



Technology, manufacturing and logistics are among the sectors expected to bring the most jobs to Atlanta this year.

### **Atlanta to Add 140,000 Jobs This Year**

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By Michelle A. Samaad

For the first time in nearly 20 years, Atlanta is poised to add an estimated 140,000 jobs this year. The last time the city saw figures that high was in 1996 for the Summer Olympics.

Much of 2015's growth is expected to come from the manufacturing, logistics and office administration sectors, according to the Manpower Employment Outlook Survey released earlier this month. The quarterly barometer measures employers' intentions to increase or decrease the number of employees in their workforces during the next quarter.

The survey's results are based on interviews with 18,000 employers located in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, which includes the largest 100

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) based on the number of business establishments, according to ManpowerGroup, a national human resources recruiting firm.

Because of Atlanta's position as an international hub, logistics will be among the sectors set to experience high employment, said Deborah Martin, an Atlanta-based client account manager at ManpowerGroup.

Delta Air Lines, Atlanta's largest employer, is a major contributor to the logistics field with Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport consistently ranked as the busiest in the world.

"Also, several very large distribution centers have relocated or are expanding in the area," Martin said. "Many large businesses are relocating to or adding facilities to complement existing structures in Atlanta. The area is poised for growth."

Indeed, in January, Mercedes-Benz announced it would move its U.S. headquarters from New Jersey to Atlanta. The relocation is expected to bring 900 new jobs, according to the German car manufacturer. In March 2014, Verizon Wireless said it will add 430 new retail, IT and network jobs at its new call centers in Alpharetta and Milton, GA. The firm already employs nearly 6,000 staffers across the state.

Since 2011, more than a dozen major companies have either relocated or expanded their operations to Atlanta including General Motors, Porsche, Dell SecureWorks and mobile technology firm AirWatch, according to the Metro Atlanta Chamber.

Among Atlanta employers surveyed by Manpower, 25 percent said they plan to hire more employees from April through June. This number was offset by the two percent that planned to reduce payrolls, while 71 percent of employers expected to maintain current staff levels and two percent indicated they are not sure of their plans.

The latest figures come on the tail of a robust 2014 with Atlanta being ranked the No. 7 city in the nation for job growth, according to the Atlanta Housing Report, which tracks market and other local and regional economic trends. Net jobs jumped by 67,400 last year, which was up 2.6 percent over 2013's figures, the data showed.

While Atlanta is forecast to experience job growth in multiple job sectors, most of the activity will occur in the information technology, manufacturing and office administration personnel sectors, according to Kim Dixon, senior technical recruiter at Kyyba, a group of privately held companies that specialize in staff augmentation, application software and project solutions.

"This is happening for a couple of reasons. Atlanta has a couple major corporations moving their headquarters to the Metro Atlanta area. This means new jobs coming into

the Atlanta job market,” said Dixon, who is based in Atlanta. “The push to get more technology-based clients to Atlanta is contributing to the growth, as well.”

Add in lower gas prices and falling home interest rates and the job market will become even stronger this year, Dixon added.

On March 16, voters approved a \$250 million bond infrastructure initiative to improve Atlanta’s buildings, sidewalks, bridges, roads and provide funding for the city’s recreation centers and municipal buildings. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed and corporate backers said they are confident the effort will create more jobs.

The city of Atlanta is also continuing its efforts to woo even more technology firms. On Feb. 26, the Atlanta City Council approved an amendment of the Occupation Tax Ordinance, which will provide a tax exemption for new and emerging technology businesses.

According to the Reed’s office, citing data from the Technology Association of Georgia, the state’s technology sector led employment recovery, generating nearly 16,000 jobs over the past two years – more than any other sector – to reach 263,000 workers.

Georgia’s technology jobs also represented more than 20 percent of all new jobs created over a two year period. In 2012, the technology sector saw increasing numbers of workers and higher wages which pumped \$2 billion of new payroll spending into Georgia’s economy.