Income Growth in Manatee County, Florida

A Data Summary (2014–2024)

May 2026

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (SAIPE), Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), FRED/St. Louis Fed, MIT Living Wage Calculator

Median Household Income

The following data comes from the U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program, tracking median household income for Manatee County.

Year	Median HH Income	Year-over-Year Change	YoY %
2014	$51,673	—	—
2015	$50,728	–$945	–1.8%
2016	$51,770	+$1,042	+2.1%
2017	$55,189	+$3,419	+6.6%
2018	$59,587	+$4,398	+8.0%
2019	$64,151	+$4,564	+7.7%
2020	$63,328	–$823	–1.3%
2021	$67,929	+$4,601	+7.3%
2022	$72,176	+$4,247	+6.3%
2023	$79,213	+$7,037	+9.7%
2024	$81,174	+$1,961	+2.5%

10-Year Growth (2014→2024): +$29,501 (57.1%)

5-Year Growth (2019→2024): +$17,023 (26.5%)

Per Capita Personal Income

Per capita personal income (from the Bureau of Economic Analysis) captures a broader picture — including investment income, retirement distributions, and transfer payments — not just wages.

Year	Per Capita Income	Year-over-Year Change	YoY %
2014	$41,892	—	—
2015	$44,453	+$2,561	+6.1%
2016	$45,106	+$653	+1.5%
2017	$47,077	+$1,971	+4.4%
2018	$48,786	+$1,709	+3.6%
2019	$52,457	+$3,671	+7.5%
2020	$54,272	+$1,815	+3.5%
2021	$58,345	+$4,073	+7.5%
2022	$61,327	+$2,982	+5.1%
2023	$65,700	+$4,373	+7.1%
2024	$68,505	+$2,805	+4.3%

10-Year Growth (2014→2024): +$26,613 (63.5%)

5-Year Growth (2019→2024): +$16,048 (30.6%)

Per capita income growing faster than household income suggests that wealth from investments, retirement accounts, and property gains — driven partly by affluent retirees relocating to the area — is disproportionately boosting aggregate income figures.

Context & the Affordability Gap

How Manatee County Compares

Metric	Manatee County	Florida	United States
Median HH Income (2024)	$81,174	~$78,500	~$80,600
Per Capita Income (2024)	$68,505	—	~$66,000
Employed Persons (Dec 2025)	189,632	—	—
Unemployment Rate (Feb 2026)	5.1%	~4.2%	~4.0%
Top-Earning Age Group	45–64: $94,224	—	—

Key Observations

- **Strong nominal growth**: Median household income rose 57% over 10 years — outpacing the national average over the same period.
- **2024 slowdown**: Growth decelerated sharply to +2.5% after a +9.7% surge in 2023. Factoring in inflation, real income gains were essentially flat in 2024.
- **Housing outpaced income**: Median home values (~$390K–$400K) require roughly $100K+ household income to afford — above the county median of $81K.
- **Wealth concentration**: Per capita income ($68.5K) running far above the household median signals that affluent retirees and investors inflate aggregate figures while many working-age residents fall behind.
- **Rising unemployment**: At 5.1% (Feb 2026), Manatee County's unemployment rate exceeds the statewide average, suggesting some softening in the local labor market.
- **COVID dip and rebound**: A brief income decline in 2020 (–1.3%) was followed by strong rebounds in 2021–2023, partly driven by pandemic-era migration from higher-cost states.

Bottom Line

Manatee County's income growth over the past decade has been impressive in absolute terms — but it masks a growing divide. Aggregate stats are boosted by wealthy newcomers and retirees, while working-age households face a widening gap between what they earn and what housing costs. The sharp deceleration in 2024, rising unemployment, and persistently elevated home prices suggest the affordability challenge is intensifying, not easing.

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