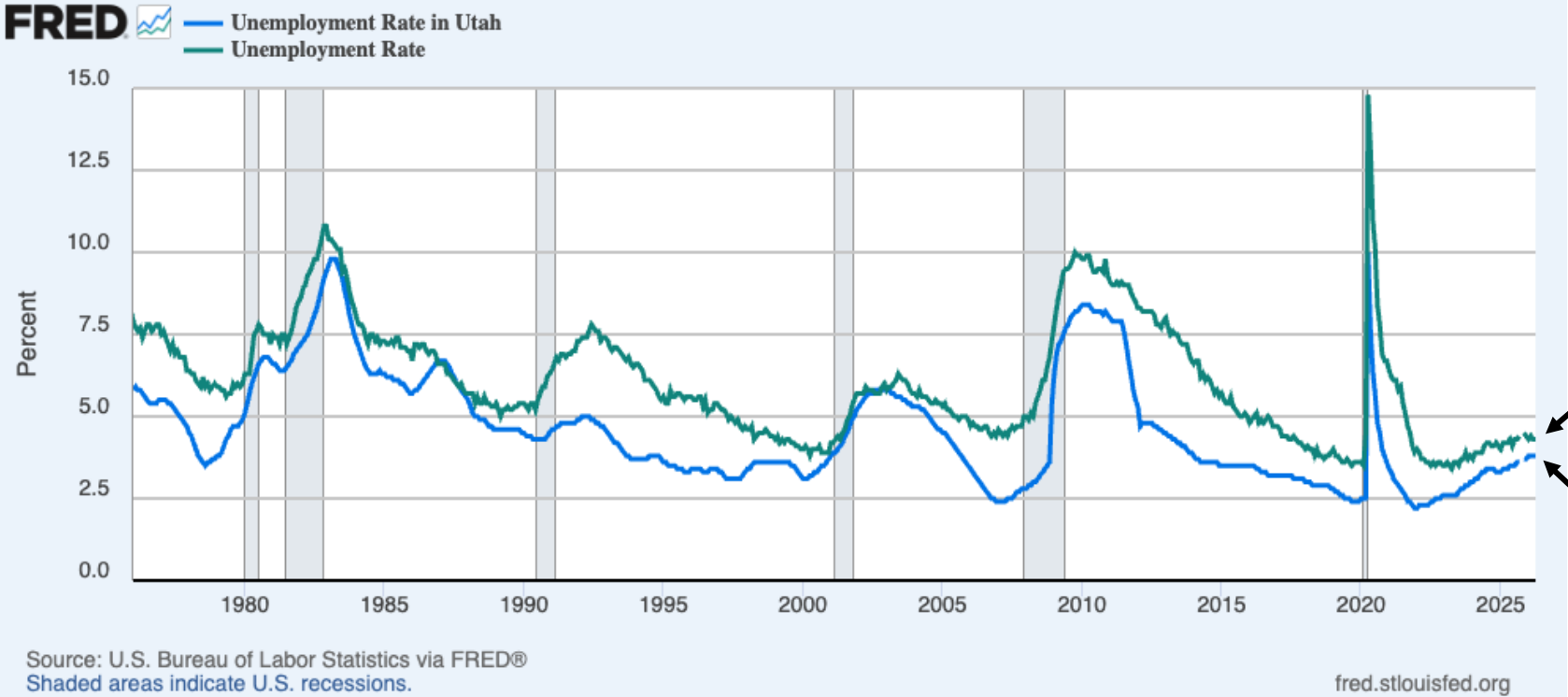
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Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

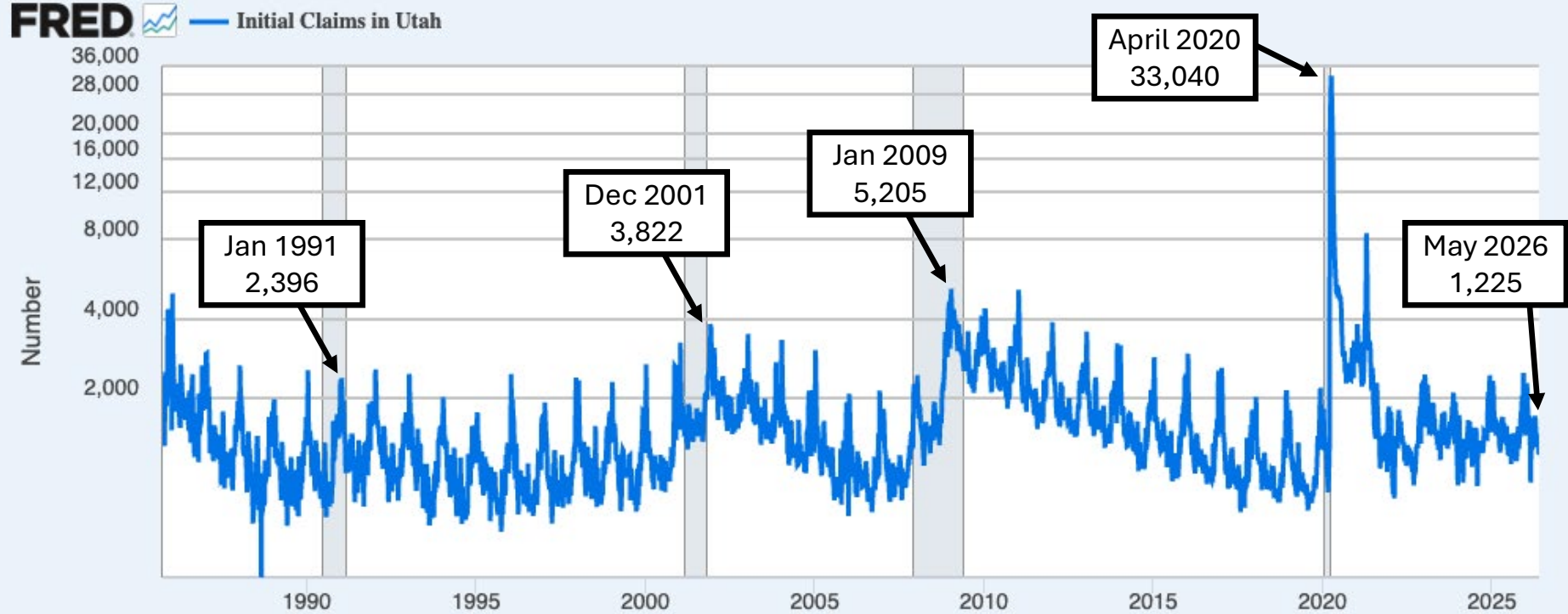
# Utah Unemployment Trending Up



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# Utah Unemployment Claims Remain Low



Source: U.S. Employment and Training Administration via FRED®  
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

