



MULTISTATE INCOME/FRANCHISE TAX

2022 North Carolina county tier designations and average wages for economic development incentive programs

Tax Alert

Overview

This Tax Alert provides the 2022 North Carolina county tier designations and the county average wages for purposes of North Carolina's economic development incentive programs. The Development Tier Designation statute (N.C Code § 143B-437.08) provides specific guidelines for calculating annual tier rankings. This process assigns each county to a designation of Tier One (most distressed), Tier Two, or Tier Three (least distressed).

Designations and County Average Wage

The tables below provide each county's Tier designation and county-average private sector wages for 2022. Bold lettering indicates that the county changed Tiers from 2021 and the arrows indicate which direction the county moved in distress ranking. For more information, please see the [2022 Development Tier Designations memo](#).

2022 Tier One		
County	Economic Distress Rank*	Average Private Sector Wage
Anson	12	\$37,270
Bertie	6	\$34,023
Bladen	17	\$38,556
Burke	32	\$39,499
Caldwell	37	\$43,905
Caswell	21	\$39,139
Cherokee	40	\$35,651
Chowan←	33	\$39,274
Cleveland	38	\$42,511
Columbus	5	\$37,680
Cumberland	20	\$40,760
Duplin	30	\$39,111
Edgecombe	3	\$39,222
Graham	25	\$39,411
Greene	28	\$34,316
Halifax	4	\$36,309
Hertford	9	\$44,007
Hoke	24	\$35,846
Hyde	26	\$33,402
Jones←	34	\$36,922
Lenoir	16	\$42,321
Martin	11	\$33,338
Mitchell	36	\$40,950
Nash	31	\$44,377
Northampton	14	\$41,307
Pasquotank	38	\$40,149
Richmond	8	\$38,035
Robeson	1	\$37,649
Rockingham	22	\$38,563
Rutherford	22	\$39,588
Sampson	27	\$40,199
Scotland	2	\$40,894
Swain	34	\$31,311
Tyrrell	14	\$32,506
Vance	7	\$40,159
Warren	13	\$31,563
Washington	10	\$43,302
Wayne	18	\$40,996
Wilkes	29	\$40,441
Wilson	19	\$47,863

2022 Tier Two		
County	Economic Distress Rank*	Average Private Sector Wage
Alamance	71	\$46,999
Alexander→	53	\$36,614
Alleghany	50	\$35,216
Ashe	67	\$37,853
Avery	76	\$35,820
Beaufort	47	\$40,255
Catawba	68	\$48,028
Clay	53	\$35,066
Craven	47	\$43,435
Dare	77	\$36,525
Davidson	63	\$45,117
Davie	77	\$43,425
Forsyth	63	\$57,351
Franklin	74	\$47,568
Gaston	57	\$44,781
Gates	44	\$42,768
Granville	69	\$45,096
Guilford	58	\$53,994
Harnett	46	\$37,947
Haywood	73	\$40,306
Jackson	72	\$40,351
Lee	62	\$45,743
Macon←	80	\$39,181
Madison	58	\$38,074
McDowell	45	\$39,071
Montgomery	61	\$45,284
Onslow	41	\$35,576
Pamlico	69	\$31,613
Perquimans	51	\$37,602
Person	58	\$44,066
Pitt	43	\$45,723
Polk←	65	\$35,612
Randolph→	42	\$40,522
Rowan→	55	\$48,360
Stanly	66	\$37,466
Stokes	55	\$33,674
Surry	51	\$40,686
Watauga←	79	\$37,294
Yadkin	49	\$39,302
Yancey	75	\$38,506

2022 Tier Three		
County	Economic Distress Rank*	Average Private Sector Wage
Brunswick→	81	\$42,500
Buncombe→	83	\$47,677
Cabarrus	89	\$43,687
Camden	93	\$41,972
Carteret	88	\$36,750
Chatham	99	\$41,638
Currituck	100	\$36,926
Durham	94	\$82,247
Henderson	91	\$43,698
Iredell	89	\$59,411
Johnston	86	\$44,150
Lincoln	95	\$45,011
Mecklenburg	84	\$75,907
Moore	91	\$46,471
New Hanover→	82	\$53,421
Orange	97	\$59,026
Pender	87	\$36,711
Transylvania	84	\$39,028
Union	96	\$49,129
Wake	98	\$68,317
North Carolina		\$57,926

The counties listed below moved to a more distressed Tier in 2022. Any new job creation or capital investment activity anticipated in these counties should be evaluated for discretionary incentive eligibility based on the new Tier designation.

- Chowan, Jones, Macon, Polk, and Watauga

Considerations

The North Carolina county development Tier designations and county average wage can have a significant effect on the evaluation of new projects creating jobs within a county that are seeking incentive benefits. Please reach out to the professionals listed below as they are monitoring these changes and will have more details about the designations and their effect on North Carolina's discretionary incentive programs. These programs include but are not limited to the Jobs Development Investment Grant, One North Carolina Fund, and Building Reuse and Building Demolition programs.

Get in touch

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