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# NJ adds 900 Jobs in January as Unemployment Rate Edges Higher

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2021

**TRENTON** – New Jersey employers added modestly to their payrolls in January while the state’s unemployment rate ticked up for the month, according to data produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). In addition, previously released estimates for 2020 underwent annual benchmark revisions and were also released.

Preliminary nonfarm wage and salary estimates for January 2021 show an increase in total nonfarm employment of 900 jobs over the month, reaching a seasonally adjusted level of 3,865,800. The gains were recorded in the private sector of the state’s economy (+3,200). The state’s unemployment rate rose by 0.2 percentage point to 7.9 percent as more residents entered the labor market in search of employment. See the technical notes at the end of this release for information about the impact of the coronavirus on this month’s employment estimates.

Industry sectors that recorded over-the-month job growth for January include leisure and hospitality (+4,100), financial activities (+3,900), education and health services (+1,900), professional and business services (+1,400), other services (+800), and manufacturing (+300). Industry sectors that recorded over-the-month job losses include trade, transportation, and utilities (-7,100), information (-1,400), and construction (-600). Government employment was lower by 2,300, mainly at the local level (-2,000).

## BENCHMARK REVISIONS FOR 2020

The benchmark process, a required annual review and adjustment of previously released employment data at the state and metropolitan area levels, re-anchors monthly, sample-based survey estimates to full-universe counts of employment, primarily derived from records of the unemployment insurance tax system. The results of the latest annual benchmarking adjustment process – conducted by BLS each year at this time for every state – indicate that the over-the-year (Dec. 2019 – Dec. 2020) change in total nonfarm jobs was revised to a loss of 341,700, a greater decline from the previously reported loss of 336,400.

Benchmarked data show that initial preliminary estimates had overestimated the size of the decline of total nonfarm jobs in the state between February and April 2020, when the brunt of the coronavirus pandemic and measures taken in response to it hit the state. The revised estimates show that between those two months New Jersey had lost 717,200 jobs, or 17.0 percent of the total number of nonfarm jobs New Jersey had recorded in February 2020. By comparison, previously released estimates had indicated a two-month loss of 831,800, or 19.6 percent of the state’s total nonfarm level as of February 2020.

At the same time, benchmarked data also show that the recovery from the pandemic-induced low seen in April was less than previously estimated. The revised estimates show that between April and December 2020 New Jersey regained a total of 352,500 jobs, or 49.1 percent of the total number of jobs lost due to the pandemic and subsequent measures taken in response to it. In comparison, the national job market has regained 55.5 percent of the job loss.

The revised data show that over the December 2019 – December 2020 period, all nine major private industry sectors of the New Jersey economy lost jobs. In order from greatest to smallest over-the-year losses, the industry sectors include leisure and hospitality (-109,200), education and health services (-61,000), trade, transportation, and utilities (-37,900), professional and business services (-31,400), other services (-31,400), manufacturing



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NJ adds jobs in July; 7th consecutive months of gains. [nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/...](https://nj.gov/labor/lwdhome/)

Aug 19, 2021



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As of the latest reporting, more than \$33 billion in unemployment benefits have been sent to Garden State workers. With federal benefits set to expire on September 4, we encourage everyone to check your email and visit [MyUnemployment.nj.gov](https://myunemployment.nj.gov) for updates and available resources.



(-12,200), construction (-9,400), financial activities (-7,600), and information (-3,700). Over the year, public sector employment was lower by 37,800, with the majority of the loss at the local government level (-33,400).

Labor force estimates for New Jersey were also revised. After benchmarking, the state averaged an annual unemployment rate for 2020 of 9.8 percent, up from 3.4 percent in 2019. New Jersey's rate was above the annual national rate of 8.1 percent for 2020.

Preliminary BLS data for February 2021 will be released on March 25, 2021.

## [PRESS TABLES](#)

**Technical Notes:** *Estimates of industry employment and unemployment levels are arrived at through the use of two different monthly surveys.*

*Industry employment data are derived through the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 4,000 business establishments conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey).*

*Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the New Jersey portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey).*

*Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. In addition, these estimates are benchmarked (revised) annually based on actual counts from New Jersey's Unemployment Compensation Law administrative records and more complete data from all New Jersey employers.*

*Effective with the release of January 2018 estimates, the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program has converted to concurrent seasonal adjustment, which uses all available estimates, including those for the current month, in developing seasonal factors. Previously, the CES program developed seasonal factors once a year during the annual benchmark process. For more information on concurrent seasonal adjustment in the CES State and Area program, see [www.bls.gov/sae/saeconcurrent.htm](http://www.bls.gov/sae/saeconcurrent.htm).*

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Department of Labor

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