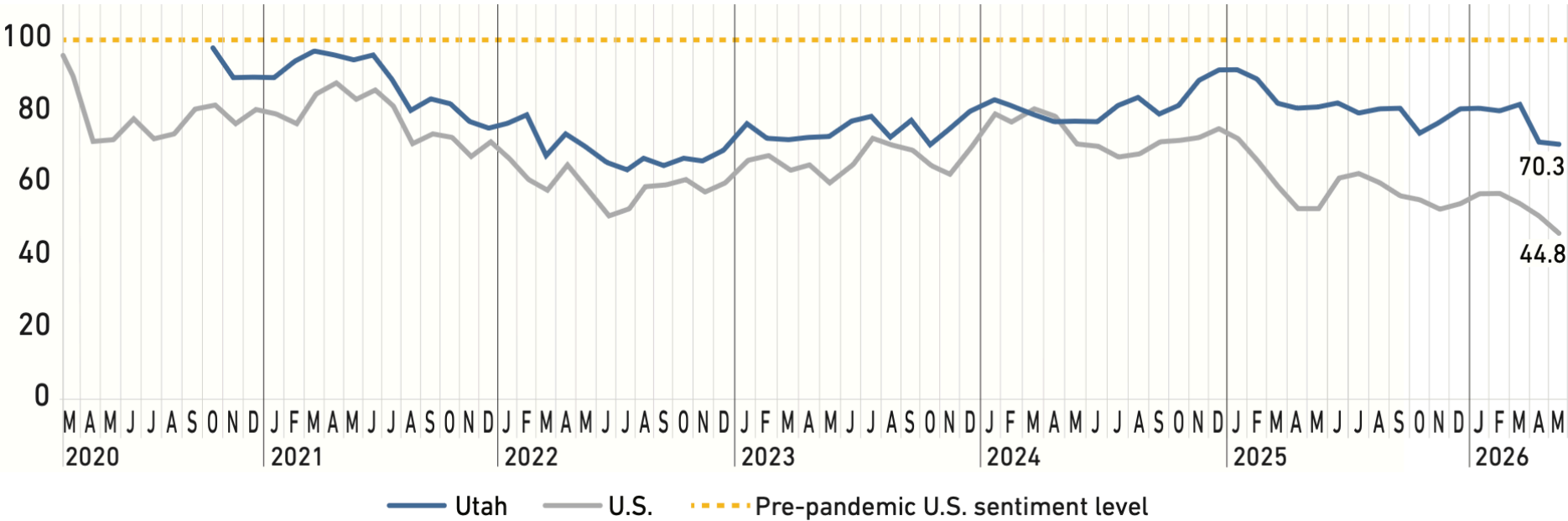
[fred.stlouisfed.org](https://fred.stlouisfed.org)

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# Utah Consumer Sentiment Remains Depressed

## Zions Bank Consumer Sentiment Survey



A division of Zions Bancorporation, N.A. Member FDIC

Sources: Zions Bank, University of Utah, University of Michigan

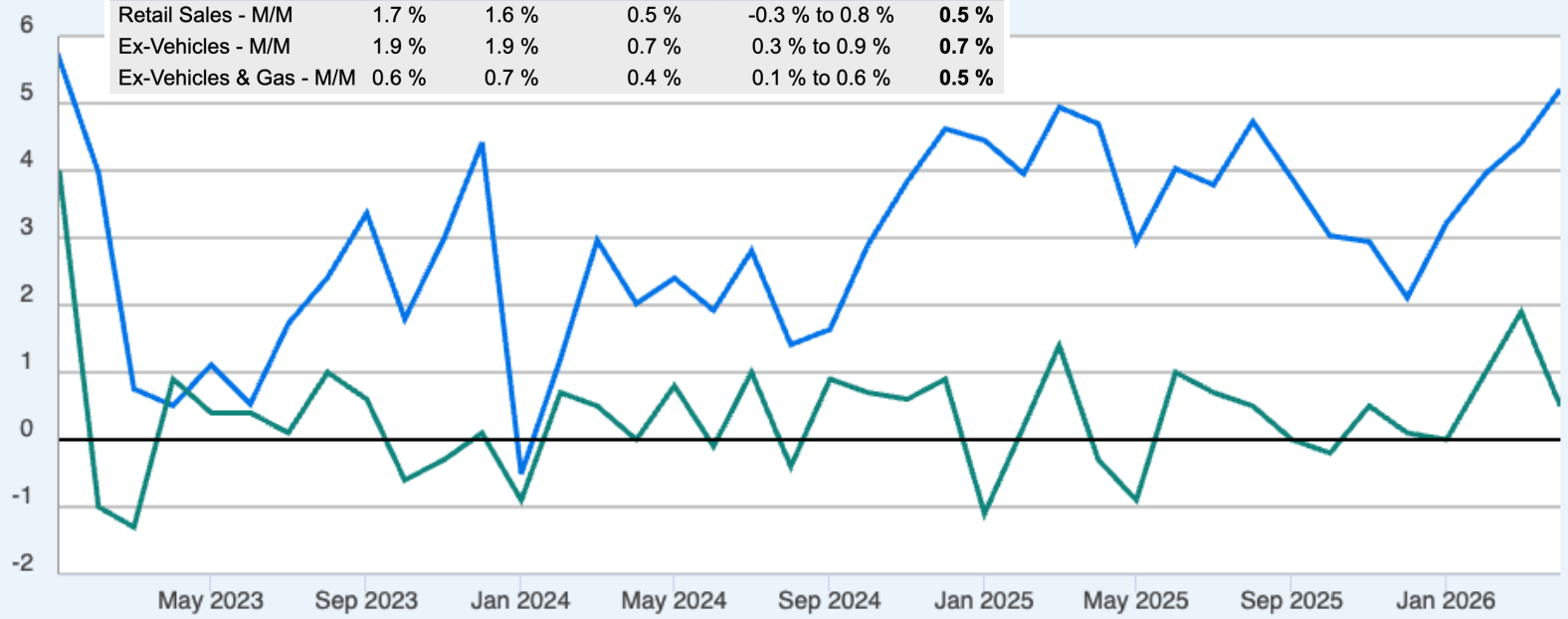
# Retail Sales Continue to Hold Up



Released On 5/14/2026 8:30:00 AM For Apr, 2026

	Prior	Prior Revised	Consensus	Consensus Range	Actual
Retail Sales - M/M	1.7 %	1.6 %	0.5 %	-0.3 % to 0.8 %	<b>0.5 %</b>
Ex-Vehicles - M/M	1.9 %	1.9 %	0.7 %	0.3 % to 0.9 %	<b>0.7 %</b>
Ex-Vehicles & Gas - M/M	0.6 %	0.7 %	0.4 %	0.1 % to 0.6 %	<b>0.5 %</b>

