

Movers Find Massachusetts Among Top States For Outbound Residents

Massachusetts was a top 10 state for outbound residents, according to a study that examined where and why Americans moved in 2023.

United Van Lines' 47th annual National Movers Study, released Tuesday, found Americans "are moving eastbound and southbound – and relocating to less expensive areas with comparable amenities to larger metropolitans."

"We are continuing to see the trend that Americans are moving to more affordable, lower-density areas across the country, with many heading to Southern states," United Van Lines Vice President of Corporate Communications Eily Cummings said. "Movers are also becoming more strategic with their planning, as relocation continues to be driven by factors such as the price of housing, regional climates, urban planning and job growth."

The top 10 "inbound" states that attracted more residents in 2023 were, in order, Vermont, Washington, D.C., South Carolina, Arkansas, Rhode Island, North Carolina, South Dakota, Alabama, New Mexico and West Virginia.

In order, the top outbound states were New Jersey, Illinois, North Dakota, New York, Michigan, California, Massachusetts and Kansas.

Among those moving from Massachusetts, 28.4 percent moved because of their job, 19.2 percent for family considerations, 18 percent for retirement, 16 percent for lifestyle, and less than 3 percent each for health or cost reasons, according to the study.

The study is based on household moves handled by the UniGroup network (parent company of United Van Lines) within the 48 contiguous states and Washington, D.C. It classifies states as “high inbound” if 55 percent or more of the moves were going into a state, “high outbound” if 55 percent or more moves were going out of a state, and “balanced” if the difference between inbound and outbound was negligible.

Massachusetts posted scores of 43.4 percent total inbound, and 56.6 percent total outbound.

While Massachusetts has many strengths, policymakers here face serious challenges, including unaffordable housing prices, traffic and public transit problems, and remote work options that have enabled more people to move out of Massachusetts.

“Massachusetts State House leaders need to take note of the reason why taxpayers are fleeing our state. The number one priority of 2024 should be economic competitiveness and this new report shows that,” said Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance spokesman Paul Craney.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported last month that Massachusetts was one of 11 states that saw its population bounce back and grow in 2023 after posting a decline in 2022.

Massachusetts experienced a net outflow of 39,149 people to other states in the U.S. and a net inflow of 50,647 people from other countries – resulting in net positive total migration of 11,498 people. Over that same time, 6,983 more people were born than died, helping to bump the Census Bureau’s population estimate for the Bay State up to 7,001,399 people.