



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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The Virginia unemployment rate rose to 6.2 percent in September while total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 9,200

— The recent changes in these measures reflect the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts to contain it. —

RICHMOND— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged upward 0.1 of a percentage point in September to 6.2 percent, which is 3.5 percentage points above the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in September, the labor force fell by 71,954, or 1.7 percent, to 4,279,495, as the number of unemployed residents declined by 2,546. The number of employed residents decreased by 69,408 to 4,015,630. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which fell to 7.9 percent.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, rose by 9,200 jobs in September to 3,857,100. August's preliminary estimate was revised downward by 2,300, subtracting from that month's job gains. In September, private sector employment increased by 20,800 jobs to 3,151,300, while public sector payrolls decreased by 11,600 jobs to 705,800.

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Employment rose in nine of eleven major industry sectors, was unchanged in one, and declined in one. The largest job gains during September occurred in **leisure and hospitality** with an increase of 5,400 jobs to 331,700 and **professional and business services** (+5,400 jobs) to 740,300. Other increases include **trade and transportation** (+3,500 jobs) to 647,400, **manufacturing** (+2,700 jobs) to 228,400, **finance** (+1,600 jobs) to 208,900, **miscellaneous** (+1,200 jobs) to 194,500, **information** (+800 jobs) to 66,200, **construction** (+100 jobs) to 207,900, and **education and health services** (+100 jobs) to 518,900. **Mining** was unchanged at 7,100 jobs over the month while **government** employment fell by 11,600 jobs to 705,800. Much of the decrease within that sector occurred in local government (-10,300 jobs), but employment also fell in state government (-2,000 jobs), while federal government rose slightly (+700 jobs).

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			August 2020 to September 2020		September 2019 to September 2020	
	September 2020	August 2020	September 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	3,857,100	3,847,900	4,064,200	9,200	0.2%	-207,100	-5.1%
Total Private Sector	3,151,300	3,130,500	3,331,500	20,800	0.7%	-180,200	-5.4%
Goods-Producing	443,400	440,600	454,100	2,800	0.6%	-10,700	-2.4%
Mining	7,100	7,100	7,800	0	0.0%	-700	-9.0%
Construction	207,900	207,800	204,100	100	0.0%	3,800	1.9%
Manufacturing	228,400	225,700	242,200	2,700	1.2%	-13,800	-5.7%
Service-Providing	3,413,700	3,407,300	3,610,100	6,400	0.2%	-196,400	-5.4%
Private Service-Providing	2,707,900	2,689,900	2,877,400	18,000	0.7%	-169,500	-5.9%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	647,400	643,900	657,800	3,500	0.5%	-10,400	-1.6%
Information	66,200	65,400	68,700	800	1.2%	-2,500	-3.6%
Finance	208,900	207,300	212,900	1,600	0.8%	-4,000	-1.9%
Professional and Business Services	740,300	734,900	770,200	5,400	0.7%	-29,900	-3.9%
Education and Health Services	518,900	518,800	557,400	100	0.0%	-38,500	-6.9%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	331,700	326,300	408,100	5,400	1.7%	-76,400	-18.7%
Miscellaneous Services	194,500	193,300	202,300	1,200	0.6%	-7,800	-3.9%
Government	705,800	717,400	732,700	-11,600	-1.6%	-26,900	-3.7%
Federal Government	191,900	191,200	181,900	700	0.4%	10,000	5.5%
State Government	148,000	150,000	161,700	-2,000	-1.3%	-13,700	-8.5%
Local Government	365,900	376,200	389,100	-10,300	-2.7%	-23,200	-6.0%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From September 2019 to September 2020, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia lost 207,100 jobs, a decrease of 5.1%. Over-the-year employment growth in Virginia had been positive for 72 consecutive months leading up to April's sharp decline. In September, the private sector recorded an over-the-year loss of 180,200 jobs, while employment in the public sector lost 26,900 jobs.

