

# Regional Focus: South Jersey

Data and analysis for the Atlantic City, Camden, Ocean City, and Vineland/Millville/Bridgeton labor areas

## Employment on the Rise in South Jersey

From March 2011 to March 2012, total nonfarm employment in the seven-county Southern Region added 10,800 jobs to reach a not seasonally adjusted level of 729,900. This increase follows three years of recessionary decline during the March-to-March period. The region's payrolls, up by 1.5 percent from the same month a year ago, outperformed their statewide counterpart which recorded a gain of 1.1 percent during the same period.

Over the year, payrolls advanced in each of the region's four labor areas. The most significant gain took place in the coastal labor area of Ocean City (Cape May County, +3,600). The region's remaining labor areas each added a nearly equal number of jobs from the same month a year ago: Camden, 2,500 jobs; Atlantic City, 2,500 jobs and Vineland-Millville-Bridgeton (VMB), 2,200 jobs. On a percentage basis, the fastest growing was Ocean City (+11.1%) and VMB (+3.9%) followed by Atlantic City (+1.9%) and Camden (+0.5%). However, the Ocean City and VMB labor areas each have a relatively small employment base representing just 4.9 percent and 8.1 percent of regional jobholding, respectively.

## Job Growth Extends Across Most Sectors

Regional employment advanced in every sector except manufacturing (-1,100) and professional and business services (-500). Education and health services experienced the most significant growth (+6,800) followed by government (+2,100) and construction (+2,000). The gains in jobholding in the remaining sectors were much smaller: trade, transportation and utilities (+800); financial activities (+600); leisure and hospitality (+500); other services (+300) and information (+100).

In the Camden Labor Area which consists of Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties, the largest job gains took place in education and health services (+5,600 or 6.8%) and construction (+1,000 or 5.5%). The greatest loss occurred in trade, transportation and utilities (-2,500 or -2.2%) where much of the loss occurred in the retail trade component (-1,500). Manufacturing (-1,200 or -3.3%) and leisure and hospitality (-1,000 or -2.5%) also shed a significant number of jobs. Atlantic City's payroll gain was concentrated primarily in construction (+900 or 20.0%)

Change in Nonfarm Employment March 2011 - March 2012 (not seasonally adjusted)				
	Region		State	
	Net	%	Net	%
Total Nonfarm Employment	10,800	1.5	41,400	1.1
Private Sector	8,700	1.5	37,100	1.2
Construction <sup>1</sup>	2,000	7.9	-1,200	-1.0
Manufacturing <sup>1</sup>	-1,100	-2.3	-4,000	-1.6
Trade, Trans. & Utilities	800	0.5	9,200	1.1
Information <sup>1</sup>	100	1.2	-6,700	-8.9
Financial Activities <sup>1</sup>	600	1.8	3,700	1.5
Prof. & Business Svcs. <sup>1</sup>	-500	-0.6	2,300	0.4
Ed. & Health Svcs.	6,800	5.9	22,400	3.7
Leisure & Hospitality	500	0.5	4,900	1.6
Other Services <sup>1</sup>	300	1.1	6,500	4.1
Government	2,100	1.6	4,300	0.7

Source: NJLWD, Current Employment Statistics

<sup>1</sup>Employment does not include data for Cape May County



Regional Focus is a quarterly publication of the New Jersey Department of Labor Division of Labor Market and Demographic Research. For questions regarding the material in this publication contact Michael Dugan at (609)633-6425 or email michael.dugan@dol.state.nj.us

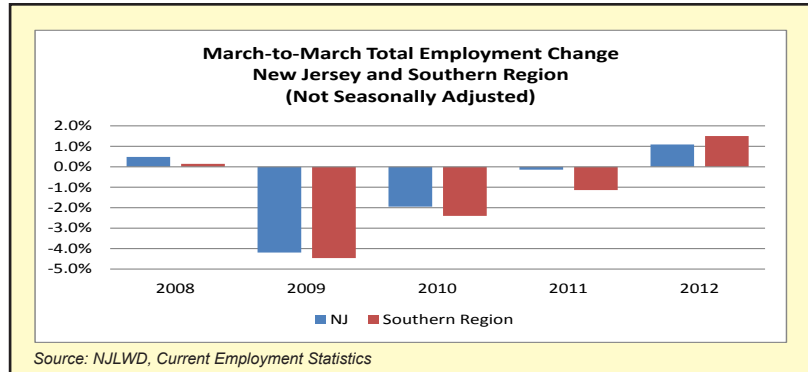
To subscribe to this publication email njsdc@dol.state.nj.us with "regional focus" in the subject line.



