



# Arkansas Tourism Ticker



January-August 2025



sponsored by the Arkansas Hospitality Association & the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism



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**Following are recent reports  
from Arkansas' tourism industry.**

## **AMP money**

The Walmart Arkansas Music Pavilion (AMP) in Rogers posted double-digit declines in shows, ticket sales and revenue this year but still had five shows with more than 10,000 in attendance. The Walton Arts Center owns the AMP, which has an 11,000-seat capacity. (Dec. 3)

## **Fairfield Hotel deal**

The Fairfield Bay Community Club announced its acquisition of the Cobblestone Inn & Suites, a hospitality property located in Fairfield Bay. The purchase secures continued operation of the hotel and ensures the long-term viability of the Fairfield Bay Conference Center, officials said. (Dec. 1)

## **Historic rebuild**

Construction to rebuild what was once the Bricktown Brewery restaurant on Garrison Avenue in downtown Fort Smith is set to begin in January, according to Rick Griffin, manager of Fort Smith-based Griffin Properties. Built by William Meade Fishback in 1871, the building was the second oldest building on the downtown avenue. (Nov. 24)

## **Hotel for sale**

The Wyndham hotel in downtown Fort Smith is for sale. The landmark 242-room hotel was first opened in 1986 as an Embassy Suites by Springfield, Mo.-based John Q. Hammons Hotels. The listing does not include a price. Located at 700 Rogers Ave., the hotel was listed Oct. 8 and is marketed by Atlanta-based Hodges Ward Elliott. (Nov. 21)

## **Cold War Center support**

The National Cold War Center (NCWC) in Blytheville announced that former U.S. Secretary of State and former CIA Director Michael Pompeo joined the organization as a special advisor. Pompeo will work with the NCWC board of directors and National Advisory Board to guide the center's strategic direction, fundraising and educational outreach. (Nov. 6) **TBP**

# Arkansas Tourism Ticker: Tourism tax numbers down through August, job numbers up

Arkansas' 2% tourism tax revenue declined almost 2% in the first eight months of 2025 compared with the same period in 2024. Hospitality tax revenue in surveyed cities is also down through August.

The 2% tourism tax revenue between January and August was \$18.056 million, down 1.82% compared with \$18.392 million in the same period of 2024. The 2025 numbers are compared against a healthy 2024 in which the tourism tax was up 4.77% compared with 2023 collections.

Despite the 2% revenue being down through August, the July and August numbers totaled \$4.934 million, up 1.1% compared with the same period in 2024. Also, the August revenue of \$2.285 million set a new monthly record. The previous record was \$2.234 million in August 2023.

January-August hospitality tax collections among 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker were down 1% compared with the same period in 2024.

The Arkansas Tourism Ticker is managed by Talk Business & Politics, and sponsored by the Arkansas Hospitality Association and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism. The ticker uses the following three measurements to review the health of the state's tourism industry.

- Hospitality tax collections — prepared food tax and lodging tax — of 17 Arkansas cities (cities listed below along with collections for each city);
- Tourism sector employment numbers as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; and
- Collections of Arkansas' 2% statewide tourism tax. **TBP**

## Results for the January-August 2025 Tourism Ticker report are:



**1% decline**

Hospitality tax revenue in January-August 2025 among 17 Arkansas cities reviewed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker compared with the same period in 2024.



**1.82% decrease**

Collections of Arkansas' 2% statewide tourism tax in January-August 2025 compared with the same period in 2024.



**1.6% increase**

Gain in the monthly average of Arkansas' tourism industry jobs in January-August 2025 compared with the same period in 2024.

# Combined hospitality tax revenue in 17 cities down through August

The combined hospitality tax collections in the 17 cities totaled \$48.076 million in January-August 2025, down 1% compared with \$48.57 million in the same period of 2024.

Restaurant (prepared food tax) tax collections among the 17 cities totaled \$36.431 million in January-August 2025, up but almost flat compared with \$36.43 million in the same period of 2024. Hotel tax collections among the 17 cities totaled \$11.645 million in January-August 2025, down 4.1% compared with \$12.14 million in the same period of 2024.

