



# 2025 State of Our State Dashboard

Technical Notes

The 2025 State of Our State dashboard provides a comprehensive resource with data and information accessible to all Tennesseans. The dashboard includes 143 individual metrics across 9 issue areas, which include: (1) Criminal Justice & Courts, (2) Economic Opportunity, (3) Education, (4) Elections & Civic Life, (5) Energy & Environment, (6) Health, (7) Housing, (8) Transportation & Infrastructure, and (9) State Economy. These metrics are disaggregated at different levels and years when available, resulting in over 56,000 data points.

The rankings presented in the State of Our State dashboard are standardized so small numbers represent positive outcomes. In other words, being ranked 1st is always better than being ranked last (e.g., 51st).

## What is in the State of Our State Dashboard?

The State of Our State dashboard data is accessible through a variety of visualizations and reports. For each metric, ThinkTennessee provides the following:

- The value and ranking for Tennessee and the remaining 49 states and D.C.,[\[1\]](#) allowing for state-to-state comparisons.
- The average value for all U.S. states for a given metric to compare the states' performance to the average.
- Different view options that disaggregate the metric by demographic groups or sub-categories, when available.
- Longitudinal data points for Tennessee to illustrate the state's changes in performance over the three most recent years of data, when available.
- A description for each metric and additional notes on their methodology, when necessary.
- The source name and link to the source's website.
- The year when the most recent data is available for a given metric.

## Selection Criteria

Metrics were selected for inclusion based on a five-point criterion, prioritizing their reliability as performance indicators in their respective issue areas, their relevance to public discourse and ThinkTennessee's policy priorities, and the overall timeliness and reliability of the data source. Furthermore, data for given metrics were included based upon:

### 1. Policy relevance

The chosen metrics are directly related to ThinkTennessee’s policy priorities and can inform decision-making processes at state and local levels.

## 2. Validity

The metrics selected are well accepted in the research and policy fields as valid measures and predictors of policy inputs or outcomes, both overall and across different social groups.

## 3. Availability

The metrics selected and their sources are available widely and publicly nationwide. Where possible, ThinkTennessee favored U.S. Federal Government data over other data sources. In a handful of instances, third-party analysis of federal data was used. Direct links to the sources are included in the detailed views of all metrics for users to explore and engage with the data further.

## 4. Frequency and consistency

The chosen metrics are consistently collected, measured, and reported over time and across geographic units, allowing for longitudinal analyses and comparisons within and across states.

## 5. Structural coverage and disaggregation

Selected metrics provide comprehensive coverage of different inputs and outputs related to each issue area and can be disaggregated by demographic groups or sub-categories, when available, to help identify the disparities and lived experiences of people and groups.

In most instances, the dashboard includes all available levels for a given metric that contain (1) a value or data point available for Tennessee in a given year, and (2) values or data points available for at least 25 additional states in the same year.<sup>[2]</sup> When these two conditions are not met, the data is not included in the dashboard for that metric.

**Important Note:** The State of Our State dashboard does not attempt to determine causation or correlation between two metrics or between given metrics and any specific policy outcome.

## Sources Used During Data Collection

The data presented in the State of Our State dashboard is sourced from a variety of reputable organizations and government agencies. Table 1 captures the list of primary sources used for data collection:

Table 1. Data Sources

American Road & Transportation Builders Association	Missouri Economic Research and Information Center	National Low Income Housing Coalition
AmeriCorps	MIT Election Data and Science Lab	U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Arizona State University's analysis of BLS	National Association of Women Judges	U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics
ATTOM	National Bureau of Economic Research	U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System	A. K. Glasmeier, Massachusetts Institute of Technology	U.S. Census Bureau
Center for Neighborhood Technology	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration	U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
County Health Rankings	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	U.S. Courts
E2 Clean Jobs America Report	Prison Policy Initiative	U.S. Department of Education
Economic Policy Institute	Reflective Democracy Campaign	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Federal Communications Commission	SHADAC	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	States for the Future	U.S. Department of Labor
Federal Reserve Bank of New York	The Annie E. Casey Foundation	U.S. Department of Transportation
Institute of Museum and Library Services	The Council of State Governments Justice Center	U.S. Energy Information Administration
University of Minnesota's IPUMS	The Sentencing Project	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Learning Policy Institute	The White House	U.S. National Center for Health Statistics
Lumina Foundation	Urban Institute	U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
		United Health Foundation

## Levels in which the Metrics are Displayed

The State of Our State dashboard includes disaggregated metrics that provide a comprehensive view of Tennessee's performance across different demographic groups and categories. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the state's progress and challenges for different socio-economic groups. Where available, metrics were disaggregated at different levels, some of which include the demographic groups illustrated in Table 2:

Table 2. Demographic Groups with Data Available in the Dashboard

American Indian or Alaska Native	Male	Unemployed
Asian	Female	Without a High School Degree
Black or African American	Non-White Male	High School Degree Attained
Hispanic or Latino	Non-White Female	Post-HS Degree Attained
Multiracial	Children	With a Bachelor's Degree
Non-Hispanic White	Youth	With an Advanced Degree
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Seniors	With Children in the Household
Other Race	Rural	With Seniors in the Household

In some instances, there were less than 50 states + D.C. with data available for some demographics or sub-categories. These are highlighted with an asterisk in their respective expanded view versions.

## Challenges to Data Accessibility of U.S. Government Sources

As of January 2025, there have been challenges when collecting and analyzing data produced and shared by the U.S. Federal Government. Think*Tennessee* recognizes the inconveniences that these changes can cause dashboard users who wishes to explore any of the metrics further. Therefore, please reach out to [info@thinktn.org](mailto:info@thinktn.org) if there are any issues when attempting to access the source data through the provided links.

Think*Tennessee* is committed to collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data that is essential for identifying, understanding, and providing solutions to the challenges facing the working families of Tennessee. If you have any questions or suggestions about the dashboard or the work of Think*Tennessee*, please email [info@thinktn.org](mailto:info@thinktn.org).

[1] Some metrics have less than 51 cases due to issues with data availability on specific levels of disaggregation.

[2] In the case of the Teacher Vacancies metric, the dashboard presents rankings from data of the two most recent school years published by the states' reporting agencies.