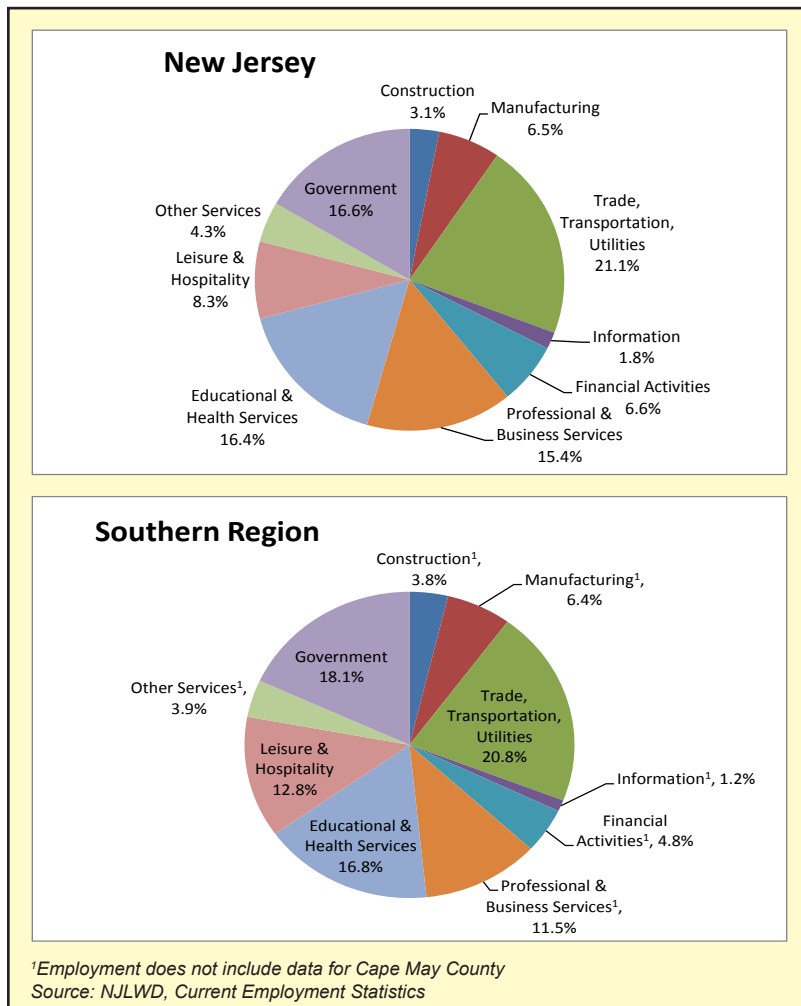
and government (+800 or 3.4%). In Ocean City, trade, transportation & utilities (+2,500 or 41.0%) and leisure & hospitality (+1,700 or 34.0%) posted the largest increases in jobholding. Most of the employment losses in the area occurred in the private service-providing sectors that are unpublished due to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics guidelines. In the Vineland-Millville-Bridgeton area, employment in education and health services (+7.7%) and trade, transportation and utilities (+5.8%) advanced by 700 each while the remaining sectors were relatively unchanged.

Total Nonfarm Employment (unadjusted March data, employment in thousands)						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
New Jersey	4,024.6	4,043.9	3,874.3	3,798.8	3,793.4	3,834.8
Southern Region	779.0	780.1	745.3	727.4	719.1	729.9
Atlantic City Labor Area (Atlantic County)	146.9	147.1	137.4	134.7	131.6	134.1
Camden Labor Area (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester counties)	534.8	536.9	515.2	501.6	498.3	500.8
Ocean City Labor Area (Cape May County)	35.6	34.1	33.4	32.9	32.4	36.0
Vineland-Millville-Bridgeton Labor Area (Cumberland County)	61.7	62.0	59.3	58.2	56.8	59.0