Percent Change from Year Ago, Percent Change from Preceding Period



**Y/Y**  
5.2%

**M/M**  
0.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau via FRED®  
Shaded areas indicate U.S. recessions.

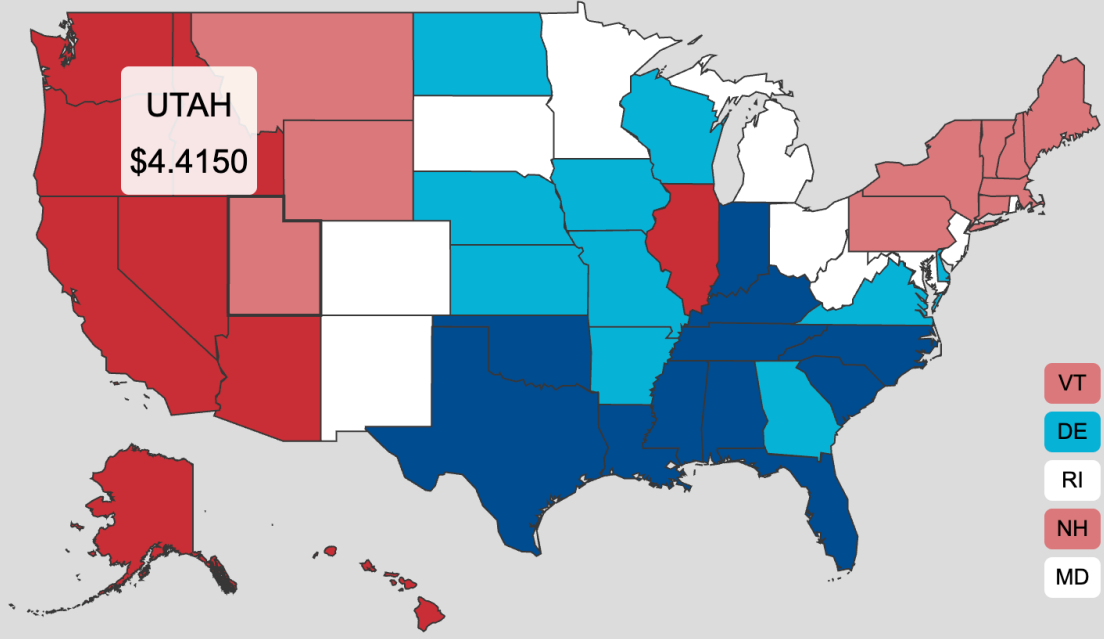
fred.stlouisfed.org

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# Gas Prices Remain Elevated

Today's AAA  
National Average  
**\$4.1640** ▼  
Price as of  
6/8/26



### National Retail Prices

- 5.8950 to 4.4930
- 4.4920 to 4.2630
- 4.2620 to 3.9710
- 3.9700 to 3.8010
- 3.8000 to 3.4380

