



STATE OF MICHIGAN

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GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT & BUDGET
LANSING

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Michigan's unemployment rate increases in March, but does not yet reflect full impact of pandemic-related layoffs

LANSING, Mich. -- Michigan's seasonally adjusted jobless rate increased by half a percentage point over the month to 4.1 percent in March, according to data released today by the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget. Employment in Michigan fell by 65,000 in March, while the number of unemployed rose by 21,000, resulting in a labor force drop of 44,000 over the month.

The data in this release reflects the Michigan employment status for the week of March 8–14, which was prior to the full impact of COVID-19 on the state labor market, and does not reflect many of the COVID-19-related layoffs that occurred in the second half of March.

The national unemployment rate rose significantly by nine-tenths of a percentage point in March to 4.4 percent. Michigan's rate was three-tenths of a percentage point below the U.S rate. The national jobless rate advanced by 0.6 percentage points over the year, while the state rate was two-tenths below its March 2019 rate of 4.3 percent.

"The jobless rate increase over the month reflected the early impact of COVID-19 on Michigan's workforce," said Jason Palmer, director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. "A significant job decline occurred in the state's leisure and hospitality sector, as restaurants were among the first employers reporting pandemic-related layoffs a week or so before the full impact of the pandemic was felt later in March."

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Monthly labor force trends and highlights

- The state jobless rate gain of 0.5 percentage points was the largest over-the-month unemployment rate rise since June 2009.
- Michigan’s total labor force fell by 44,000 over the month, or 0.9 percent, a rate comparable to the national over-the-month workforce decline of 1.0 percent.
- After two months of employment increases, Michigan’s March employment total fell by 65,000, or 1.4 percent. Over the year, employment receded by 0.4 percent.
- Total unemployment rose by 11.7 percent in March, a gain essentially half of that exhibited by the nation (+23.7 percent).

Michigan
Labor Force Estimates
 Seasonally Adjusted
 (Data in Thousands)

	Mar 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2019	Over the Month		Over the Year	
				Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Civilian Labor Force	4,906	4,950	4,935	-44	-0.9%	-29	-0.6%
Employment	4,705	4,770	4,724	-65	-1.4%	-19	-0.4%
Unemployment	201	180	211	21	11.7%	-10	-4.7%
Rate (Percent)	4.1	3.6	4.3	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx

Detroit metropolitan area’s unemployment rate advances in March

The Detroit-Warren-Dearborn Metropolitan Statistical Area’s (MSA) seasonally adjusted jobless rate increased by a full percentage point to 4.9 percent in March. Total employment inched down by 2,000, while the number of unemployed rose by 23,000. The Detroit MSA labor force was up by 22,000 in March.

Over the year, the Detroit jobless rate rose by four-tenths of a percentage point. Employment advanced by 19,000, while unemployment rose by 9,000, resulting in a net workforce gain of 28,000 since March 2019.

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Detroit-Warren-Dearborn MSA
Labor Force Estimates
 Seasonally Adjusted
 (Data in Thousands)

	Mar 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2019	Over the Month		Over the Year	
				Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Civilian Labor Force	2,187	2,165	2,159	22	1.0%	28	1.3%
Employment	2,080	2,082	2,061	-2	-0.1%	19	0.9%
Unemployment	107	84	98	23	27.4%	9	9.2%
Rate (Percent)	4.9	3.9	4.5	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx

Michigan payroll jobs fall in March

Data from the monthly survey of employers indicated that seasonally adjusted payroll employment in Michigan receded by 24,000 in March to 4,437,000. Over half of this decline was a result of job losses in the state’s leisure and hospitality industry. This reflected the beginning of layoffs in the restaurant industry related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the state.

Industry employment trends and highlights

- Michigan’s March total nonfarm employment value of 4,437,000 was the lowest seen by the state since October 2019 (4,415,000).
- The March statewide leisure and hospitality industry job level of 423,000 was the lowest total seen for the sector since January 2016.
- After two months of employment advances, professional and business services was stable in March, edging down by 1,000, or 0.2 percent, over the month.
- Michigan’s construction sector exhibited the largest over-the-year employment gain on a percentage basis, advancing by 4.9 percent since March 2019.
- Over the year, payroll employment edged up by 4,000, or 0.1 percent. In comparison, the national total nonfarm job count advanced by 1.0 percent since March 2019.

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Michigan
Payroll Employment Estimates
 Seasonally Adjusted
 (Data in Thousands)

	Mar** 2020	Feb* 2020	Mar 2019	Over the Month***		Over the Year ***	
				Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	4,437	4,462	4,434	-24	-0.5%	4	0.1%
Natural Resources and Mining	7	7	7	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Construction	180	182	172	-2	-1.3%	8	4.9%
Manufacturing	623	624	634	-1	-0.2%	-11	-1.7%
Transportation Equipment	187	187	193	0	-0.2%	-6	-3.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	805	805	794	0	0.0%	10	1.3%
Retail Trade	466	466	466	0	-0.1%	0	0.0%
Information	55	55	56	-1	-0.9%	-1	-1.1%
Financial Activities	229	229	223	0	0.2%	6	2.9%
Professional and Business Services	657	658	656	-1	-0.2%	1	0.2%
Education and Health Services	680	684	680	-4	-0.6%	0	0.0%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	423	435	437	-13	-2.9%	-14	-3.3%
Other Services	164	165	166	-1	-0.4%	-2	-0.9%
Government	615	617	611	-2	-0.4%	4	0.7%

* Revised data for February 2020

** Preliminary data for March 2020

*** Change calculated using unrounded data

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Michigan
Hours and Earnings for Production Workers
 Seasonally Adjusted

Manufacturing							
	Mar 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2019	Over the Month		Over the Year	
				Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Average Weekly Earnings	\$965.60	\$956.66	\$930.27	\$8.94	0.9%	\$35.33	3.8%
Average Weekly Hours	43.0	43.3	42.3	-0.3	-0.7%	0.7	1.7%
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing							
	Mar 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2019	Over the Month		Over the Year	
				Numeric	Percent	Numeric	Percent
Average Weekly Earnings	\$1,239.69	\$1,242.78	\$1,194.41	-\$3.09	-0.2%	\$45.28	3.8%
Average Weekly Hours	46.7	47.1	46.7	-0.4	-0.8%	0.0	0.0%

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Note COVID-19 pandemic:

State employment estimates are produced on a monthly basis using employment information from the week of the 12th of each month. The information in this release covers labor market trends for the week of March 8–14, 2020, ten days prior to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer’s [Executive Order 2020-21](#) “Stay Home, Stay Safe.”

As such, the information in this release does not reflect the majority of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Michigan’s workforce.

For more information on the COVID-19 pandemic’s effect on workforce estimates, please visit the following resources from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

[Effects of COVID-19 on the Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program](#)

[FAQs – The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on The Employment Situation for March 2020](#)

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