

OFF THE GRID NEWS

Better Ideas For Off The Grid Living

The Freest States For Off-Grid Living, Ranked 1-50

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WASHINGTON — New Yorkers enjoy the least freedom in America, while New Hampshire citizens enjoy the most, according to a new report, *Freedom in the 50 States*, that examines the best states in which to live.

The report by the Cato Institute examines everything from tax laws to gun laws to government regulation to education freedom and found that the five freest states are:

1. New Hampshire
2. Alaska
3. Oklahoma
4. Indiana
5. South Dakota

The five states with the least freedom are:

1. Maryland
2. New Jersey
3. Hawaii
4. California
5. New York

Although the report was not aimed solely at homesteaders and off-gridders, its emphasis on economic and personal freedom makes it invaluable for those who enjoy a rural life, free of government regulation.

“New York is again the least free state in the country,” survey authors William Ruger and Jason Sorens wrote, noting that New York was dead last in 2015.

The reasons why the Empire State came in No. 50 in the freedom survey include:

A local tax burden twice that of the average state.

Local taxes consuming 7.8 percent of the average New Yorker’s income.

The nation’s strictest gun control laws.

Laws that make it perhaps the worst state for homeschooling.

Not surprisingly, a large percentage of New Yorkers are leaving the state, and it has an annual migration rate of -11.2 percent.

New Hampshire is ranked first because it combines “relatively high scores on both personal and economic freedom,” the authors noted.

Some of the reasons why New Hampshire ranked so high include:

State taxes as a share of personal income at 2.8 percent.

Local taxes as a share of income at 4.8 percent.

One of the best states for gun rights; there are almost no restrictions on concealed and open carry.

Ruger and Soren calculated freedom in each state using more than 230 variables. Some of these included land-use regulations, insurance requirements, licensing, gun rights and asset forfeiture. Cato is a libertarian think tank.

These rankings were divided into three broad categories: regulatory policy, personal freedom and fiscal policy. Regulatory policy is a measure of how much freedom businesses have in a state, personal freedom is a ranking of individual liberty, and fiscal policy is a measure of the level of taxes and government spending.

The study found that personal liberty and economic freedom do not always go together.

“Texas is one of the economically freest and personally least free states in the country,” the survey authors said.

The authors also discovered a correlation between the number of people leaving a state and economic freedom. Between the last survey in 2012 and this year’s survey, California had a net migration rate of -4.9 percent – meaning nearly 5 percent of the population left the state. During the same period, Texas had a net migration rate of +6.7 percent.

Following is Cato’s complete list:

1. New Hampshire
2. Alaska
3. Oklahoma
4. Indiana
5. South Dakota
6. Tennessee
7. Idaho
8. Florida
9. Iowa
10. Arizona
11. Colorado
12. Nevada
13. North Dakota
14. Wyoming

15. South Carolina
16. Kansas
17. Montana
18. Missouri
19. North Carolina
20. Utah
21. Virginia
22. Georgia
23. Alabama
24. Michigan
25. Nebraska
26. Pennsylvania
27. Wisconsin
28. Texas
29. Arkansas
30. New Mexico
31. Delaware
32. Washington
33. Massachusetts
34. Louisiana
35. Ohio
36. Mississippi
37. Oregon
38. Minnesota
39. West Virginia
40. Vermont
41. Kentucky
42. Maine
43. Rhode Island
44. Illinois
45. Connecticut
46. Maryland
47. New Jersey
48. Hawaii
49. California
50. New York

Learn more at [Freedom in the 50 States.](#)