- VT NJ
- DE DC
- RI CT
- NH MA
- MD HI

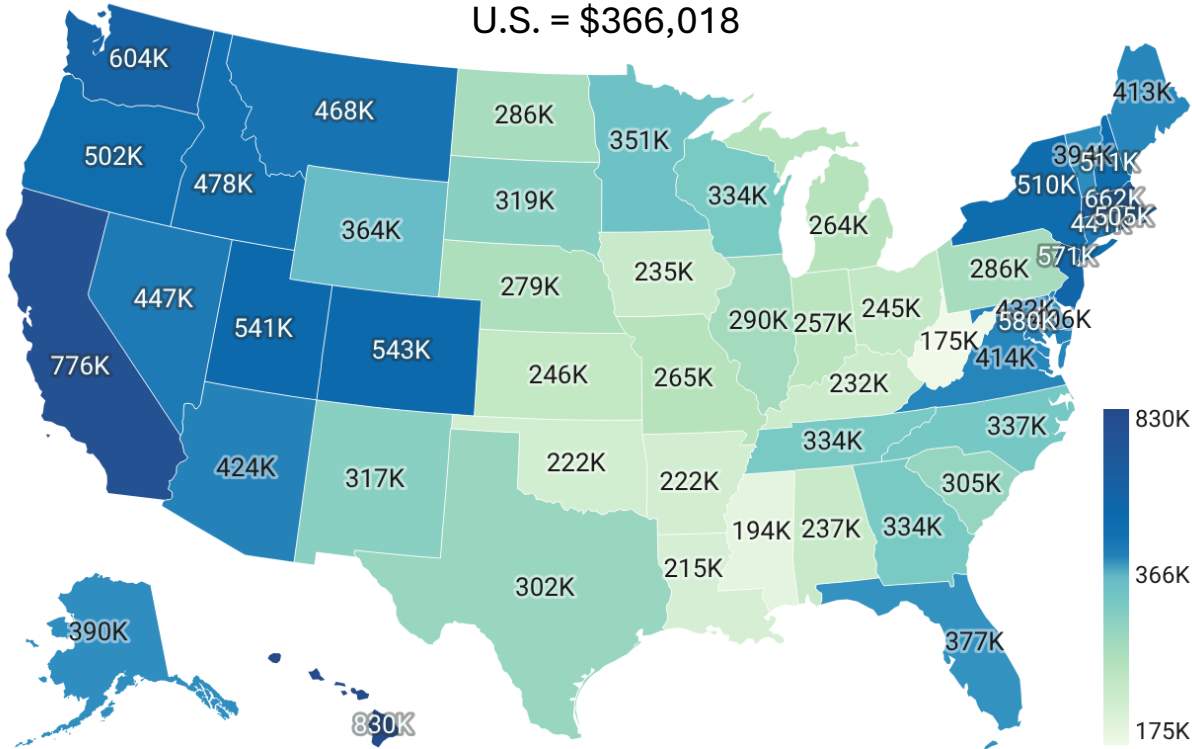


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Source: AAA

# Utah Home Prices Much Higher Than Nation



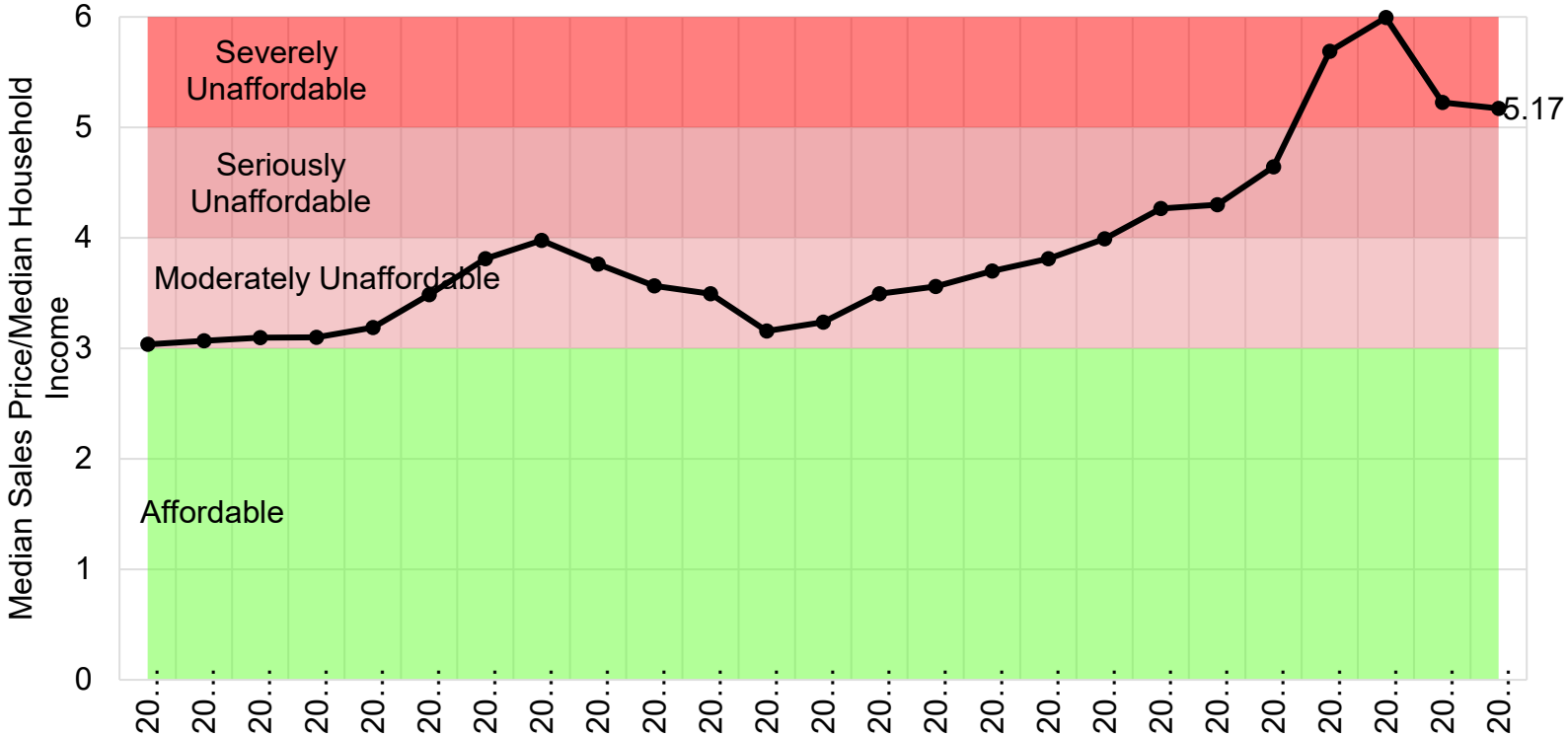
Created with Datawrapper

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Sources: Zillow, FRED

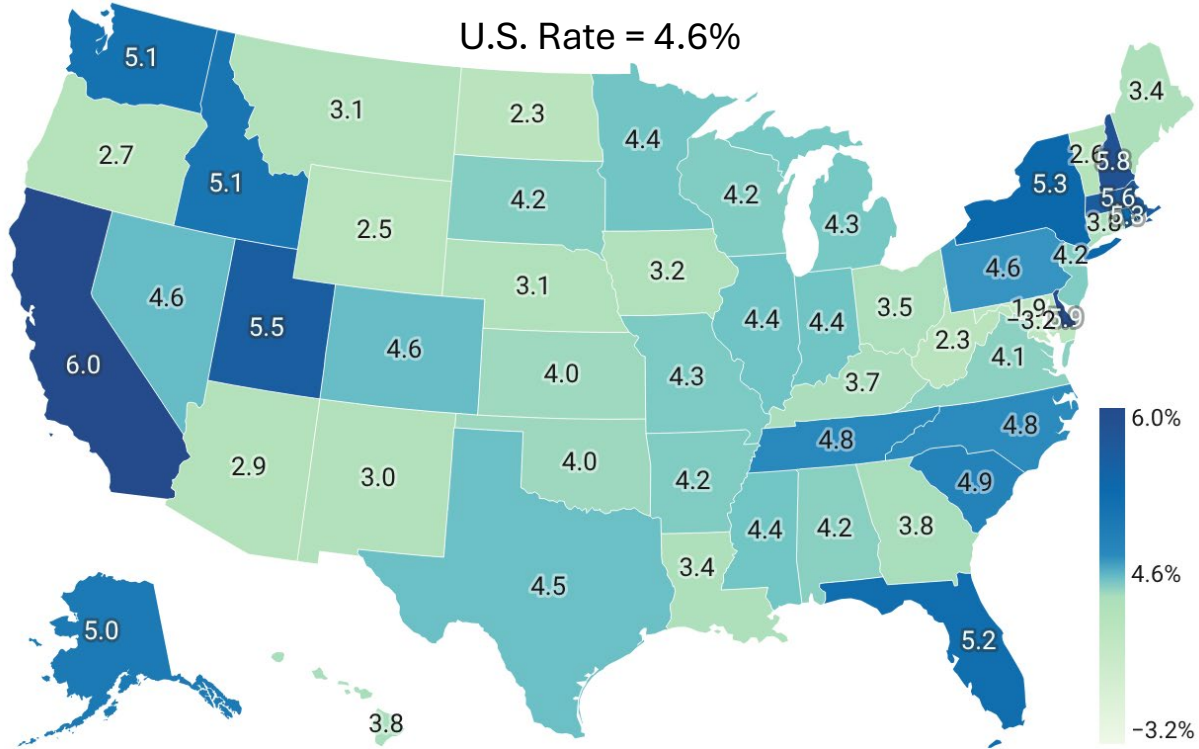
# Utah Home Prices Remain Unaffordable



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Source: Utah Realtors Association, Kem C Gardner Institute

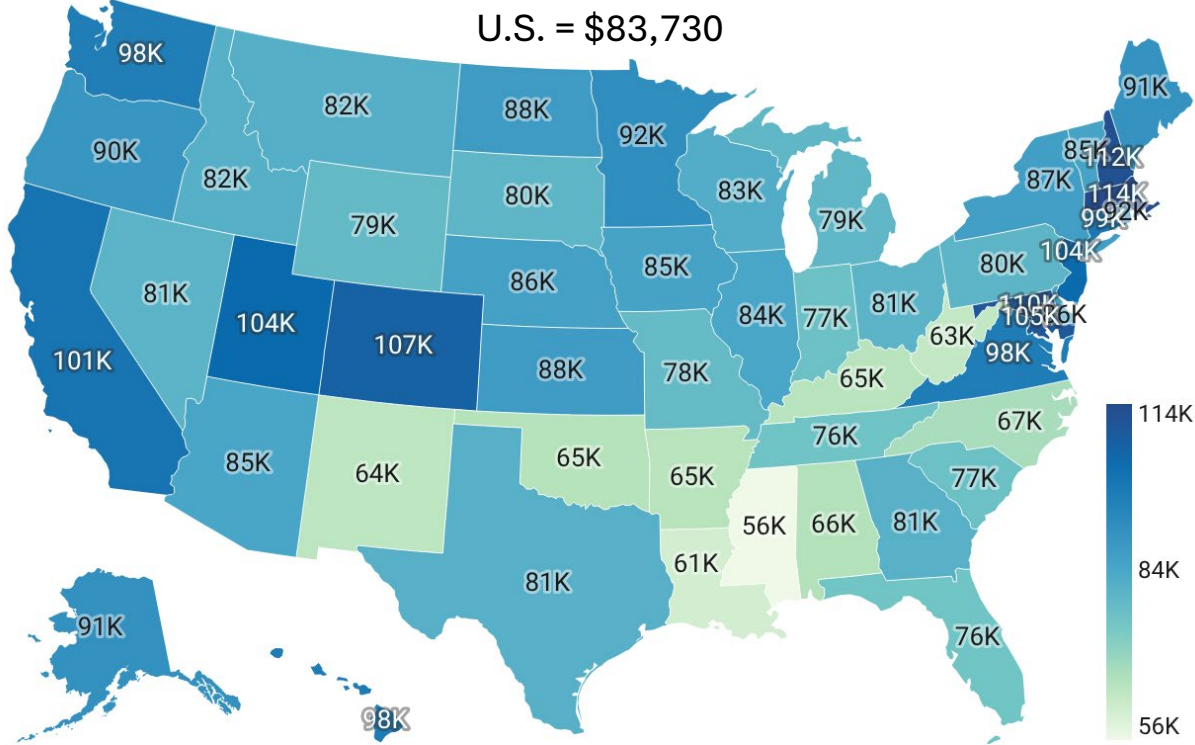
# Utah Wage Growth Among Top in Nation



Created with Datawrapper

Note: Q4 2025 Wage Growth Percent Change from One Year Ago  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, FRED

