



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Workforce Development and Advancement

Carrie Roth
Director

Post Office Box 26441
Richmond, VA 23261-6441

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Contact: Department of Workforce Development and Advancement
Economic Information & Analytics Division
(804) 786-7496

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Virginia's December's Unemployment Rate Increased by 0.1 Percentage Points to 3.0%; Labor Force Participation Rate Unchanged at 66.9% and Employment Decreased by 8,395 to 4,484,295

RICHMOND— Virginia Works (Department of Workforce Development and Advancement) announced today that Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in December increased by 0.1 percentage points to 3.0 percent, which is 0.1 percentage points below the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in December, the labor force decreased by 1,763 to 4,623,066 as the number of unemployed residents increased by 6,632 to 138,771. The number of employed residents decreased by 8,395 to 4,484,295. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 0.7 percentage points below the national rate, which remained unchanged at 3.7 percent.

The Commonwealth's labor force participation rate remained unchanged at 66.9 percent in December, the lowest it has been since March 2012. The labor force participation rate measures the proportion of the civilian population age 16 and older that is employed or actively looking for work.

In December, Virginia's nonagricultural employment, from the monthly establishment survey, decreased by 11,800 to 4,157,000. November's preliminary estimate of employment, after revision, decreased by 3,600 to 4,168,800. In December, private sector employment decreased by 5,600 to 3,420,800 while government employment decreased by 6,200 to 736,200. Within that sector, federal government jobs decreased by 300 to 185,400, state government employment decreased by 5,500 to 158,900, and local government decreased by 400 to 391,900 over the month.

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Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for eleven industry sectors. In December, four experienced over-the-month job gains, two remained unchanged, and five experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Education and Health Services (+3,200) to 588,300. The second largest job gain occurred in Manufacturing (+600) to 247,600. The third largest job gain occurred in Leisure and Hospitality (+500) to 409,100. The other gains was in Construction (+100) to 214,400.

The largest job loss occurred in Government (-6,200) to 736,200. The second largest job loss occurred in Professional and Business Services (-6,000) to 805,100. The third largest job loss occurred in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (-2,600) to 668,200. The other losses were in Miscellaneous Services (-1,200) to 193,200; and Information (-200) to 70,900. Financial Activities and Mining and Logging remained unchanged.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted							
Industry	Employment			November 2023 to December 2023		December 2022 to December 2023	
	December 2023	November 2023	December 2022	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	4,157,000	4,168,800	4,111,900	-11,800	-0.3%	45,100	1.1%
Total Private	3,420,800	3,426,400	3,391,500	-5,600	-0.2%	29,300	0.9%
Goods Producing	469,000	468,300	467,200	700	0.1%	1,800	0.4%
Mining and Logging	7,000	7,000	7,200	0	0.0%	-200	-2.8%
Construction	214,400	214,300	214,700	100	0.0%	-300	-0.1%
Manufacturing	247,600	247,000	245,300	600	0.2%	2,300	0.9%
Service-Providing	3,688,000	3,700,500	3,644,700	-12,500	-0.3%	43,300	1.2%
Private Service Providing	2,951,800	2,958,100	2,924,300	-6,300	-0.2%	27,500	0.9%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	668,200	670,800	667,300	-2,600	-0.4%	900	0.1%
Information	70,900	71,100	71,400	-200	-0.3%	-500	-0.7%
Financial Activities	217,000	217,000	214,200	0	0.0%	2,800	1.3%
Professional and Business Services	805,100	811,100	807,800	-6,000	-0.7%	-2,700	-0.3%
Education and Health Services	588,300	585,100	567,800	3,200	0.5%	20,500	3.6%
Leisure and Hospitality	409,100	408,600	401,400	500	0.1%	7,700	1.9%
Miscellaneous Services	193,200	194,400	194,400	-1,200	-0.6%	-1,200	-0.6%
Government	736,200	742,400	720,400	-6,200	-0.8%	15,800	2.2%
Federal Government	185,400	185,700	184,400	-300	-0.2%	1,000	0.5%
State Government	158,900	164,400	153,800	-5,500	-3.3%	5,100	3.3%
Local Government	391,900	392,300	382,200	-400	-0.1%	9,700	2.5%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From December 2022 to December 2023, Virginia Works estimates that total nonfarm employment in Virginia increased by 45,100 to 4,157,000, private sector employment increased by 29,300 to 3,420,800,

and government employment increased by 15,800 to 736,200 jobs. Within that sector, federal government jobs increased by 1,000 to 185,400, state government employment increased by 5,100 to 158,900, and local government increased by 9,700 to 391,900 over the year.

