

INSIGHTS



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S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

Business Intelligence Department

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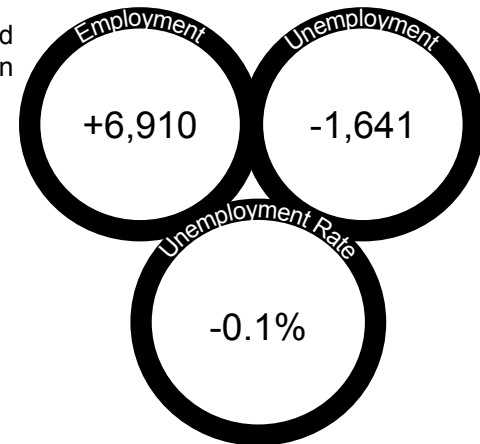
Employment Marks New Record in September

The number of people working in South Carolina set a new record in September, and unemployment reached its lowest level since February 2001, as the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2017 dropped to 3.9 percent from 4 percent in August.

The over-the-month change in the number of individuals working across the state increased by 6,910 to 2,232,795. The number of people unemployed declined 1,641 to 91,428, while the state's labor force increased 5,269 to 2,324,223 people.

Since September 2016, the labor force has grown by 26,586 with employment gains of 39,183. The level of unemployed decreased 12,597.

Nationally, the unemployment rate decreased from 4.4 percent in August to 4.2 percent in September.

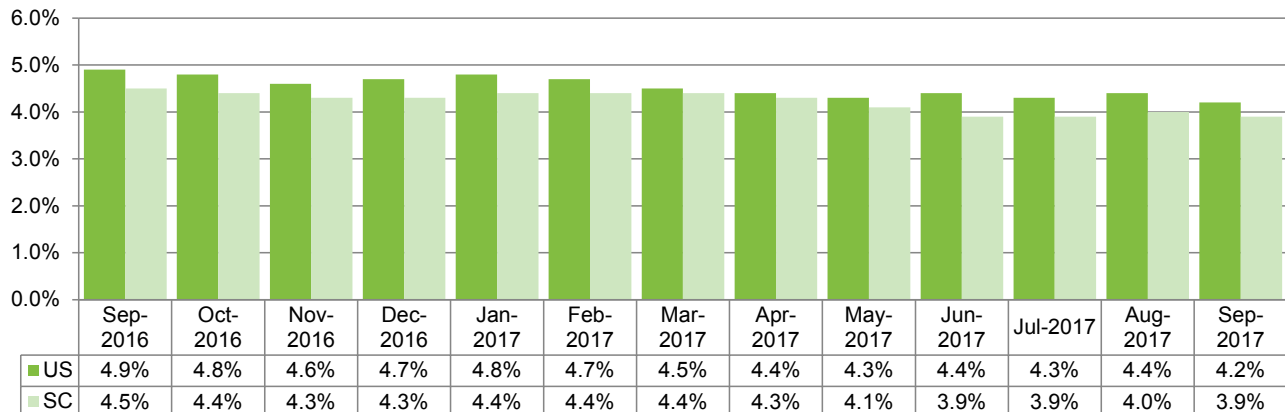


Economic Indicators

September - Seasonally Adjusted (SA)

| | United States | S.C. |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|
| Labor Force | 161,146,000 | 2,324,223 |
| Employed | 154,345,000 | 2,232,795 |
| Unemployed | 6,801,000 | 91,428 |
| Unemp. Rate | 4.2% | 3.9% |

South Carolina vs U.S. Unemployment Rate
September 2016 - September 2017



Insights is prepared in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The current month's estimates are preliminary, while all previous data are subject to revision. All estimates are projected from a first quarter 2016 benchmark. To subscribe to *Insights*, please email bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov or to provide feedback please click on the [BID Customer Feedback Form](#).

South Carolina ranked 23rd lowest of 50 states and D.C. in September

Unemployment rates were lower in September in 11 states, higher in four states and stable in 35 states, and the District of Columbia. Twenty-two states had jobless rate decreases from a year earlier, one state had an increase, and 27 states and the District had little or no change. In September, South Carolina ranked 23rd lowest out of 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Nonfarm payroll employment decreased in six states in September 2017, increased in five states, and was essentially unchanged in 39 states and the District of Columbia. Over the year, 28 states added nonfarm payroll jobs, and 22 states and the District were essentially unchanged. The largest percentage gains occurred in Nevada and Utah (+2.5 percent each), followed by Maryland (+2.4 percent) from a year ago.

