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New Jersey Employment Report February 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TRENTON – Preliminary nonfarm employment labor market estimates for February, produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, indicate that New Jersey payrolls decreased by 10,300 over the month, resulting in a seasonally adjusted employment level of 4,373,700 jobs. The state's unemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage point to 5.1 percent from January to February.

Employment estimates for January were revised downward to show a December to January gain of 3,500 (preliminary estimates: +6,000). The state's unemployment rate for January remained unchanged at 5.2 percent.

Over the past month, three out of nine private industry sectors recorded employment gains compared to January. Those sectors were leisure and hospitality (+1,800), private education and health services (+1,200), and other services (+1,000). Sectors that recorded job losses include construction (-5,900), professional and business services (-2,600), trade, transportation, and utilities (-1,900), financial activities (-1,600), information (-1,400), and manufacturing (-500). The public sector recorded a loss of 400 jobs for the month.

During the last 12 months, two out of nine private industry sectors recorded gains. Total private employment added 900 jobs over that time including education and health services (+28,400), and leisure and hospitality (+300). Losses were recorded year-over-year in trade, transportation, and utilities (-10,800), professional and business services (-6,700), manufacturing (-4,300), construction (-3,100), financial activities (-1,500), information (-1,000), and other services (-400). The public sector has recorded a loss of 4,500 jobs over the past twelve months.

Preliminary BLS estimates data for March will be released April 30.

[NJ Employment Situation Highlights: January 2026](#)

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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).

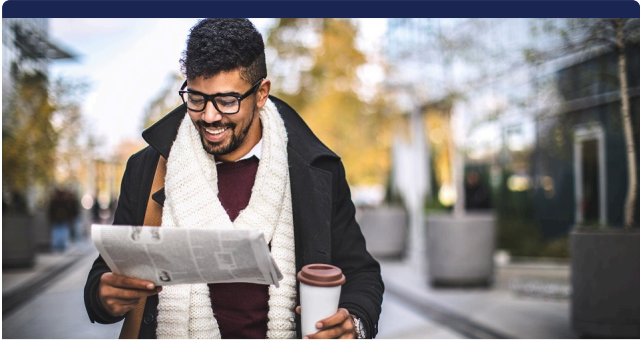
Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by BLS. In addition, these estimates are benchmarked (revised) annually based on actual counts from New Jersey's Unemployment Compensation Law administrative records and more 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 <https://www.bls.gov/sae/seasonal-adjustment/>.

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