Of the 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker, 10 posted hospitality tax revenue gains in January-August 2025 compared with the same period in 2024. **TBP**

## Following are the past 15 years of 2% tax collections.

<b>2024:</b> \$26.661 million	<b>2016:</b> \$15.461 million
<b>2023:</b> \$25.446 million	<b>2015:</b> \$14.815 million
<b>2022:</b> \$24.049 million	<b>2014:</b> \$13.677 million
<b>2021:</b> \$20.544 million	<b>2013:</b> \$12.716 million
<b>2020:</b> \$13.61 million	<b>2012:</b> \$12.405 million
<b>2019:</b> \$17.608 million	<b>2011:</b> \$12.025 million
<b>2018:</b> \$16.428 million	<b>2010:</b> \$11.492 million

# Travel and tourism sector jobs up through August

Monthly average tourism sector jobs in January-August 2025 were 130,837, up 1.6% compared with 128,800 in the same period of 2024. The sector in the January-August period reached record employment of 132,100 in July. Sector jobs have fully recovered from the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic when job numbers fell to an estimated 74,200 in April 2020.

Of the seven metro areas in or connected to Arkansas, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides tourism employment data on five. Four of the five metros posted employment gains compared with the same period in 2024. Following is the average monthly employment between January and August 2025 for the metro regions. **TBP**

## Monthly employment averages

### Northwest Arkansas

January-August 2025: **31,650**  
(up 2.5% compared with the same 2024 period)

January-August 2024: **30,887**



### Fort Smith

January-August 2025: **9,325**  
(up 1% compared with the same 2024 period)

January-August 2024: **9,237**

### Memphis-West Memphis

(Arkansas-Tennessee-Mississippi)

January-August 2025: **62,712**  
(down 0.01% compared with the same 2024 period)

January-August 2024: **62,762**

### Central Arkansas

(Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway)

January-August 2025: **35,950**  
(up 0.5% compared with the same 2024 period)

January-August 2024: **35,775**

### Texarkana

(Arkansas-Texas)

January-August 2025: **6,812**  
(up 2.6% compared with the same 2024 period)

January-August 2024: **6,637**

# Tourism Tax Collections (among 17 cities)

CITY	January-August 2025	January-August 2024	% CHANGE
<b>Bentonville</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$3.066 million	\$2.783 million	<b>up 10.2%</b>
<b>Conway</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$3.988 million	\$4.371 million	<b>down 8.7%</b>
<b>El Dorado</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$264,266	\$325,142	<b>down 18.7%</b>
<b>Eureka Springs</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$1.38 million	\$1.263 million	<b>up 9.2%</b>
<b>Fayetteville</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$6.804 million	\$6.659 million	<b>up 2.2%</b>
<b>Fort Smith</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$800,549	\$874,472	<b>down 2.05%</b>
<b>Harrison</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	643,089	\$645,420	<b>down 0.4%</b>
<b>Hot Springs</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$7.023 million	\$6.99 million	<b>up 0.5%</b>
<b>Jonesboro</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax; 2% restaurant tax implemented Jan. 1, 2024)</small>	\$5.234 million	\$5.176 million	<b>up 1.1%</b>
<b>Little Rock</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$12.899 million	\$12.494 million	<b>up 3.2%</b>
<b>North Little Rock</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$6.864 million	\$6.771 million	<b>up 1.4%</b>
<b>Pine Bluff</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$1.436 million	\$1.452 million	<b>down 1.1%</b>
<b>Rogers</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$1.093 million	\$1.091 million	<b>up 0.2%</b>
<b>Russellville</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$269,743	\$267,747	<b>up 0.7%</b>
<b>Springdale</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$383,729	\$438,341	<b>down 12.5%</b>
<b>Texarkana</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$960,685	\$949,525	<b>up 1.2%</b>
<b>Van Buren</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$625,334	\$584,269	<b>up 7%</b>





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Talk Business & Politics Administrative Assistant Kathy Reed contributed to this report.

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Contact Michael Tilley at [mtilley@talkbusiness.net](mailto:mtilley@talkbusiness.net) for approval requests.