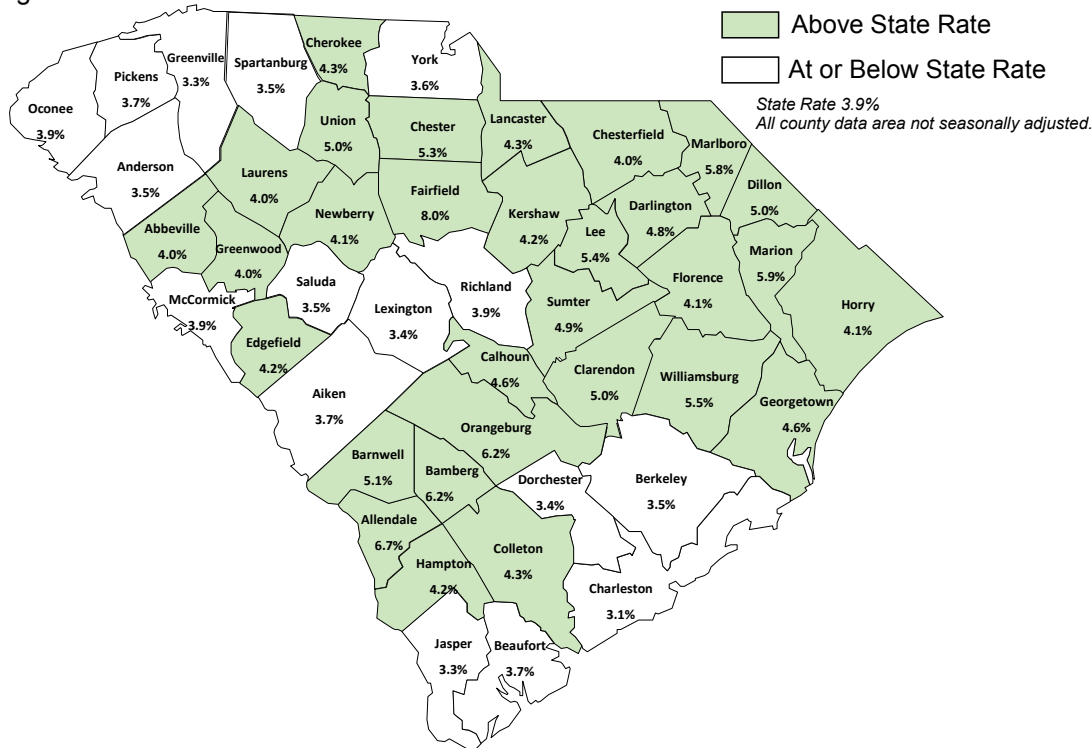
September unemployment rates by county

Not seasonally adjusted county unemployment rates fell in September, shadowing the not seasonally adjusted statewide unemployment rate.

Over the month, substantial employment gains were made in Spartanburg and Greenville counties.

Driven by seasonal factors related to tourism, declines in employment levels occurred in Horry and Beaufort counties. Additionally, notable employment declines were also seen in Sumter and Jasper counties.

Overall, county unemployment rates ranged from 8.0 percent in Fairfield County to 3.1 percent in Charleston County during the month.



| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| North Dakota | 2.4 |
| Colorado | 2.5 |
| Hawaii | 2.5 |
| New Hampshire | 2.7 |
| Idaho | 2.8 |
| Nebraska | 2.8 |
| Vermont | 2.9 |
| Tennessee | 3.0 |
| Iowa | 3.2 |
| South Dakota | 3.4 |
| Utah | 3.4 |
| Arkansas | 3.5 |
| Wisconsin | 3.5 |
| Maine | 3.7 |
| Minnesota | 3.7 |
| Virginia | 3.7 |
| Alabama | 3.8 |
| Florida | 3.8 |
| Indiana | 3.8 |
| Kansas | 3.8 |
| Maryland | 3.8 |
| Missouri | 3.8 |
| Massachusetts | 3.9 |
| Montana | 3.9 |
| South Carolina | 3.9 |
| Texas | 4.0 |
| Wyoming | 4.0 |
| North Carolina | 4.1 |
| Oregon | 4.2 |
| Rhode Island | 4.2 |
| United States | 4.2 |
| Michigan | 4.3 |
| Georgia | 4.5 |
| Oklahoma | 4.5 |
| Connecticut | 4.6 |
| Washington | 4.6 |
| Arizona | 4.7 |
| New Jersey | 4.7 |
| Pennsylvania | 4.8 |
| Delaware | 4.9 |
| Nevada | 4.9 |
| New York | 4.9 |
| Illinois | 5.0 |
| California | 5.1 |
| Louisiana | 5.1 |
| West Virginia | 5.1 |
| Kentucky | 5.2 |
| Mississippi | 5.2 |
| Ohio | 5.3 |
| New Mexico | 6.2 |
| District of Columbia | 6.5 |
| Alaska | 7.2 |

September 2017

| Highest County Unemployment Rates | | Lowest County Unemployment Rates | |
|-----------------------------------|------|----------------------------------|------|
| Fairfield | 8.0% | Charleston | 3.1% |
| Allendale | 6.7% | Greenville | 3.3% |
| Bamberg | 6.2% | Jasper | 3.3% |
| Orangeburg | 6.2% | Dorchester | 3.4% |
| Marion | 5.9% | Lexington | 3.4% |

September 2017

| Economic Indicators | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Average Hours & Earnings | | |
| | United States (SA) | S.C. (Unadj.) |
| Manufacturing | | |
| Avg. Weekly Earnings | \$1,032.57 | \$783.13 |
| Avg. Weekly Hours | 40.7 | 41.7 |
| Avg. Weekly Wage | \$26.68 | \$18.78 |

South Carolina seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment trend for September

In September 2017, seasonally adjusted, nonfarm payrolls declined by -4,500 over the month to a level of 2,091,400.

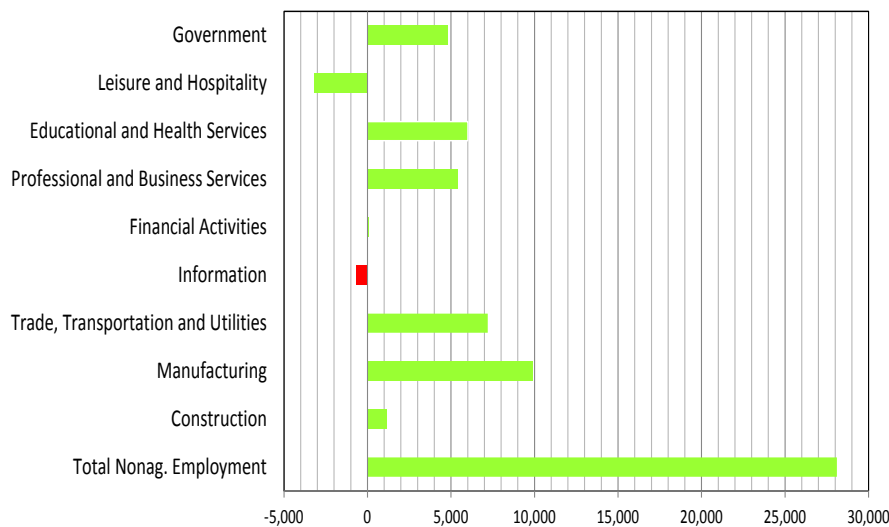
Increases in employment was primarily due to growth in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+4,300). During September, additional job counts occurred in Construction (+2,300); Manufacturing (+1,300); and Education and Health Services (+500). Information remained steady.

Industries reporting declines during the same period were the Professional and Business Services (-4,300); Leisure and Hospitality (-3,200); Other Services (-2,600); Government (-2,200); and Financial Activities (-500) sectors.