# Utah Median Household Income Among Highest



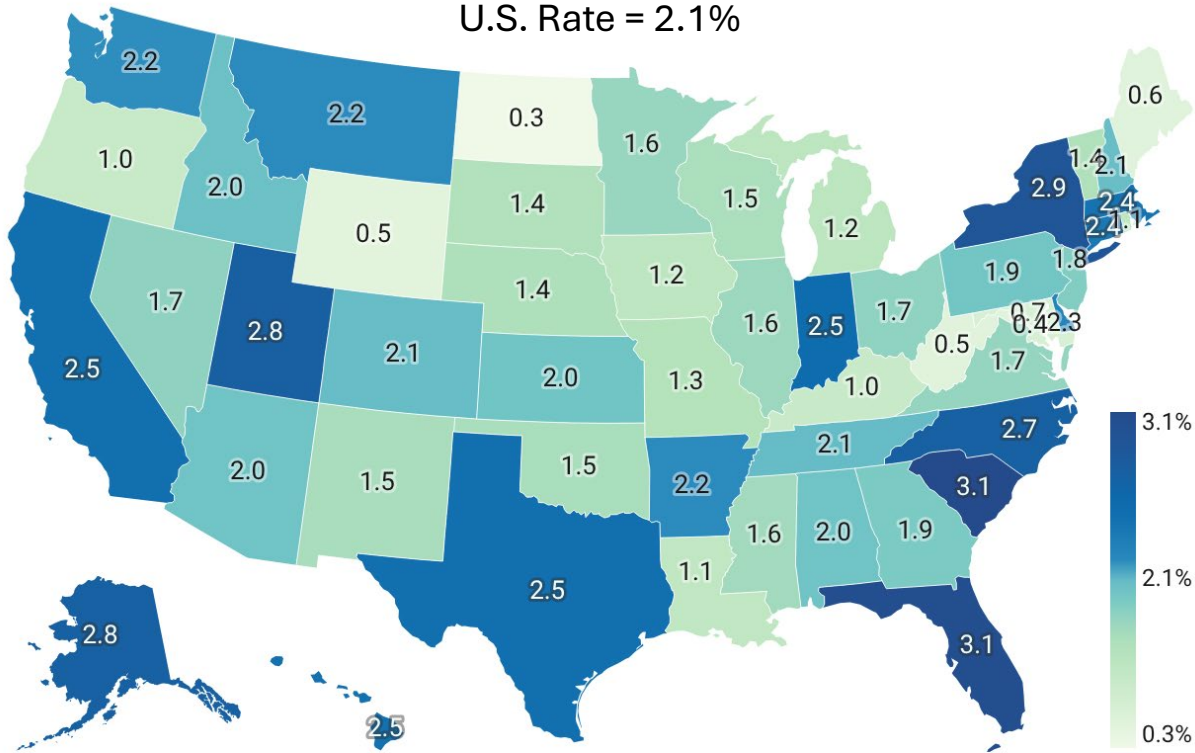
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Source: US Census Bureau

# Utah GDP Growth Stronger Than U.S.



Created with Datawrapper

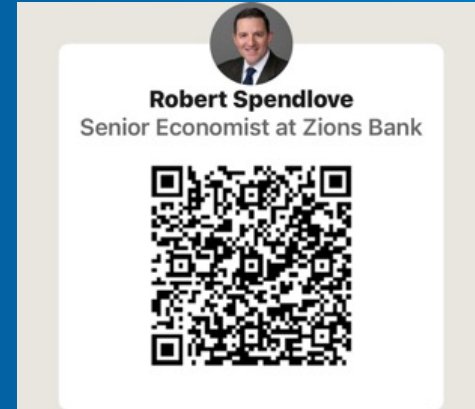
Note: Percent Change from One Year Ago  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, FRED