For the eleven industry sectors in Virginia over the year, six experienced over-the-year job gains, and five experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Education and Health Services (+20,500) to 588,300. The second largest job gain occurred in Government (+15,800) to 736,200. The third largest job gain occurred in Leisure and Hospitality (+7,700) to 409,100. The other gains were in Financial Activities (+2,800) to 217,000; Manufacturing (+2,300) to 247,600; and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+900) to 668,200.

The largest job loss occurred in Professional and Business Services (-2,700) to 805,100. The second largest job loss occurred in Miscellaneous Services (-1,200) to 193,200. The third largest job loss occurred in Information (-500) to 70,900. The other losses were in Construction (-300) to 214,400; and Mining and Logging (-200) to 7,000.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted							
Area	Employment			November 2023 to December 2023		December 2022 to December 2023	
	December 2023	November 2023	December 2022	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	4,157,000	4,168,800	4,111,900	-11,800	-0.3%	45,100	1.1%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	82,000	81,800	81,700	200	0.2%	300	0.4%
Charlottesville MSA	126,500	126,300	121,900	200	0.2%	4,600	3.8%
Harrisonburg MSA	73,300	73,100	70,700	200	0.3%	2,600	3.7%
Lynchburg MSA	105,400	105,000	104,800	400	0.4%	600	0.6%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,561,100	1,570,100	1,549,900	-9,000	-0.6%	11,200	0.7%
Richmond MSA	718,900	718,300	702,600	600	0.1%	16,300	2.3%
Roanoke MSA	165,900	166,000	164,000	-100	-0.1%	1,900	1.2%
Staunton MSA	53,200	53,100	53,200	100	0.2%	0	0.0%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News MSA	798,000	797,100	794,200	900	0.1%	3,800	0.5%
Winchester MSA	72,000	71,400	70,700	600	0.8%	1,300	1.8%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In December, eight experienced over-the-month job gains, and two experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+900) to 798,000. The second largest job gain occurred in Richmond (+600) to 718,900. The third largest job gain occurred in Winchester (+600) to 72,000. The other gains were in Lynchburg (+400) to 105,400; Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+200) to 82,000; Charlottesville (+200) to 126,500; Harrisonburg (+200) to 73,300; and Staunton (+100) to 53,200.

The largest job loss occurred in Northern Virginia (-9,000) to 1,561,100. The second largest job loss occurred in Roanoke (-100) to 165,900.

Over the year, nine metropolitan areas experienced over-the-year job gains, one remained unchanged, and none experienced a decline. The largest job gain occurred in Richmond (+16,300) to 718,900. The second largest job gain occurred in Northern Virginia (+11,200) to 1,561,100. The third largest job gain occurred in Charlottesville (+4,600) to 126,500. The other gains were in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+3,800) to 798,000; Harrisonburg (+2,600) to 73,300; Roanoke (+1,900) to 165,900; Winchester (+1,300) to 72,000; Lynchburg (+600) to 105,400; and Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+300) to 82,000. Staunton remained unchanged.

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's unadjusted unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 2.7 percent in December. It has increased by 0.1 percentage points to 2.7 percent compared to last year. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed increased by 5,831 to 123,186, household employment increased by 84,023 to 4,424,565, and the labor force increased by 89,854 to 4,547,751. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 0.8 percentage points below the national unadjusted rate, which remained unchanged at 3.5 percent.

Compared to last month, the December unadjusted workweek for Virginia's 162,800 manufacturing production workers decreased by 0.1 to 40.0 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers increased by \$0.20 to \$25.89, and average weekly earnings increased by \$5.43 to \$1,035.60.

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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 April 2020, refer to the BLS December [Employment Situation](#) press release for details.

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of December 10-16, 2023.

Virginia Works (Department of Workforce Development and Advancement) plans to release the December local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, February 5, 2025. The data will be available on our website www.VirginiaWorks.com. The January 2024 statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Monday March 11, 2024.