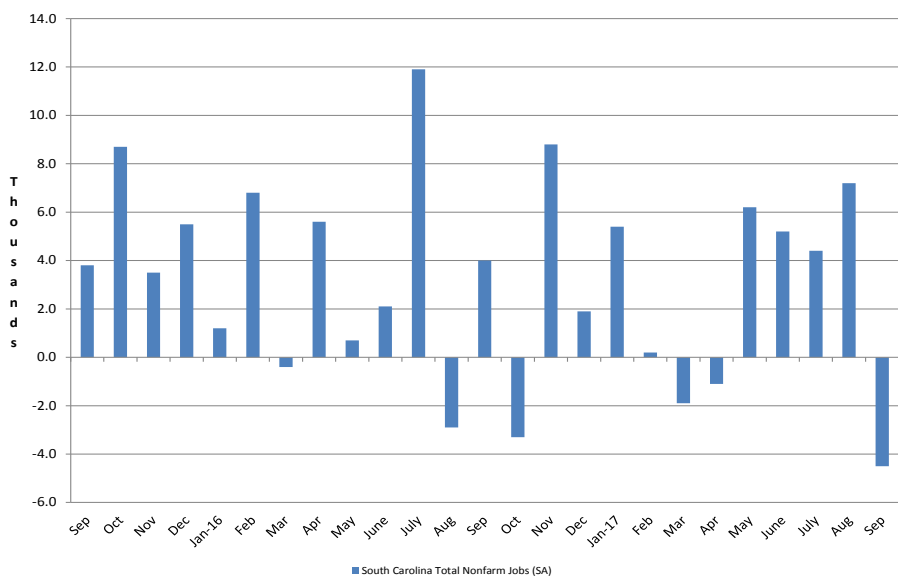
From September 2016 to September 2017, South Carolina's economy has added 28,100 seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs with the largest increases in the Manufacturing (+9,900); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+7,200); Education and Health Services (+6,000); Professional and Business Services (+5,400); Government (+4,800); and Construction (+1,200). A slight job gain was seen in Financial Activities (+100). Declines were reported in the Leisure and Hospitality (-3,200); Other Services (-2,700); and Information (-700) sectors.

Every Metropolitan Statistical Areas' seasonally adjusted, total nonfarm payroll saw an over-the-month decrease, except Myrtle Beach (+1,700). Job losses were reported in Columbia (-2,300), followed by Greenville (-900), Sumter (-700), Florence (-300), Charleston (-100) and Spartanburg (-100).

**South Carolina Job Changes by Industry
September 2016 - September 2017 (SA)**



**SC Total Nonfarm Jobs
2015 - 2017**



**Economic Indicators (September 2017)
Top Job Growth by MSA (SA)**

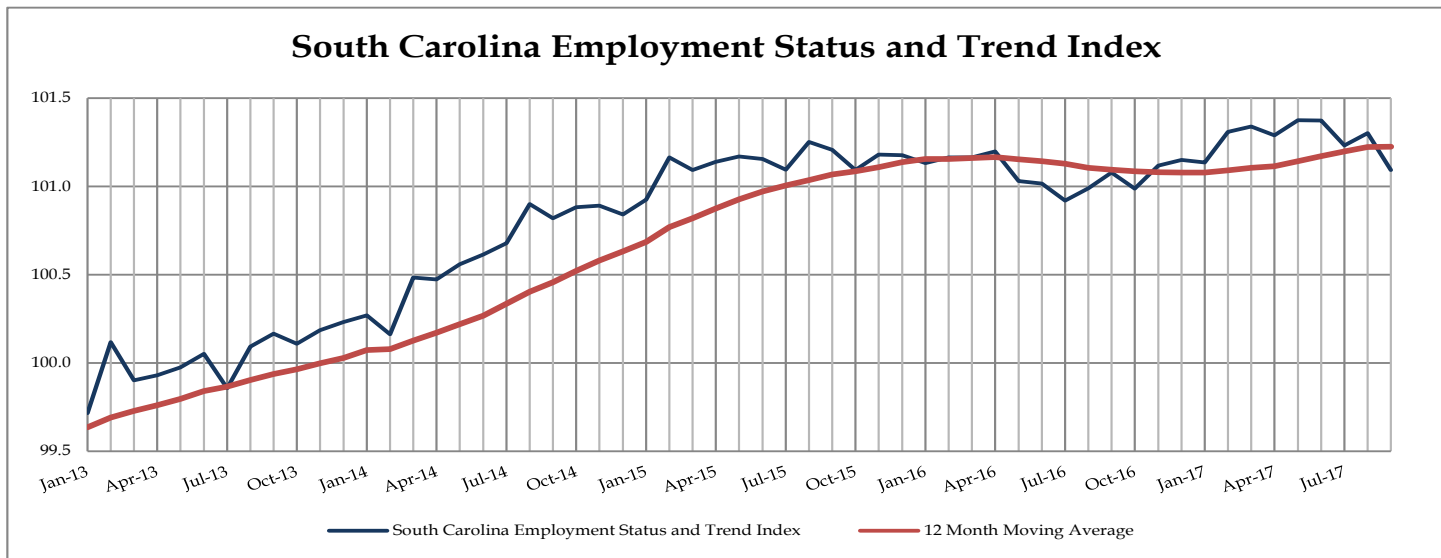
| MSA | Over Month % Change | Over Year % Change |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Charleston MSA | -0.03% | 1.20% |
| Greenville MSA | -0.22% | 1.10% |
| Florence MSA | -0.34% | 1.25% |
| Columbia MSA | -0.58% | -0.55% |

