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ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT**

*The public policy research arm of the State University of New York*



**NEWS**

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## **Despite Private Sector Growth, State and Local Government Employment Has Not Regained Jobs Lost to the Great Recession**

*Across the Nation, State and Local Governments  
Are Forced to Do More with Less*

Albany, NY—Today, the Rockefeller Institute of Government released a report showing that, across the country, state and local government job growth remains weak in comparison to strong private sector growth. Employing more than 19 million people, state and local governments account for nearly 13 percent of total employment for the nation. These jobs are essential for the services government delivers, such as education, public safety, health care, and social services.

Specifically, the Rockefeller Institute report found:

- Nationally, state and local government employment is 1.5 percent below its prior peak, while private sector employment is 6.4 percent above its prior peak.
- State government employment nationally is 2.5 percent below its peak level and local government employment is 1.3 percent below its peak level.
- State government non-education employment, for services such as corrections, hospitals and other health care, public welfare, and highways, has fared the worst among the government subsectors—currently, 5.5 percent below its peak even though the population has grown 6.9 percent over the same period.
- Local government education and non-education employment are 2.0 percent and 0.8 percent below their respective prior peaks, while elementary and secondary enrollment has risen by more than 2.0 percent during the same period.

- The only subsector that has grown is state government education employment for universities, colleges, and similar services; here employment is up 1.2 percent above the prior peak, but still far weaker than in previous economic recoveries.
- Although state and local government employment did not decline as much during the Great Recession as private sector employment, it has been recovering far more slowly and has not regained the jobs lost to the Great Recession.

"The report put together by Rockefeller Institute's Fiscal Studies Team, Lucy Dadayan and Don Boyd, shows that while the national economy has recovered from the Great Recession in many respects, state and local governments across the nation are clearly still feeling its effects. For many governments, this is forcing them to rethink operations, find efficiencies, and alternative ways to deliver services. The current trend in Washington to shift responsibilities back to localities and states will only exacerbate this problem," said Jim Malatras, president of the Rockefeller Institute of Government.

To read the *By The Numbers* brief, go to [www.rockinst.org/pdf/government\\_finance/2017-03-By-Numbers-Brief-no6.pdf](http://www.rockinst.org/pdf/government_finance/2017-03-By-Numbers-Brief-no6.pdf).

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