



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2022

Contact: DCEO.Media@illinois.gov

Illinois Emerges as Regional and National Leader in Startup Creation in 2021

Illinois Top State for Startup Creation in the Midwest in 2021, 6th Highest Nationally; Illinois is the Largest State to Rank in the Top Ten for Startup Growth in the Nation

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) today highlighted recently-released data from the [Business Formation Statistics Report](#) that shows Illinois is leading the Midwest, and is among the top ten states nationally, in business startups - in addition to reaching the highest recorded number of business startups. Highlights include:

Illinois Highlights:

- In 2021, **198,827** business startups were created in Illinois, which is an increase from **170,400** in 2020
- In 2021, Illinois recorded its highest-ever number of business startups since the data was first reported in 2004.
- Illinois has **69 percent** more business startups in 2021 compared to pre-pandemic levels in 2019 (198,827 compared to 117,392). From 2019 to 2020 there was also a **45 percent** increase in business startups (117,392 to 170,400).

Regional Highlights:

- In 2021, Illinois had the highest number of business startups in the Midwest (as defined by the Census bureau), with 44,000 more business startups than the closest ranked state (Ohio, 154,818).
- Illinois also had the highest *growth* in business startups (69 percent) in the Midwest between 2019-2021.

National Highlights:

- In 2021, Illinois had the 6th highest number of business startups in 2021 (behind FL, CA, NY, TX, & GA).
- Illinois ranks eighth in the nation in business startup growth, from pre-pandemic levels in 2019 to 2021 (behind MS, GA, SC, LA, AL, WY, DE); it is the largest state to rank in the top ten for growth in the nation.

- This rate of growth in business startups from pre-pandemic levels in 2019 to 2021 is the 8th-highest in the country, highest in the Midwest, and 2nd-highest among the 20 largest states (behind Georgia).

“Illinois’ prowess in attracting and growing new businesses is a testament to the power of a state that balances its budgets, provides fiscal stability for entrepreneurs, supports families, and builds a firewall around the rights of the people who call her home,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “With yet another record-breaking year under our belt, Illinois kicks off 2022 with a message for the world: we’re back and open for business.”

“Governor Pritzker has prioritized Illinois’ workforce and economy – and it shows: businesses in Illinois are launching in record numbers,” **said Sylvia I. Garcia, Acting DCEO Director**. “From innovative tax incentives for new businesses, to small business centers designed to support up-and-coming entrepreneurs, Illinois remains committed to investing in proven programs that spur innovation, create jobs and boost our economy.”

Governor Pritzker's 5-year plan for economic growth offers a blueprint for creating jobs, boosting investment in underserved communities, and leveraging growth in regional industry clusters. Key programs that support business growth include:

- **[Advantage Illinois](#)**: Advantage Illinois is designed to enable small businesses to obtain medium to long-term financing, in the form of low-interest loans.
- **[Angel Tax Credits](#)**: Angel tax credits encourage investment in innovative, early-stage companies to help companies obtain the working capital needed to further the growth of their company in Illinois. Investors in new companies can receive a state tax credit equal to 25% of their investment (up to \$2 million).
- **[Illinois Small Business Development Centers \(SBDCs\)](#)**: Through SBDCs small businesses receive technical assistance and other support, including helping entrepreneurs looking to launch new businesses.
- **[Economic Development for a Growing Economy \(EDGE\) program](#)**: Illinois’ EDGE program provides annual corporate tax credits to qualifying businesses which support job creation, capital investment and improve the standard of living for all Illinois residents.

For more information on the ways in which DCEO supports small businesses and startups in Illinois, please visit **[DCEO's website](#)**.

#