To see the monthly not seasonally adjusted data series, go to www.SCWorkforceInfo.com (Employment and Wage Data section)

Employment Changes by County July 2017 through September 2017

| County | Employment | | | Net Change From | |
|--------------|------------|----------|----------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | Sep 2017 | Aug 2017 | Jul 2017 | Aug '17 - Sep '17 | Jul '17 - Aug '17 |
| Abbeville | 10,059 | 10,016 | 9,977 | 43 | 39 |
| Aiken | 72,964 | 73,231 | 73,523 | -267 | -292 |
| Allendale | 2,521 | 2,546 | 2,562 | -25 | -16 |
| Anderson | 86,981 | 86,444 | 86,430 | 537 | 14 |
| Bamberg | 4,945 | 4,970 | 4,982 | -25 | -12 |
| Barnwell | 8,000 | 8,013 | 8,020 | -13 | -7 |
| Beaufort | 70,342 | 72,394 | 73,593 | -2,052 | -1,199 |
| Berkeley | 93,631 | 93,642 | 94,564 | -11 | -922 |
| Calhoun | 6,594 | 6,590 | 6,720 | 4 | -130 |
| Charleston | 199,799 | 199,853 | 201,750 | -54 | -1,897 |
| Cherokee | 22,887 | 22,775 | 22,683 | 112 | 92 |
| Chester | 13,167 | 13,125 | 13,120 | 42 | 5 |
| Chesterfield | 21,481 | 21,497 | 21,514 | -16 | -17 |
| Clarendon | 12,360 | 12,431 | 12,492 | -71 | -61 |
| Colleton | 16,639 | 16,640 | 16,670 | -1 | -30 |
| Darlington | 28,744 | 28,837 | 29,087 | -93 | -250 |
| Dillon | 12,361 | 12,426 | 12,482 | -65 | -56 |
| Dorchester | 72,822 | 72,847 | 73,569 | -25 | -722 |
| Edgefield | 10,455 | 10,531 | 10,602 | -76 | -71 |
| Fairfield | 9,498 | 9,478 | 9,660 | 20 | -182 |
| Florence | 63,307 | 63,332 | 63,732 | -25 | -400 |
| Georgetown | 24,721 | 24,901 | 25,055 | -180 | -154 |
| Greenville | 240,077 | 238,514 | 238,414 | 1,563 | 100 |
| Greenwood | 30,543 | 30,460 | 30,381 | 83 | 79 |
| Hampton | 7,979 | 8,118 | 8,203 | -139 | -85 |
| Horry | 136,281 | 140,051 | 143,799 | -3,770 | -3,748 |
| Jasper | 11,651 | 11,974 | 12,155 | -323 | -181 |
| Kershaw | 28,052 | 27,987 | 28,519 | 65 | -532 |
| Lancaster | 36,748 | 36,610 | 36,572 | 138 | 38 |
| Laurens | 29,403 | 29,252 | 29,267 | 151 | -15 |
| Lee | 6,180 | 6,210 | 6,271 | -30 | -61 |
| Lexington | 142,692 | 142,193 | 144,769 | 499 | -2,576 |
| McCormick | 3,319 | 3,316 | 3,307 | 3 | 9 |
| Marion | 11,989 | 12,071 | 12,157 | -82 | -86 |
| Marlboro | 8,761 | 8,755 | 8,740 | 6 | 15 |
| Newberry | 18,633 | 18,714 | 18,870 | -81 | -156 |
| Oconee | 33,733 | 33,675 | 33,635 | 58 | 40 |
| Orangeburg | 33,436 | 33,437 | 33,485 | -1 | -48 |
| Pickens | 54,926 | 54,565 | 54,532 | 361 | 33 |
| Richland | 193,428 | 192,450 | 195,817 | 978 | -3,367 |
| Saluda | 8,580 | 8,665 | 8,894 | -85 | -229 |
| Spartanburg | 140,630 | 139,443 | 138,969 | 1,187 | 474 |
| Sumter | 41,445 | 41,824 | 42,384 | -379 | -560 |
| Union | 11,348 | 11,253 | 11,216 | 95 | 37 |
| Williamsburg | 12,010 | 12,027 | 12,040 | -17 | -13 |
| York | 128,003 | 127,380 | 127,134 | 623 | 246 |