# ZionsBank.com/economy

**Robert Spendlove**  
**Senior Economist**

**Robert.Spendlove@zionsbank.com**

**801-560-5394**

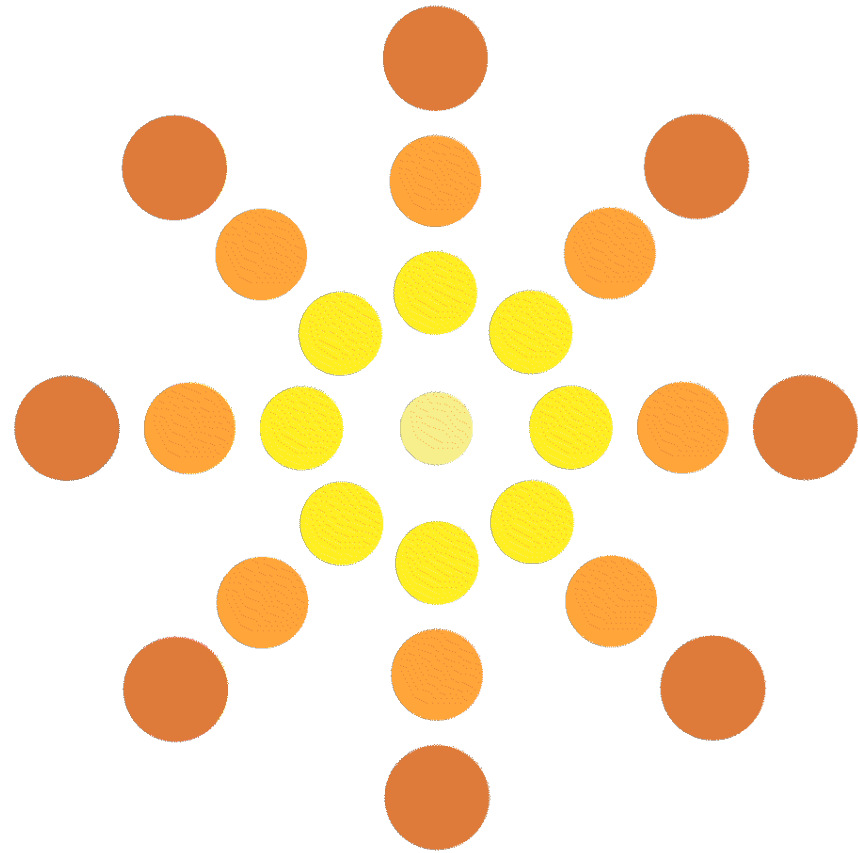


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# Mental Health in Utah

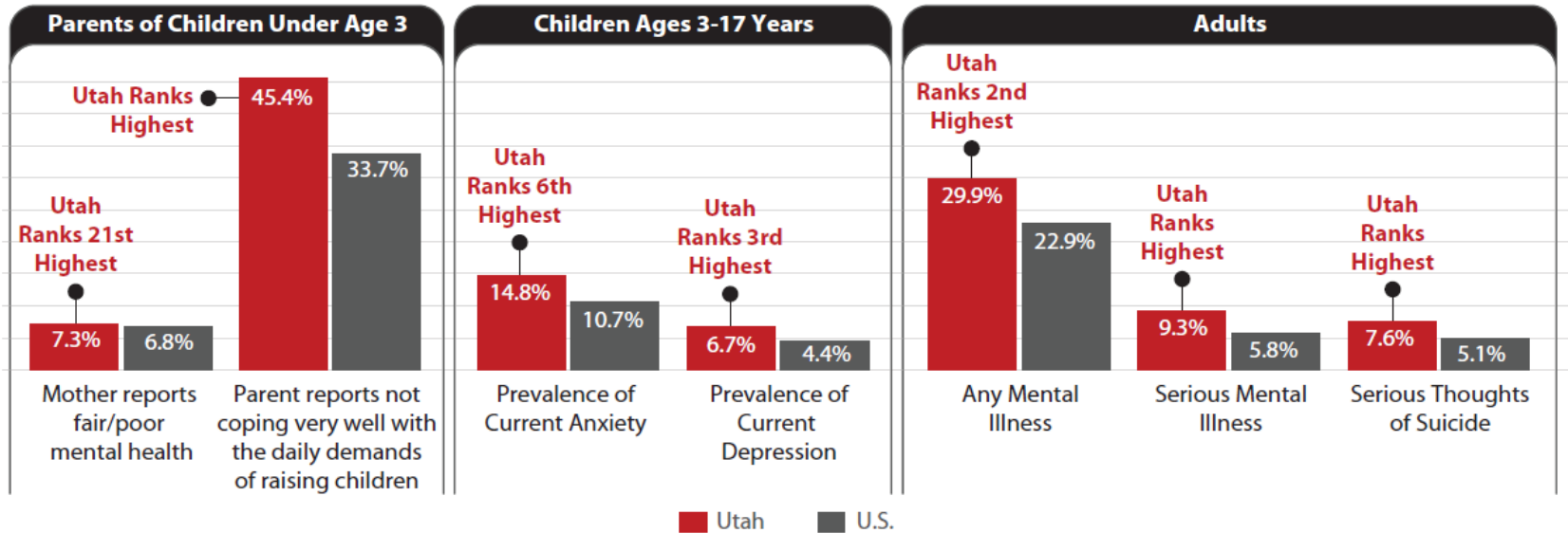
Utah's Progress Report on America's Anniversary

June 10, 2026

INFORMED DECISIONS™

# Demand Exists Across the Population Lifespan

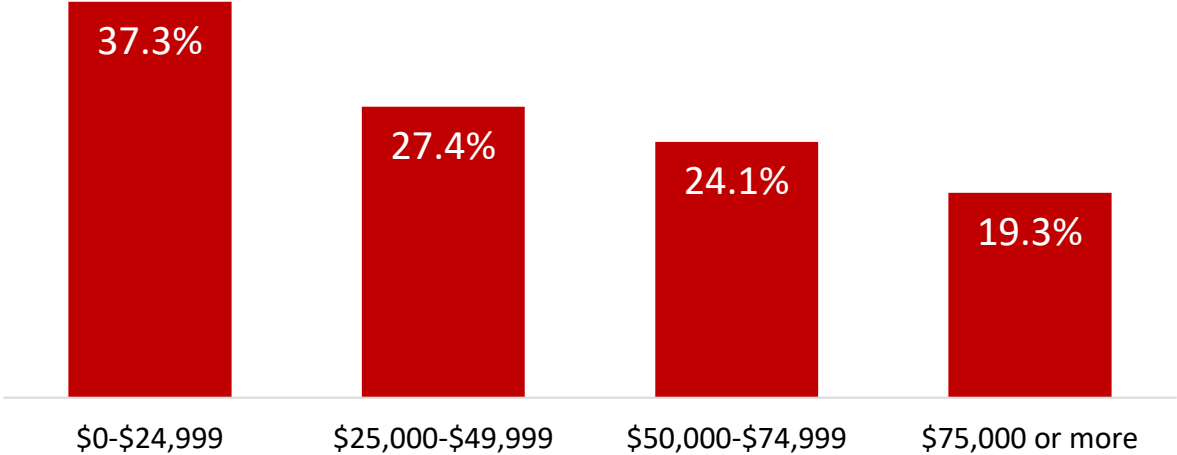
## Select Mental Health Indicators Among Utah Parents, Children, and Adults, 2022-2023



Parent Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), HRSA, MCHB. (2021-2023). National Survey of Children's Health NSCH Public-Use Data. From Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap. Children Source: Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2022-2023 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). Adult Source: SAMHSA, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2022 and 2023

# Demand Varies by Socioeconomic Status...

Share of Utah Adults Reporting Poor Mental Health by Income, 2019-2023

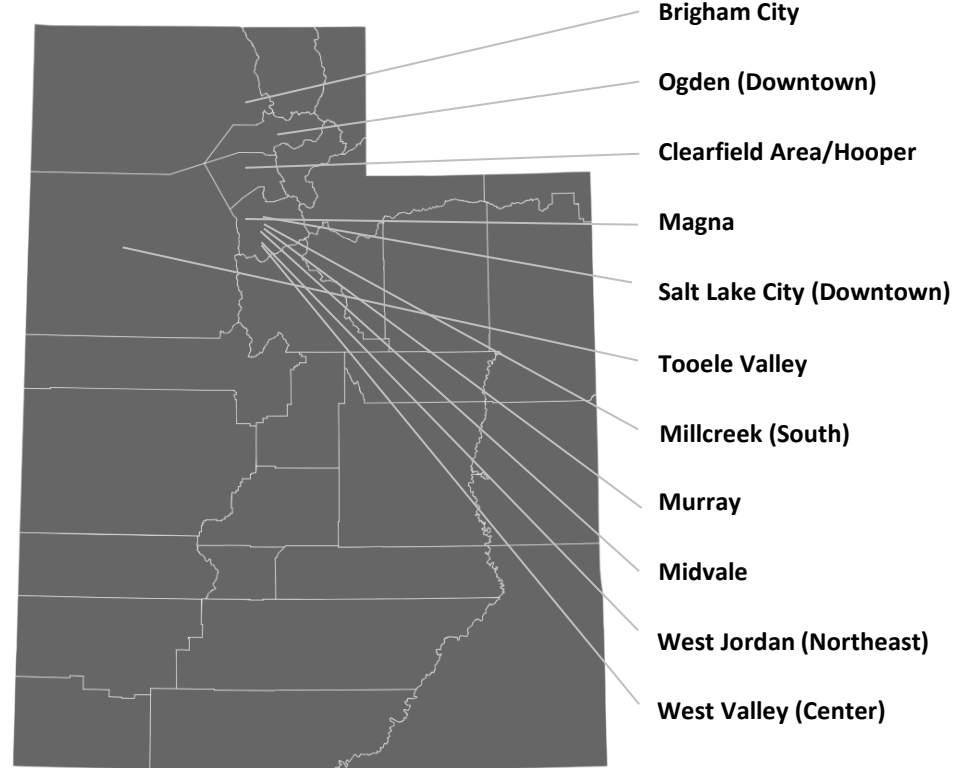


Note: Age-adjusted.  
Source: Utah Department of Health and Human Services Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2019-2023

