Most Uneven Unemployment Spread in TN Metro — ALEX Intelligence 2026

1.4-Point Unemployment Gap in Knoxville

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THE DATA

1.4

Spread in County Unemployment Rate Across the Market, in Points (July 2026)

The gap between Morgan County's 4.2% unemployment and Sevier County's 2.8% reveals deep structural divergence within the Knoxville metro.

This 1.4-point spread—measured at the county level across East Tennessee—reflects more than just cyclical variation; it signals entrenched disparities in economic infrastructure, industry mix, and workforce mobility. Morgan County, with the highest rate, remains anchored in traditional sectors with limited diversification, while Sevier County benefits from tourism and service-sector stability. This divergence is not incidental—it shapes where capital, talent, and development flow.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, July 2026 (county, seasonally unadjusted) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-16-knoxville-within-county-unemployment

01

Uneven Growth Favors Resilience

For real estate investors, this means that market-wide averages obscure critical differences. A home in Sevier County may benefit from sustained demand, while properties in Morgan County could see delayed appreciation unless policy intervention closes the gap. The market's strength lies not in uniformity, but in its ability to absorb stress in some counties while others thrive.

02

Policy Levers Can Close the Gap

For real estate, this means that the next wave of development may not come from high-growth centers alone, but from strategic investment in underperforming counties. The market is not just about where people are today, but where they can be tomorrow. The most impactful real estate decisions will be those that anticipate this shift—not just react to it.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

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