



Ranking America's Fifty States: A Comparison in Graphic Detail

Michael D. Dulberger

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This book provides a compendium of stimulating facts about the states, presented graphically, and covering a wide array of topics including demographic, economic, environmental, health, and crime variables. Hundreds of attributes are compared side-by-side, from life expectancy to murder rates; from fourth-grade math proficiency scores to the number of food stamp recipients, and from illicit drug use to the rate of firearm background checks per state.

Through meticulous organization and use of graphic formats, retrieval of specific information the reader may seek has been greatly facilitated. In addition to the graphs comparing the fifty states for each individual metric, a summary table is provided at the beginning of each chapter along with highlights of pertinent data found in the chapter.

While we are one, indivisible nation, at the same time Americans are as diverse from state-to-state as many nations are when compared with other nations. For example: in 2010, 95 percent of Vermont residents were white compared with only 24 percent of residents in Hawaii and 1-in-12 New York residents were Jewish compared with less than 1-in-1,000 Arkansas residents. In Texas, 464 prisoners have been executed over the past 35 years while 16 states have not executed any.

More interesting facts found in ranking *America's Fifty States* include:

- Alaska ranked highest or lowest in 31 metrics—more than any other state—followed by Mississippi at 25 and Texas at 20.
- Alaska is the only state that does not have a state income tax or a state sales tax. It had the highest revenues per capita from taxes levied on businesses for the extraction of oil and gas and receives the highest federal aid per capita. Alaska had the lowest percent of households with annual income below \$15,000.
- Over the past decade, over 100 million firearms background checks have been performed nationally, with the highest rate in Utah and the lowest rate in New Jersey
- Mississippi had the lowest personal income per capita, median household income, gross domestic product per capita, and lowest male life expectancy rate. Additionally, it had the highest food stamp recipient rate, rate of persons below the poverty level, and infant mortality rate.
- Florida had the highest rate of identity theft victims in 2010 followed by Arizona, California, and Georgia.
- Texas had the most extreme environmental metrics including the highest major disaster, storm, and wildfire emergency declarations. Texas also had the highest summer air temperature and carbon dioxide emissions level. In addition to extreme environmental metrics, Texas also had the highest property crime rate and high school dropout rate.

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