# ...Geography

## Share of Utah Adults Reporting Poor Mental Health by Utah Small Area, 2021-2024

Small areas with statically significant higher shares than the state average

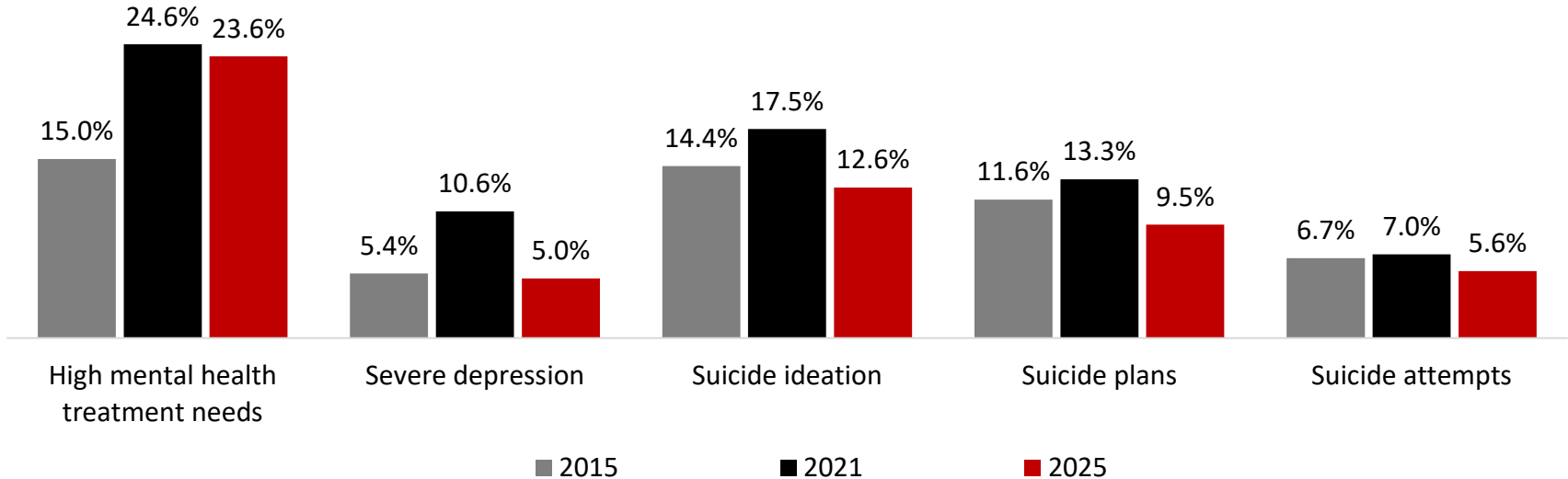


Note: Age-adjusted.

Source: Utah Department of Health and Human Services  
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2021-2024

# ...and Age

## Share of Utah Middle and High School Students with Select Mental Health Needs, 2015–2025

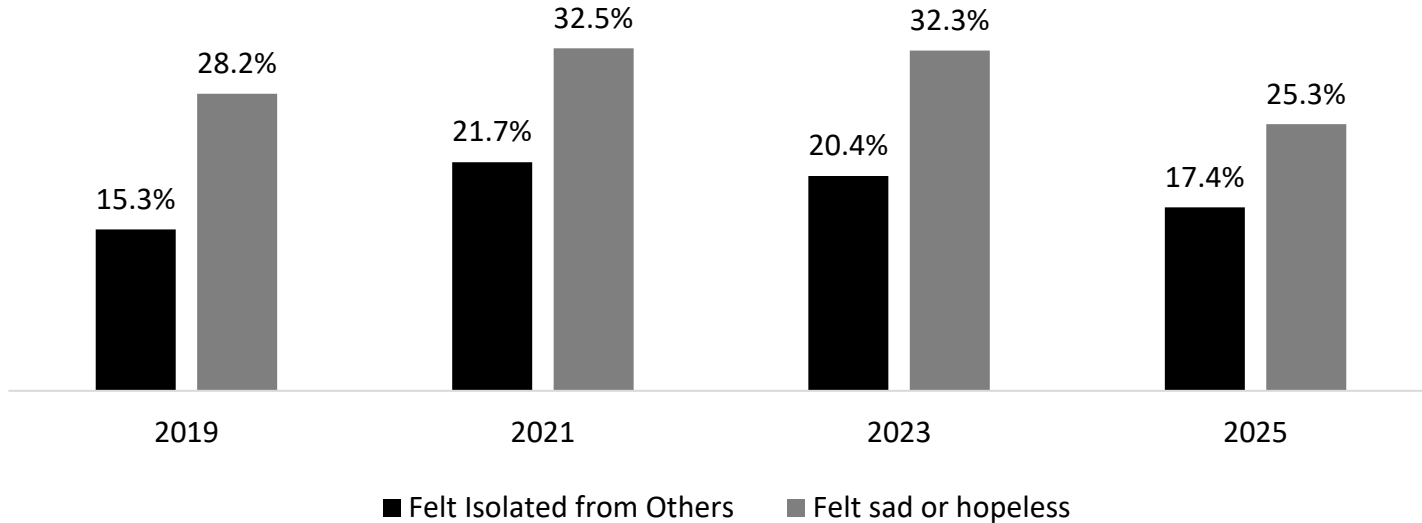


Note: Survey responses are from students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12.

Source: Student Health and Risk Prevention: Prevention Needs Assessment Survey. Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

# ...and Age

## Share of Utah Middle and High School Students Feeling Isolated, Sad or Hopeless, 2019–2025

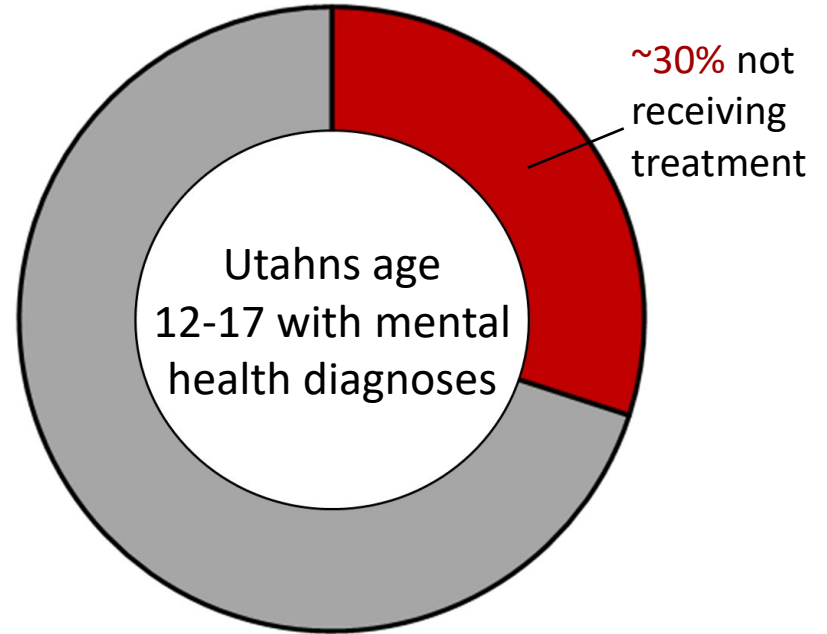


Note: Survey responses are from students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12.