Source: NJLWD, Current Employment Statistics



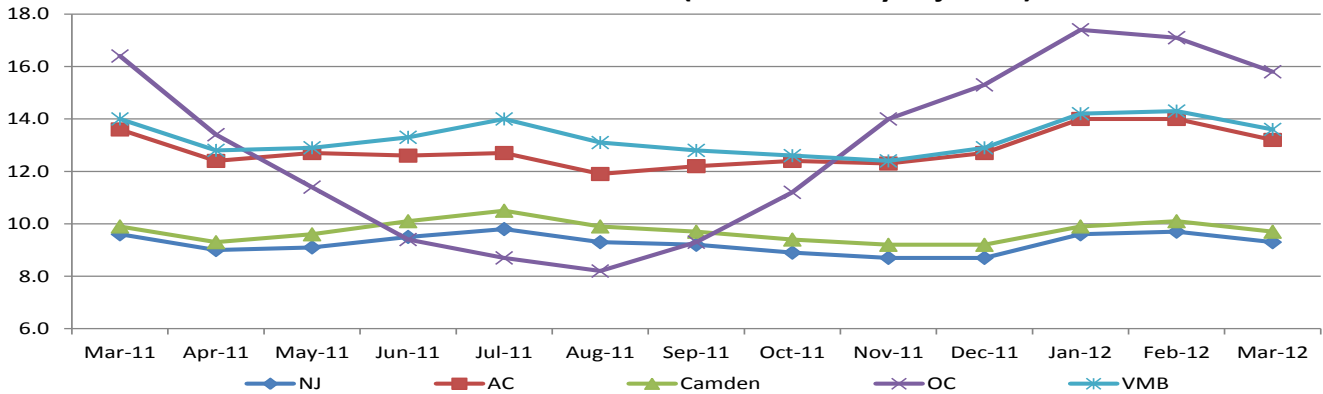
## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, MARCH 2012 (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)



- Similar to the state, the largest employment sectors in the southern region in March 2012 was trade, transportation and utilities (21% for region and state), government (18% and 17%, respectively) and educational and health services (17% and 16%, respectively). The smallest sector was information.
- The biggest difference, percentage-wise, between the southern region and New Jersey is within leisure and hospitality (13% of employment vs. 8%, respectively). One contributing factor could be the high concentration of accommodations in Atlantic City and other tourist-dependent establishments in the county of Cape May. The state's casino hotels account for 9.1 percent of payrolls in leisure and hospitality statewide.

More detailed data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program can be found at: [http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/ces/ces\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/ces/ces_index.html)

**Unemployment Rates, New Jersey and Southern Region  
 March 2011 - March 2012 (not seasonally adjusted)**



Source: NJLWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

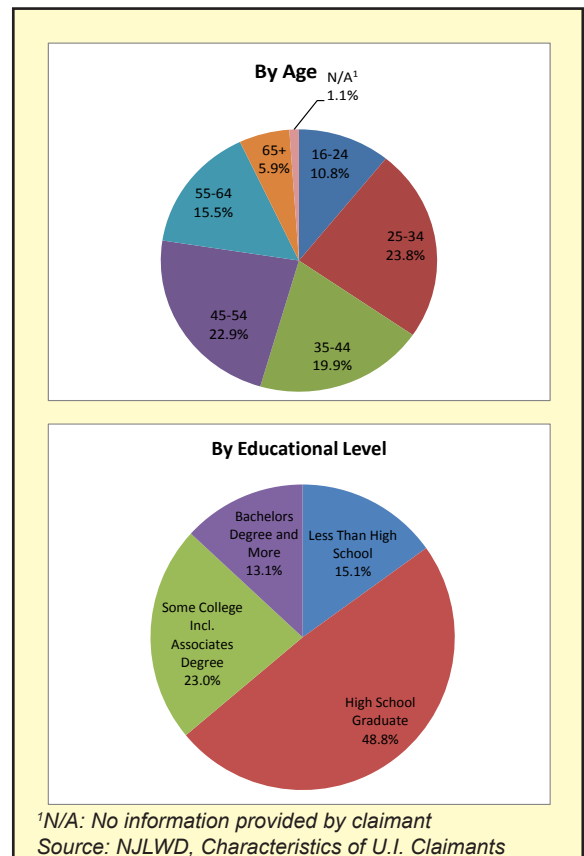
- The March 2012 not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 10.9 percent for the Southern Region was higher than the statewide rate of 9.3 percent. Rates for the labor areas in the region ranged from a low of 9.7 percent in Camden to a high of 15.8 percent in Ocean City.
- The Camden Labor Area has the largest labor force in the region. In March 2012, the area's 668,800 labor force participants accounted for 71.8 percent of the region's labor force. Camden's unemployment rate declined modestly to 9.7 percent in March 2012 from 9.9 percent in the same month a year ago.
- Sharp seasonal swings in employment largely concentrated in the hospitality and other tourism-related industries tend to cause the unemployment rate in the Ocean City Labor Area to fluctuate the most during the year. From March 2011 to March 2012, Ocean City's unemployment rate ranged from a low of 8.2 percent in August 2011 to a high of 17.4 percent in January 2012.