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Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, ten out of eleven major industry divisions experienced employment declines, with some experiencing more severe losses than others. The largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **leisure and hospitality**, down 76,400 jobs (-18.7%). The next largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **education and health services**, down 38,500 jobs (-6.9%). **Professional and business services** experienced the third largest over-the-year job loss of 29,900 jobs (-3.9%). **Government** employment declined by 26,900 (-3.7%). Within government, there were decreases in local government employment (-23,200 jobs) and state government employment (-13,700 jobs). Federal government experienced an increase in employment (+10,000 jobs). **Manufacturing** lost 13,800 jobs (-5.7%) while **trade and transportation** shed 10,400 jobs (-1.6%). Other losses were in **miscellaneous services**, down 7,800 jobs (-3.9%); **finance**, down 4,000 jobs (-1.9%); **information**, down 2,500 jobs (-3.6%); and **mining** down 700 jobs (-9.0%). The sole increase occurred in **construction**, up 3,800 jobs (+1.9%).

Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			August 2020 to September 2020		September 2019 to September 2020	
	September 2020	August 2020	September 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	3,857,100	3,847,900	4,064,200	9,200	0.2%	-207,100	-5.1%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	73,600	73,000	78,000	600	0.8%	-4,400	-5.6%
Charlottesville MSA	115,100	116,200	121,800	-1,100	-0.9%	-6,700	-5.5%
Harrisonburg MSA	65,600	66,100	69,600	-500	-0.8%	-4,000	-5.7%
Lynchburg MSA	97,200	98,600	105,600	-1,400	-1.4%	-8,400	-8.0%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,448,100	1,440,000	1,519,900	8,100	0.6%	-71,800	-4.7%
Richmond MSA	652,200	650,500	686,300	1,700	0.3%	-34,100	-5.0%
Roanoke MSA	154,000	153,500	161,800	500	0.3%	-7,800	-4.8%
Staunton-Waynesboro MSA	52,200	52,700	51,800	-500	-0.9%	400	0.8%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	756,300	754,600	795,100	1,700	0.2%	-38,800	-4.9%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	60,500	60,300	65,800	200	0.3%	-5,300	-8.1%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In September, six metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains while four experienced losses over-the-month. The largest absolute job increase occurred in Northern Virginia (+8,100 jobs). The next largest absolute job gains occurred in Richmond and Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+1,700 jobs each). Other increases include Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+600 jobs), Roanoke (+500 jobs), and Winchester (+200 jobs). The largest monthly employment decline occurred in Lynchburg (-1,400 jobs), followed by Charlottesville (-1,100 jobs). Harrisonburg and Staunton-Waynesboro both declined by 500 jobs.

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Over the year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment decreased in nine of the ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job loss, down 71,800 jobs (-4.7%). Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ranked second, with a loss of 38,800 jobs (-4.9%). Richmond ranked third with a decline of 34,100 jobs (-5.0%). Other over-the-year job losses occurred in Lynchburg (-8,400 jobs), Roanoke (-7,800 jobs), Charlottesville (-6,700 jobs), Winchester (-5,300 jobs), Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (-4,400 jobs), and Harrisonburg (-4,000 jobs). Staunton-Waynesboro added 400 jobs and was the only metropolitan area with a positive change over the year.

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate decreased 0.3 of a percentage point in September to 6.0 percent, and was up 3.4 percentage points from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed increased by 143,693, household employment decreased by 294,137, and the labor force decreased by 150,444. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which fell by 0.8 of a percentage point in September to 7.7 percent.

Compared to last month, the September **unadjusted** workweek for Virginia's 153,300 manufacturing production workers decreased by 1.5 hours to 39.2 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers increased by \$.27 to \$20.30 in September and average weekly earnings fell \$19.46 to \$795.76.

Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia 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). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, 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). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. **For national figures and information on how COVID-19 affected collection of the BLS establishment and household surveys in September, refer to the BLS [September 2020 Employment Situation](#) press release for details.**

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of September 6-12, 2020.

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the September local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, October 28, 2020. The data will be available on our website www.VirginiaWorks.com.

The October statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, November 20, 2020.