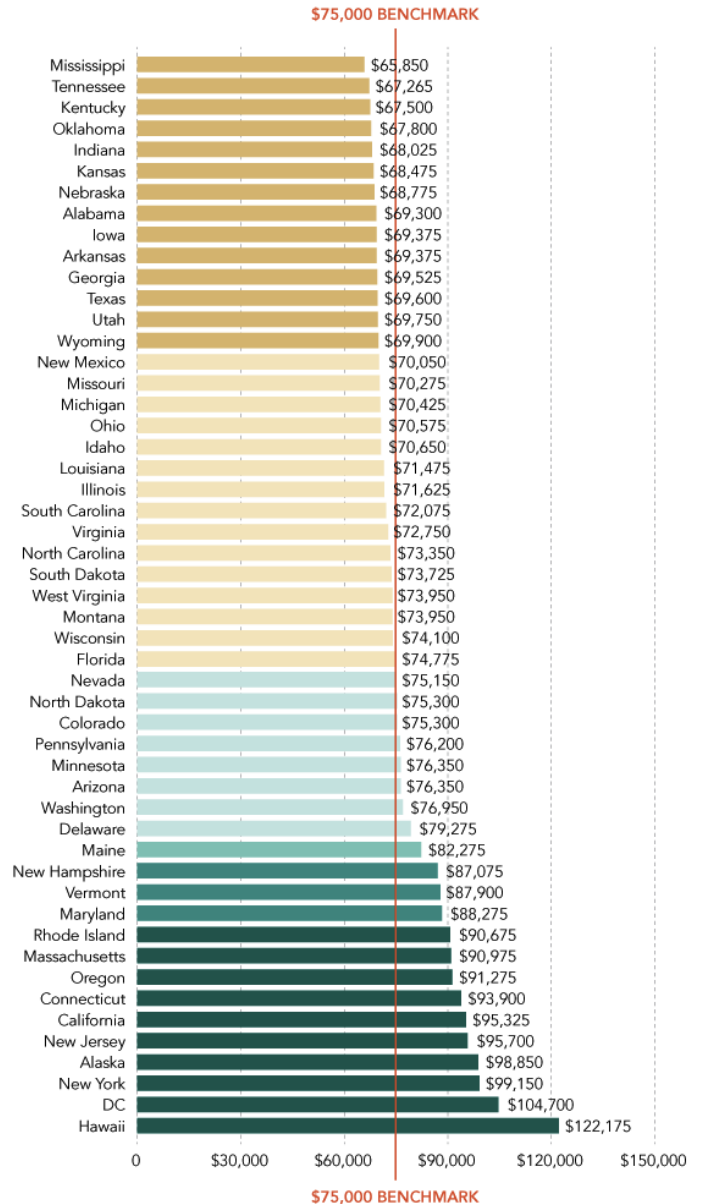


Work and Mood

The environment you work in can impact your mood in surprising ways. Below is a summary of the key research findings in this area:

- ◆ People who routinely work more than 11 hours per day have double the risk of depression.
- ◆ Long commute times (especially greater than 45 minutes) are associated with depression, obesity, insomnia, chronic pain and marital stress.
- ◆ Night shift work increases the risk of depression. One study found that varying shifts were harder on women, while continuous night shift was harder on men. Night-shift work is also associated with stomach problems, heart disease, obesity and sexual dysfunction. About 15% of people have significant difficulty adapting to night shift work.
- ◆ Volunteering can have a positive impact on mood, and some research suggests its benefits can be greater than paid work. The impact of volunteering is greatest when it involves helping people through direct, personal contact and when it involves helping people who would otherwise be strangers to you.
- ◆ Money can improve mood, but only up to a point. Happiness levels do not rise further once income reaches a level around \$75,000 (the actual amount varies by state – see chart at right). The wealthiest among us (those in the Fortune-500) report only slightly higher levels of happiness than the average American.

—Chris Aiken, MD, Updated 9/8/2014



Sources: Daniel Kahneman and Angus Deaton: High income improves evaluation of life but not emotional well-being, Doug Short: Happiness Revisited: A Household Income of \$75K?, Council for Community & Economic Research." THE HUFFINGTON POST

The chart above shows the income level for each state where happiness maxed out; further wealth beyond this point did not improve mood (2010 data).