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2025 Benchmark New Jersey Employment Data Released; Preliminary January 2026 Estimates Indicate Job Growth

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2026

TRENTON – Preliminary employment estimates for January 2026 produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate that New Jersey payrolls increased by 6,000 over the month. The unemployment rate for January was 5.2 percent, a decrease from December’s rate of 5.4 percent. Additionally, the originally reported 2025 employment estimates have been adjusted downward after annual benchmark revisions.

BENCHMARK REVISIONS FOR 2025

The BLS’s 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 annual benchmarking adjustment indicates that the year-over-year (Dec. 2024 – Dec. 2025) change in total nonfarm jobs was adjusted lower to show a gain of 5,100, from the previously reported gain of 9,000 jobs. The two-year job gain from December 2023 to December 2025 was revised to 37,900, or 10,300 fewer jobs than previously estimated.

The revised estimates show that over the December 2024 – December 2025 period, three out of nine major private industry sectors added to their payrolls. Year-over-year gains were recorded in private education and health services (+29,000), construction (+800), and information (+800). Year-over-year losses were recorded in trade, transportation, and utilities (-5,600), manufacturing (-4,800), professional and business services (-4,800), leisure and hospitality (-2,900), financial activities (-400), and other services (-4,000). Public sector employment declined year-over-year by 3,000 jobs.

The state’s average annual unemployment rate for 2025 was adjusted to 5.2 percent, an increase from 4.6 percent for 2024. The national unemployment rate for 2025 was 4.3 percent, an increase from 4.0 percent for 2024.

JANUARY 2026 ESTIMATES

Preliminary total nonfarm employment estimates for January 2026 showed an increase of 6,000 jobs, reaching a seasonally adjusted level of 4,386,500. New Jersey’s private sector recorded an increase of 5,600 jobs during the month. New Jersey’s unemployment rate fell by 0.2 percentage points to 5.2 percent.

For January, six out of nine major private industry sectors recorded month-over-month job growth. Sectors that recorded gains include professional and business services (+2,600), private education and health services (+1,800), construction (+1,600), other services (+1,500), manufacturing (+500), and trade, transportation, and utilities (+400). Sectors that recorded losses include leisure and hospitality (-1,800), information (-600), and financial activities (-400). The public sector recorded a gain of 400 jobs.

Preliminary BLS data for February 2026 will be released on April 16, 2026.

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

[PRESS TABLES](#)

Technical Notes: *Estimates of industry employment and unemployment levels are arrived at using 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).

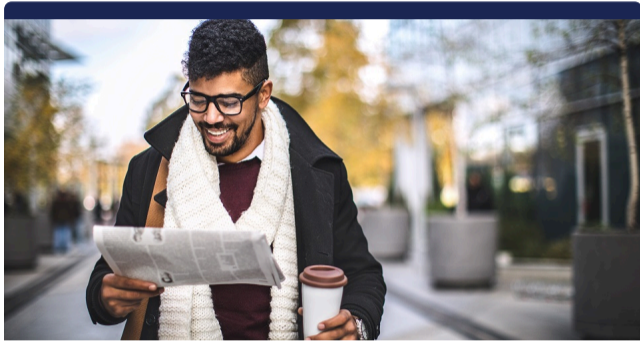
Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the New Jersey portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (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 <https://www.bls.gov/sae/seasonal-adjustment/>.

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