More detailed data from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program can be found at:  
[http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/uirate/lfest\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/employ/uirate/lfest_index.html)

**CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW JERSEY'S  
 INSURED UNEMPLOYED  
 SOUTHERN REGION  
 FIRST QUARTER 2012**

CLAIMANTS BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUP		
	NUMBER	PERCENT
Management	7,850	7.4
Business and Financial	2,465	2.3
Professional and Related	9,742	9.2
Services	23,475	22.1
Sales and Related	8,621	8.1
Office and Administrative Support	15,521	14.6
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	724	0.7
Construction and Extraction	10,511	9.9
Installation, Maintenance and Repair	4,463	4.2
Production	9,474	8.9
Transportation and Material Moving	12,191	11.5
Military	720	0.7

- Residents of the southern region who collected unemployment insurance benefits during the first quarter of 2012 were most likely to be previously employed in a service or office and administrative support occupation.
- Over half (63.9%) of claimants in the Southern Region had no further education beyond high school.



## Spotlight on Atlantic City

The \$2.4 billion Revel resort, the first new Atlantic City casino in nine years, opened in April 2012. The property includes 14 restaurants, 55,000-sq.ft. of retail space and offers guests views of the ocean and boardwalk from the casino floor.

This development made a positive contribution to employment levels in multiple industries. During building, Revel created jobs for about 2,000 construction workers, boosting the trade unions at a time when they were suffering from double-digit unemployment. In addition, estimates state that Revel should create about 5,000 permanent jobs — 4,000 hired by the company and the remainder working for the casino's retail, food and beverage contractors. The significant hirings provided a huge lift for an industry battered by about 10,000 job cuts and billions of dollars in lost revenue over the past four years.

Revel was awarded a \$2.6 million Customized Training grant from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development which helped local workers qualify for the jobs being created at the resort. Prospective employees learned leadership and communication skills, along with receiving specialty instruction regarding specific jobs at the resort.

Another development which would impact payrolls in the long-term is the construction of the proposed 200-room casino resort by Hard Rock International. This project is the first to be approved under new legislation which allows two smaller-scale casino development projects under a new pilot program. A January 2015 opening is planned.

In other casino-related news, the Golden Nugget held a ceremonial grand-opening in April to mark the completion of renovation work at the resort. Golden

Nugget owners purchased the former Trump Marina property in 2011 and shortly thereafter began renovation. The resort remained open for business during construction.

## College and University Building Aids Construction Payrolls

Building projects at the state's colleges and universities has helped offset some of the recessionary loss in construction employment caused by a decline in homebuilding. In the southern region, work is underway on Rowan Boulevard, a \$300 million revitalization project designed to link Rowan University with downtown Glassboro. At build-out, it will include retail, office and residential space, plus a hotel and conference center. Camden County College is also in the process of constructing a sciences building which includes labs for science and health care programs, classrooms, an expanded Dental Hygiene Clinic and nursing arts center. Construction of a state-of-the-art culinary arts center was completed in July 2011.

## New Retail Tenants Enter Market

In recent years, some supermarket chains have been closing smaller locations and replacing these stores with larger grocery stores which offer more services such as an expanded prepared foods section, in-store dining, etc. Also, several chains such as Pathmark, Acme and Superfresh have closed underperforming stores in the region. New stores which emphasize value such as Bottom Dollar Food have been moving into the region and absorbing some of the vacant retail space.

Residential Building Permits Year-to-Date (Jan to Mar)				
	Total		Single-Family	
	2011	2012	2011	2012
New Jersey	2,696	3,354	1,543	1,473
Southern Region	677	662	514	422
Source: U.S. Census Bureau				

More detailed building permit data can be found at: [http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/bp/bp\\_index.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/bp/bp_index.html)

- During the first quarter of 2012, 677 residential housing units were authorized to be built in New Jersey's southern region. This figure is lower by 15 or 2.3 percent from the same period a year ago. Statewide, permitting activity was up by 24.4 percent since 2011.
- Year-to-date total authorizations in the southern region account for 19.7 percent of planned homebuilding statewide.
- Permitting activity for single-family housing units accounts for 63.7 percent of all units authorized in the southern region during the first three months of 2012. Although the number of single-family units authorized during 2012 (422) was down from 2011 (514), authorizations for multi-family units increased.