

# ECONOMIC OVERVIEW OF PONDERA COUNTY

## Labor Market, 2023

**Population:** 6,125  
**Labor Force:** 2,657  
**Employed:** 2,581  
**Unemployed:** 76  
**Unemployment Rate:** 2.9%  
 (Same as the Statewide Rate of 2.9%)

## Employment Growth

**181 jobs lost** since 2020, about 7% of total jobs.

## Income and Benefits

**\$79,051** average household income in 2022, ranking Pondera County the **27<sup>th</sup>** highest among all counties.

**92.6%** of population with health insurance coverage.

**9.8%** of households receiving SNAP benefits in last year.

**21.6%** of the population with income below the federal poverty level (above the state average of 12.4%).

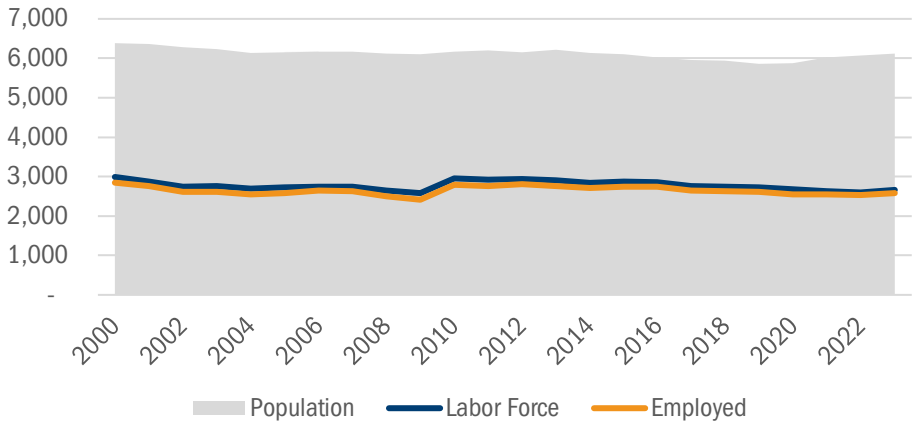
## Highest Paying Industries

Average Annual Wage, 2023

1. Wholesale Trade - \$71,590
2. Finance & Insurance - \$61,680
3. Utilities - \$60,700
4. Mining & Extraction - \$59,280
5. Information - \$57,270

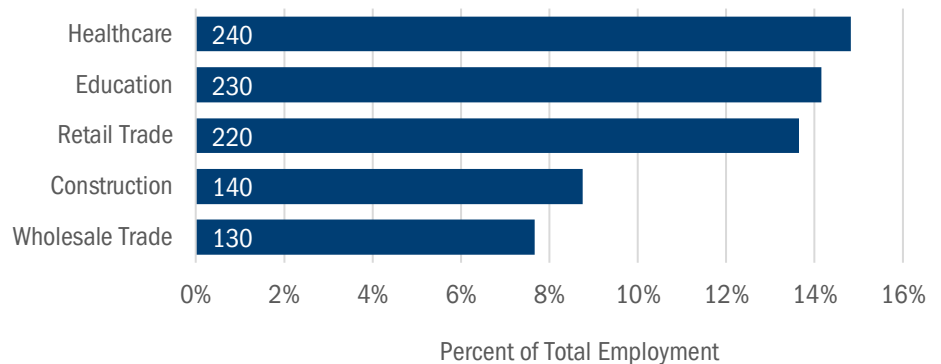
## Workforce Size in Pondera County

Employment, Labor Force, and Population



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Population total intercensal tables, Population and Housing Estimates Program, U.S. Census Bureau.

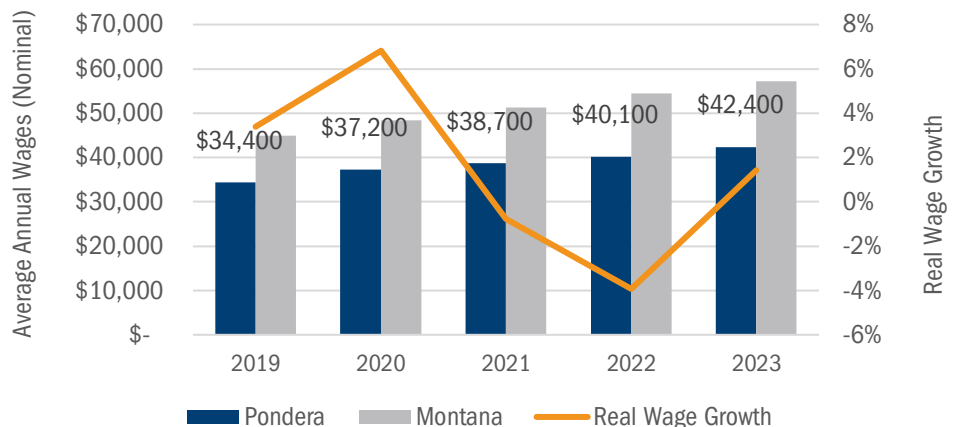
## Top Employing Industries, 2023



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Average Wage and Real Wage Growth

Comparison to Statewide Average



Source: U.S. BLS and Montana Department of Labor & Industry, QCEW and CPI-U. Wages rounded to nearest hundred.



