



# Arkansas Tourism Ticker



January-December 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.

## Support Fund

The Fort Smith Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) is working to set up a disaster relief fund supporting restaurant workers and their families during times of emergency. As the CVB was preparing for the Fort Smith Dine Local Week in February, Tankersley Foodservice took steps to help with a \$5,000 donation to the disaster relief fund, according to a CVB social media post. (March 23)

## Beatles Award

The Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce has received the 2026 Henry Award for Tourism Attraction of the Year for the Beatles at the Ridge Festival, recognizing the event's impact in bringing visitors from across the nation and around the world to Arkansas. (March 16)

## Live Nation Venue

Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Live Nation Entertainment said it's working with the Momentary to open a 46,327-square-foot music venue in Bentonville. Bentonville Ballroom will have a capacity of 2,500 people and be built on 1.75 acres at the northeast corner of Southeast Eighth and Southeast E streets. (March 10)

## Outdoor Economy

In Arkansas, the value of the outdoor recreation economy was \$4.957 billion in 2024, which was 2.6% of the state's GDP. There were 43,834 Arkansas jobs tied to the outdoor recreation economy in 2024, which was 3.2% of all jobs, according to a recent federal report. (March 5)

## Fayetteville Events

Experience Fayetteville, the city's tourism marketing agency, and Downtown Fayetteville Coalition are working together to launch three new events that will take place this year in the Upper Ramble in Fayetteville. The events include the Fayetteville Arts Fair, American 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration, and Hogs & Dogs: Rumble in the Ramble. (March 5) **TBP**

# Arkansas Tourism Ticker: State tourism sector growth moderates in 2025

Arkansas' 2% tourism tax revenue between January and December was \$26.596 million, down 0.24% compared with the \$26.66 million in the same period of 2024. Despite the slight dip in 2025, monthly tax revenue for the tax posted a record of \$2.857 million in June.

The 2025 numbers are compared against a healthy 2024 in which the tourism tax revenues were up 4.77% compared with 2023 collections. The 2024 revenue set a new annual record. The 2025 numbers are up 29.5% compared with the post-pandemic revenue of \$20.544 million in 2021.

January-December hospitality tax collections among 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker were down 1.37% 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-December 2025 Tourism Ticker report are:



**1.37% decrease**

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



**0.24% decline**

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



**2.5% increase**

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

# Combined hospitality tax revenue in 17 surveyed cities declines in 2025

The combined hospitality tax collections in the 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker totaled \$72.028 million in January-December 2025, down 1.37% compared with \$73.028 million in the same period of 2024.

Restaurant (prepared food tax) tax collections among the 17 cities totaled \$54.253 million in January-December 2025, down 0.82% compared with \$54.7 million in the same period of 2024. Hotel tax collections among the 17 cities totaled \$17.775 million in January-December 2025, down 3% compared with \$18.328 million in the same period of 2024.

Of the 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker, 10 posted hospitality tax revenue increases in January-December 2025 compared with the same period in 2024. Percentage changes ranged from Bentonville up 5.9% and Springdale down 10.7%. **TBP**

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

<b>2025:</b> \$26.596 million	<b>2017:</b> \$15.897 million
<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 2.5% in 2025

The monthly average for tourism sector jobs in January-December 2025 was 132,310, up 2.5% compared with 129,100 in the same period of 2024. The sector posted a record of 136,600 in December. 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. All five posted employment gains compared with the same period in 2024. Following is the average monthly employment during 2025 for the metro regions. **TBP**

## Monthly employment averages



### Northwest Arkansas

January-December 2025: **32,200**  
(up 1.3% compared with the same 2024 period)  
January-December 2024: **31,800**  
January-December 2010: **18,150**

### Fort Smith

January-December 2025: **9,370**  
(up 1.3% compared with the same 2024 period)  
January-December 2024: **9,200**  
January-December 2010: **8,450**

### Central Arkansas

(Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway)  
January-December 2025: **36,100**  
(up 1.7% compared with the same 2024 period)  
January-December 2024: **35,500**  
January-December 2010: **29,760**

### Memphis-West Memphis

(Arkansas-Tennessee-Mississippi)  
January-December 2025: **63,010**  
(up 0.65% compared with the same 2024 period)  
January-December 2024: **62,600**  
January-December 2010: **65,090**

### Texarkana

(Arkansas-Texas)  
January-December 2025: **6,780**  
(up 1.2% compared with the same 2024 period)  
January-December 2024: **6,700**  
January-December 2010: **5,750**

# Tourism Tax Collections (among 17 cities)

CITY	January-December 2025	January-December 2024	% CHANGE
<b>Bentonville</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$4.574 million	\$4.318 million	<b>up 5.9%</b>
<b>Conway</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$6.155 million	\$6.531 million	<b>down 5.7%</b>
<b>El Dorado</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$440,929	\$491,424	<b>down 10.3%</b>
<b>Eureka Springs</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$2.14 million	\$2.071 million	<b>up 3.3%</b>
<b>Fayetteville</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$10.649 million	\$10.559 million	<b>up 0.85%</b>
<b>Fort Smith</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$1.171 million	\$1.309 million	<b>down 10.6%</b>
<b>Harrison</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$992,113	\$986,078	<b>up 0.6%</b>
<b>Hot Springs</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$10.246 million	\$10.082 million	<b>up 1.6%</b>
<b>Jonesboro</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax; 2% restaurant tax implemented Jan. 1, 2024)</small>	\$7.79 million	\$7.74 million	<b>up 0.65%</b>
<b>Little Rock</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$19.232 million	\$18.775 million	<b>up 2.4%</b>
<b>North Little Rock</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$10.188 million	\$10.12 million	<b>up 0.67%</b>
<b>Pine Bluff</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$2.137 million	\$2.172 million	<b>down 1.6%</b>
<b>Rogers</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$1.768 million	\$1.721 million	<b>up 2.8%</b>
<b>Russellville</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$434,867	\$423,235	<b>up 2.75%</b>
<b>Springdale</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$611,894	\$685,176	<b>down 10.7%</b>
<b>Texarkana</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$1.439 million	\$1.541 million	<b>down 6.6%</b>
<b>Van Buren</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$854,173	\$879,679	<b>down 2.9%</b>





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