



THE TRUTH

Money Needed to Pay Bills

- \$2.4 billion

Taxpayer Burden™

- \$2,300

Financial Grade

C

Ranking

19 out of 50

Oklahoma In Fiscal Freefall Despite Federal Funds



September 2021

truthinaccounting.org | data-z.org

Financial State of Oklahoma

Despite receiving support from COVID relief grants and other federal programs, Oklahoma’s overall financial condition worsened during the onset of the pandemic. Based upon the state’s fiscal year 2020 audited financial report, Oklahoma had a Taxpayer Burden™ of \$2,300, earning it a “C” grade from Truth in Accounting.

Oklahoma’s elected officials have repeatedly made financial decisions that left the state with a debt burden of \$2.4 billion. That burden came to \$2,300 for every state taxpayer. Oklahoma’s financial problems stem mostly from unfunded retirement obligations that have over the years. The state had only set aside 73 cents for every dollar of promised pension benefits and 43 cents for every dollar of promised retiree health care benefits.

Oklahoma did not have enough money set aside to weather the pandemic. Like all other states, Oklahoma received federal assistance from the CARES Act and other COVID-19 related grants which came with stipulations on how the money could be spent. However, the state is in poor fiscal health because it has not been properly funding its pension and retiree health care promises which places a burden on future taxpayers.

The data included in this report is derived from the state of Oklahoma’s 2020 audited Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and retirement plans’ reports. To compare states’ financial information go to Data-Z.org.

Oklahoma’s Financial Breakdown

Fast Facts

- Oklahoma had \$16.1 billion available to pay \$18.5 billion worth of bills.
- The outcome was a \$2.4 billion shortfall, which breaks down to a burden of \$2,300 per taxpayer.
- Oklahoma’s overall financial condition decreased by \$1.7 billion mostly because the Teachers’ Retirement System increased the estimated pension liabilities and experienced low investment returns.

THE STATE’S BILLS EXCEEDED ITS ASSETS

Total assets	\$49,658,127,000
Minus: Capital assets	-\$22,800,985,000
Restricted assets	-\$10,757,681,000
Assets available to pay bills	\$16,099,461,000
Minus: Total bills	-\$18,539,563,000
Money available (needed) to pay bills	-\$2,440,102,000
Each taxpayer’s share of this debt	-\$2,300

BILLS THE STATE ACCUMULATED

Bonds	\$7,878,227,000
Other liabilities	\$7,360,123,000
Minus: Debt related to capital assets	-\$6,702,993,000
Unfunded pension benefits	\$9,313,038,000
Unfunded retiree health care benefits	\$691,168,000
Total bills	\$18,539,563,000

Grade:

C

Bottom line: Oklahoma would need \$2,300 from each of its taxpayers to pay all of its bills, so it received a “C” for its finances. According to Truth in Accounting’s grading scale, any government with a Taxpayer Burden between \$0 and \$4,900 receives a “C” grade.

Truth in Accounting is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to educating and empowering citizens with understandable, reliable and transparent government financial information. To be knowledgeable participants in their government and its budget process, citizens need truthful and transparent financial information.