Source: Student Health and Risk Prevention: Prevention Needs Assessment Survey. Utah Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health

# Limited Supply

- **~30%** of Utah youth age 12-17 with a clinically diagnosed mental/behavioral health condition do not receive treatment or counseling.
- **64%** of parents report mental health services are difficult, or sometimes impossible to obtain for children in need of treatment.



Source: Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2022-2023 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB).

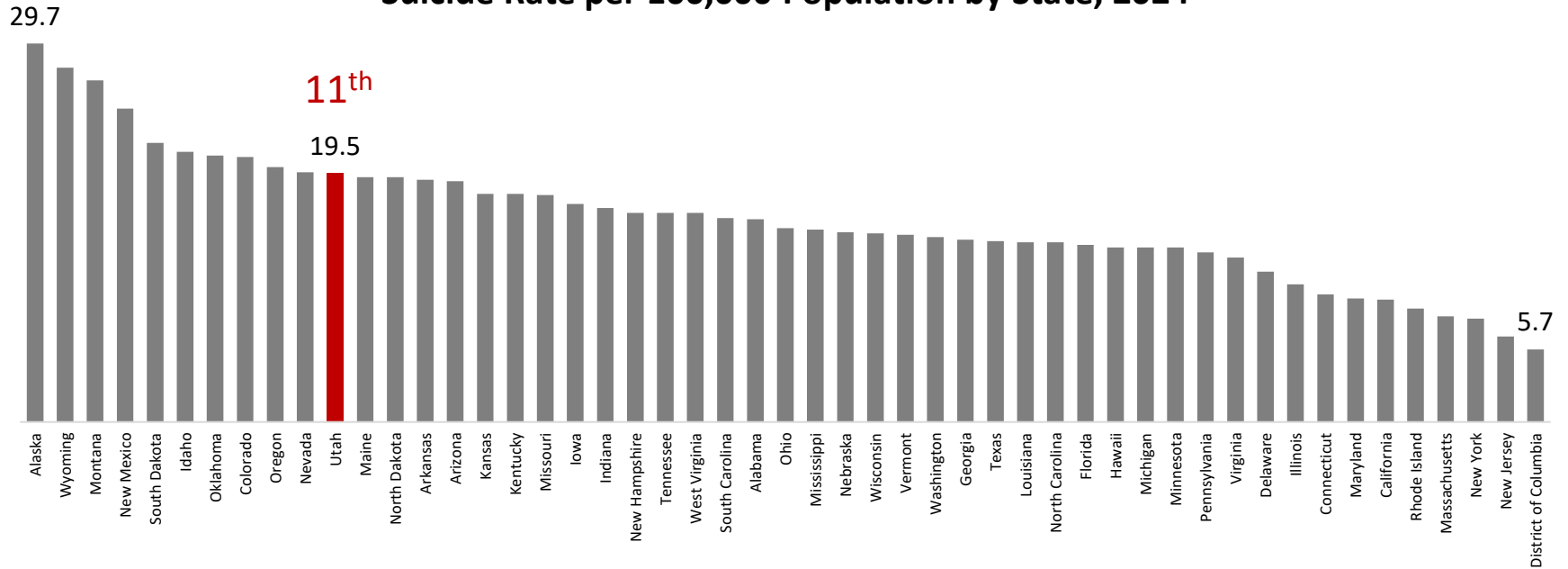




# Silver Linings

# Declining Suicide Rates

## Suicide Rate per 100,000 Population by State, 2024



Note: Utah's suicide rate is 11th highest among U.S. states and the District of Columbia. This is down from 6th highest in 2019.

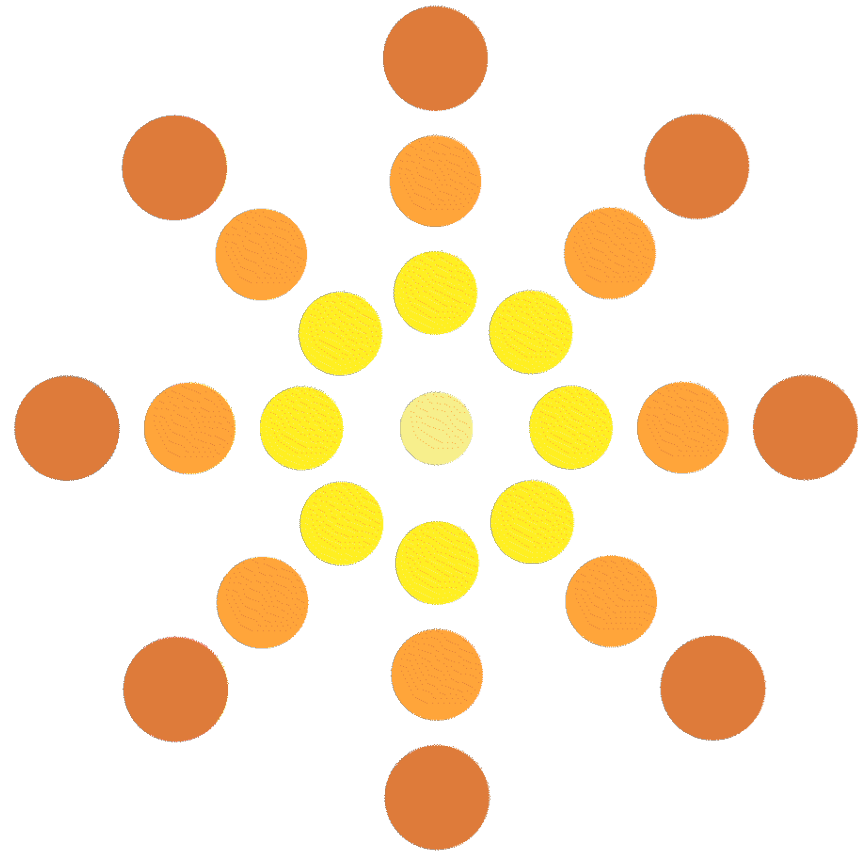
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death, 2024, on CDC WONDER Online Database. Retrieved from <https://wonder.cdc.gov/mcd.html>

# **Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute**

Thomas S. Monson Center | 411 E. South Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84111 | 801-585-5618 | [gardner.utah.edu](http://gardner.utah.edu)

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UNIVERSITY OF UTAH





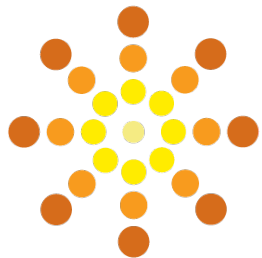
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— ON —  
**AMERICA'S ANNIVERSARY**

**25** 

★ YEARS ★

1776 ★ 2026