Montana Department of  
**LABOR & INDUSTRY**

Governor Greg Gianforte  
 Commissioner Sarah Swanson

**Labor Force Participation**

**53.3%** of Pondera County’s population over 15 participates in the labor force, below the statewide rate of 63.0%.

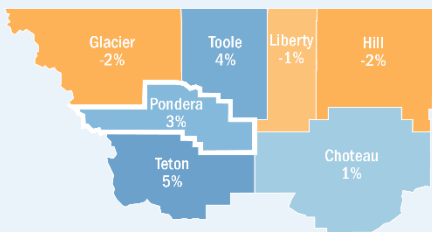
**70.2%** of Falon County’s prime working age population (25 to 54 years old) participates in the labor force, below the statewide rate of 84.2%.

**Decreasing in Pondera County**

Pondera County had **240 more people move out** than in from 2020 to 2023, about **2%** of the population.

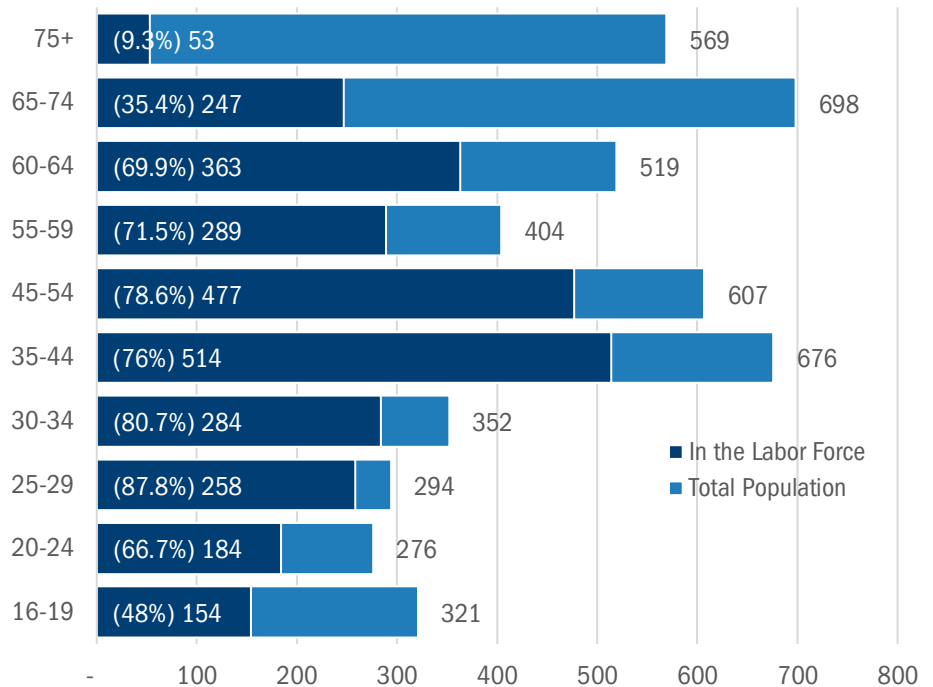
**16.5%** of workers in Pondera County **work from home**, greater than the statewide average of 10.6%.

**Net Migration as a Percent of the Population by County**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Resident Population Estimates, Estimated Components of Resident Population Change, and Rates of the Components of Population Changes for States and Counties: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023.

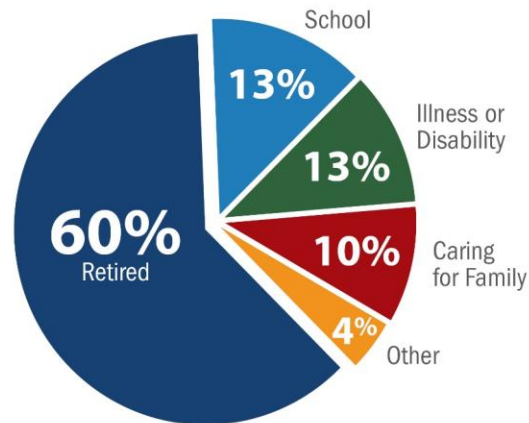
**Population by Age Group and Participation in Labor Force**



Source: Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022 5-Year Estimates. Labor force participation rates are in parentheses.

**Most People Not Working are Retired**

Reasons Not Participating in Montana Labor Force



Source: Current Population Survey (CPS), U.S. BLS and U.S. Census. MTDLI analysis of IPUMS CPS microdata for Montana for Jan through Dec 2023.

**Blackfeet Indian Reservation, 2023**

**Labor Force:** 4,137

**Employed:** 3,822

**Unemployment Rate:** 7.6%