

PENNSYLVANIA

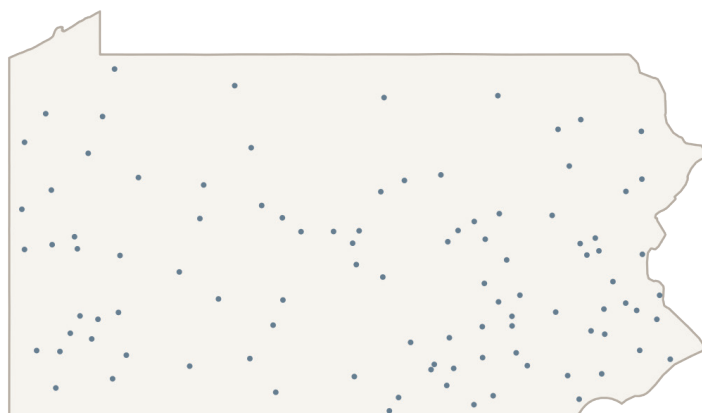
According to the 2022 Pennsylvania Aviation Economic Impact Study, general aviation airports in Pennsylvania support over \$1.5 billion in economic output each year.

Aviation by the Numbers

According to FAA data, Pennsylvania is home to 99 public-use general aviation airports, 21,730 pilots, and 6,221 registered aircraft.

Number of Jobs

According to the 2022 Pennsylvania Aviation Economic Impact Study, general aviation airports in Pennsylvania support over 8,100 jobs and sustain a payroll of over \$581 million.



Economic Impact

According to the same study, general aviation airports in Pennsylvania support over \$1.5 billion in economic output each year.

According to FAA data, Pennsylvania is home to 92 repair stations, 28 FAA-approved pilot schools, 9,077 student pilots, and 3,564 flight instructors.

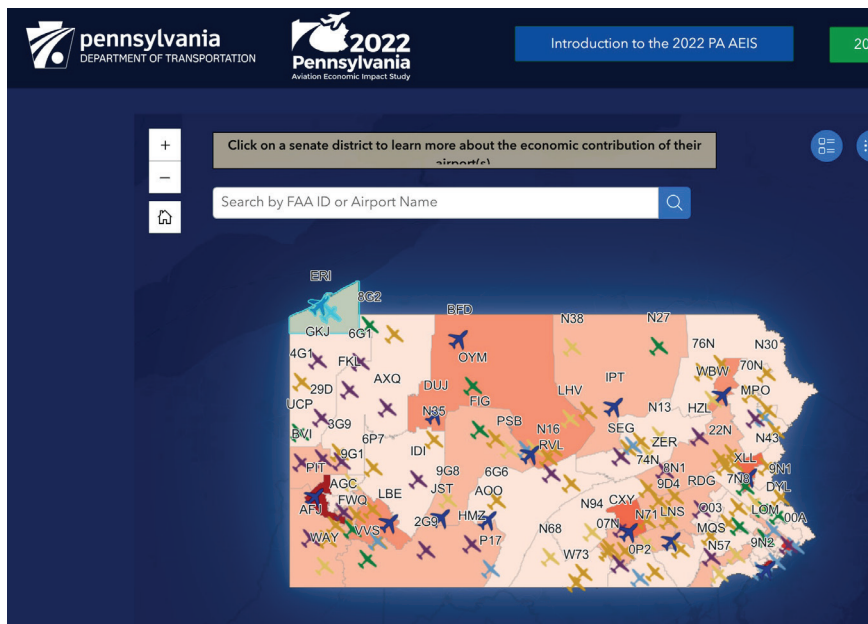
In addition, there are 75 fixed-base operators in the state, according to the AC-U-KWIK directory.

According to the University Aviation Association, flight departments in Pennsylvania include Community College of Allegheny County in West Mifflin, Community College of Beaver County in Monaca, Edinboro University in Edinboro, Gannon University in Erie, Lehigh Carbon Community College in Allentown, Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, and Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics in Pittsburgh.

Pennsylvania: Measuring Economic Impact

State aviation economic impact studies are typically built to establish a snapshot: how many jobs airports support, how much payroll they generate, and how that activity moves through the wider economy. Pennsylvania offers a case study in what happens after publication.

The Bureau of Aviation's last comprehensive study dated to 2016. Timing mattered as much as age; the Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee was simultaneously conducting the Pennsylvania Aviation System Strategic Investment Plan, evaluating the system's capital funding needs. Running both at once let the Bureau pair the arguments: here is what aviation contributes, and here is what it requires. The resulting 2022 Pennsylvania Aviation Economic Impact Study measured the contribution of 122 public-use airports across two base years, 2019 for typical conditions and 2020 to capture pandemic disruption.



Source: PA Department of Transportation | Bureau of Aviation

What distinguishes Pennsylvania is what the Bureau built from the findings. PennDOT converted the study into a GIS story map, letting users search economic impact by county or by state senate district. The district cut is the pointed one: 40 of Pennsylvania's 50 senate districts contain at least one airport, most of those contain several, and one holds nine, so a senator voting on aviation funding can see what the airports in their own district contribute. A companion calculator then lets any public-use airport estimate how changes in its activity would affect employment, payroll, and output, using the statewide study as a baseline and generating a printable summary the airport can take into a conversation.

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PennDOT and FAA representatives launched the calculator in June 2024 at New Garden Flying Field in Chester County. The setting made the point: the airport had just completed a nearly \$1 million terminal expansion supported by federal and state funding, the kind of investment the calculator is meant to help airports account for.

The numbers are now advancing local decisions. At Reading Regional Airport, officials have cited roughly \$78 million in annual economic contributions while making the case for the airport's importance to Berks County, including as the airport broke ground on a roughly \$20 million program of new hangars and supporting infrastructure, its largest capital project since the Second World War.

The Bureau's own lesson is about the tools rather than the study. Data earns its keep when stakeholders and the public, particularly people unfamiliar with aviation, can find themselves in it. Tools that are easy to use, visually clear, and connected to a user's own circumstances are what turn a one-time study into something that keeps paying back the investment.



Source: PA Department of Transportation | Bureau of Aviation

"The Pennsylvania Aviation Economic Impact Study has been instrumental in demonstrating the vital role our airports play in driving statewide economic growth," said Anthony J. McCloskey, P.E., Director of the PennDOT Bureau of Aviation. "Its clear, data-driven findings have strengthened support for increased airport funding and provided decision-makers with the evidence needed to prioritize long-term investment in Pennsylvania's aviation system."