

Cities Across the U.S. Offer Cash and Incentives to Attract New Residents

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— Categories: Real Estate



A growing number of cities and towns across the United States are offering financial incentives to attract new residents, aiming to revitalize local economies and address population decline. Programs range from cash grants to home-buying assistance and even free land, reflecting how municipalities are competing for people in a changing work and housing landscape.

Tulsa, Oklahoma, is among the most recognized examples, continuing its program to pay remote workers \$10,000 to relocate. The initiative includes travel reimbursement and credits for temporary stays to help individuals experience the city before committing. Since its launch in 2018, the program has brought in over 1,400 new residents, demonstrating how locally driven solutions can increase spending and expand the tax base without heavy federal intervention.

Topeka, Kansas, is also targeting newcomers with up to \$15,000 in incentives for those purchasing a home and support for renters working remotely. Even small businesses are participating, with some employers offering bonuses to employees who move into designated areas, highlighting a private-sector push to stimulate economic life in less dense regions rather than relying on centralized programs.

West Virginia has introduced a program offering as much as \$12,000 to people willing to relocate to cities like Morgantown. Participants must be employed remotely and agree to live there for a minimum of two years. Along with cash, the package often includes coworking memberships and access to outdoor activities.

Small towns are joining the competition. Belleville, Kansas, offers up to \$35,000 in construction grants for new home builds, while Bemidji, Minnesota, provides free internet for a year and coworking access to remote professionals. Noblesville, Indiana, has tailored its incentives, offering \$5,000 grants, wellness stipends and workspace benefits to attract higher-income earners.

Jackson, Michigan, is focusing on home ownership by offering up to \$25,000 in down payment assistance for buyers in specific

developments. Hamilton, Ohio, takes a different approach by targeting recent graduates with student loan repayment incentives of up to \$15,000 per year, hoping to draw skilled young professionals into its workforce.

Even rural counties are participating. Parts of eastern Kentucky are offering \$5,000 to remote workers, with additional bonuses for families bringing healthcare or education professionals. In Iowa, towns like Manilla are giving away land on the condition that recipients build a primary residence, while cities like Cedar Rapids and Columbus, Georgia, provide relocation packages that include cash, coworking access and community support.

These initiatives highlight a shift in how communities approach economic development. With remote work allowing professionals to live far from major urban centers, smaller towns and mid-sized cities see an opportunity to compete by making relocation attractive. While each program varies in size and focus, they all share a goal: to strengthen local economies by drawing in residents whose presence drives housing markets, supports small businesses and secures stronger tax bases without dependence on federal spending.

For individuals looking to relocate, these incentives present a significant opportunity. For municipalities, they represent a strategic bet on long-term growth and resilience in an economy where talent and income are increasingly mobile.