

Targeted Employment Areas as Defined by the EB-5 Investor Visa Program (Updated March 2012)

The lists below identify areas in the State of Florida that currently qualify as Targeted Employment Areas (TEAs) as defined by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) EB-5 Investor Visa Program. The definition of a TEA is: **1.** A rural area or **2.** A non-rural area that has experienced high unemployment (150.0 percent of the national average unemployment rate during a comparable 12-month period).

Rural areas are defined as those areas not located within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or within a city or town with a population of 20,000 or more. Areas in Florida that qualify as rural areas under this provision include:

Bradford County	Jackson County
Calhoun County	Lafayette County
Citrus County	Levy County
Columbia County	Liberty County
DeSoto County	Madison County
Dixie County	Monroe County (excluding Key West City)
Franklin County	Okeechobee County
Glades County	Putnam County
Gulf County	Sumter County
Hamilton County	Suwannee County
Hardee County	Taylor County
Hendry County	Union County
Highlands County	Walton County
Holmes County	Washington County

High unemployment areas are defined as non-rural areas (either entire MSAs; component counties of multicounty MSAs; or cities with populations of 20,000 or more) with unemployment rates at least 150.0 percent higher than the national average for the most recent calendar year available. For calendar year 2011, the national unemployment rate averaged 8.9 percent. Therefore, a non-rural area qualifies as a high unemployment area if its 2011 annual average rate was at least 13.4 percent. Areas in Florida that qualify as high unemployment areas under this provision include:

Palm Coast MSA (Flagler County)—14.1 percent

Hernando County—13.4 percent

Hialeah City (in Miami-Dade County)—14.1 percent

Miami Gardens City (in Miami-Dade County)—14.8 percent

Fort Pierce City (in St. Lucie County)—15.8 percent

The Labor Market Statistics (LMS) Center can provide unemployment estimates for smaller geographies such as Census tracts to determine if they qualify as TEAs by request. LMS is the agency authorized to certify TEAs in Florida and can provide certification letters by request. Please note:

- A state-issued TEA designation is not required for areas specifically listed above.
- State-issued TEA designations are not binding on USCIS and the final decision to accept or reject state-issued TEA designations is at the discretion of USCIS.
- Requests for TEA designation letters should be one of the last steps in the EB-5 application process to insure that the latest available annual unemployment estimates are used.

If you have questions or require additional information about the TEA status of an area, please contact Susanna Patterson (susanna.patterson@deo.myflorida.com) at (850) 245-7268 or Demetria McMillan-Rollins (demetria.mcmillan-rollins@deo.myflorida.com) at (850) 245-7218.

More information about the EB-5 Investor Visa Program can be found on the USCIS website (www.uscis.gov).