South Carolina Employment Status and Trend Index Falls



The S.C. Employment Status and Trend Index (SCESTI), an aggregate of five labor-market indicators, fell in September 2017, dropping to 101.09 from an August revised value of 101.30. The Index declined below its 12-month moving average, which increased one-hundredth of a point to 101.23 in September.

All five underlying labor-market components moved in a negative direction in September. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance increased from an August average of 2,179 per week to a September average of 2,238 per week. The Conference Board’s Consumer Confidence Index fell by 0.6 points from August’s revised value of 120.4 to 119.8 in September. The Conference Board’s Employment Trends Index declined slightly in September to 132.74 points from an August revised value of 132.78. The Conference Board’s Help Wanted Online data, which tracks the number of available job openings posted online, fell by 1,810 in September to 55,195 from 57,005 in August. The Bureau of Labor Statistic’s Weekly Manufacturing Hours data showed a decline in production hours in September with 41.7 average hours per week from August’s revised value of 43.5 average hours per week.

SCESTI has increased from its year-ago value of 101.08 in September 2016. With the Index dropping below its 12-month moving average, this signifies an uncertain direction for employment change over the next several months.

South Carolina Tourism: Another season wraps up

Billions of dollars are poured into the state's economy by travel and tourism. In February 2017, South Carolina held its Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Travel in Spartanburg. The latest figures indicate South Carolina tourism industry hit a record high \$20 billion in 2015, an impressive 6.1 percent. This figure is up from 2014, and it generates \$1.5 billion in tax revenue for state and local schools, hospitals and housing. For more than six years, the travel industry has experienced continuous growth.

Recent hurricane seasons demonstrated that tourism, particularly in areas such as Myrtle Beach, Charleston and Hilton Head, which has the potential to generate more than 60 percent of revenue annually, saw significant cancellations. Hotels experienced low occupancy totals predominantly along coastal areas. Tourism industry is an important economic driver and creates jobs and introduces visitors to our natural resources, rich heritage and Southern culture. Job creation is exhibited in the food services, public transportation, lodging, auto transportation, recreation and amusement, retail and travel planning industries.

South Carolina is easily accessible to major interstates and each thoroughfare passes through a number of the state's major cities. Three main tourist destinations in the state are Myrtle Beach, listed as the ninth-fastest growing region in the nation; Charleston, bursting with lots of charm and hospitality; and Hilton Head Island, surrounded by miles of pristine beaches and enriched with some of the most luxurious accommodations in the country.

Beaches are not the only destination vacation spot in the state. Greenville currently gets more than 5.3 million visitors a year. Whether the plan is a quick getaway or an adventure of exploring the great outdoors, Greenville is the perfect destination.

Spartanburg is conveniently located alongside major interstates and accessible from Columbia, Atlanta, Asheville and Charlotte. This city offers plenty of outdoor fun, arts and spectacular scenic views. Visitors to Spartanburg, nestled in the foothills of the gorgeous Blue Ridge Mountains, have spent an average of \$531, generating more than \$17.4 million in spending. President of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Allen Smith said, "these numbers further underscore the importance tourism has on the local economy."

The state's parks, beaches and recreation are the major attractions which saw an all-time high in fiscal year 2016 with revenue increasing more than \$28 million (4.26 percent). As South Carolina completes construction on several projects, South Carolina state parks will continue to provide quality experiences to its visitors and encourage greater tourism spending for state residents and visitors.