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Virginia's Latest Unemployment Insurance Weekly Initial Claims at 2,895; Continued Claims at 21,687

RICHMOND— Virginia Works announced today that 2,895 unemployment insurance weekly **initial claims** were filed during the week ending January 17, 2026, which is 41.1 percent lower than last week's 4,915 claims and 1.3 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (2,858). Nearly 80 percent of claimants self-reported an employer which correlates to an associated industry. Based on this reporting, the top five industries (59 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (360); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (278); Retail Trade (245); Construction (242); and Health Care and Social Assistance (232).

Continued weeks claims (21,687) were 9.5 percent higher than last week (19,804) and were 26.4 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (17,161). Nearly 91 percent of claimants self-reported an employer which correlates to an associated industry. Based on this reporting, the top five industries (60 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (4,077); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,412); Manufacturing (2,366); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,559); and Construction (1,461).

Significant Layoffs and Announcements are available at the following websites:

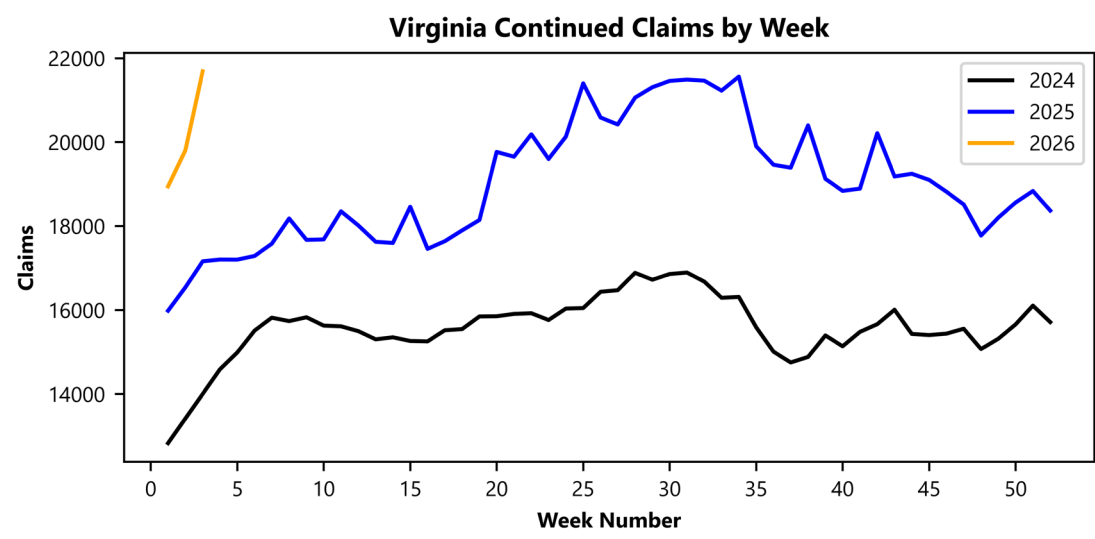
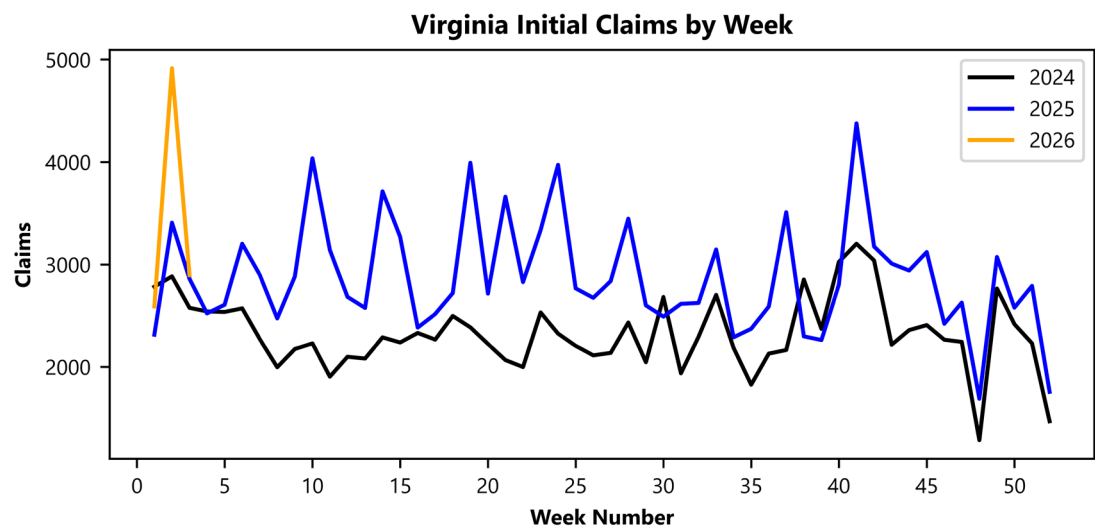
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Richmond, VA

Unemployment Claims Activity Comparison				
	Week Ending 01/17/2026	Week Ending 01/10/2026	Week Ending 01/03/2026	Last Year 01/18/2025
Initial Claims	2,895	4,915	2,590	2,858
Initial Change (%)	-2020 (-41.1%)	+2325 (+89.8%)	+834 (+47.5%)	+37 (+1.3%)
Continued Claims	21,687	19,804	18,946	17,161
Continued Change (%)	+1883 (+9.5%)	+858 (+4.5%)	+579 (+3.2%)	+4526 (+26.4%)



Virginia Continued Weeks Claimed as a Percentage of Total Workforce

A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemployment files a continued claim to claim benefits for that week of unemployment. On a weekly basis, continued claims reflect a good approximation of the current number of insured unemployed workers filing for UI benefits, and are a good indicator of labor market conditions. While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

The color-coded map below shows the distribution of this week's continued claims in Virginia's counties and cities, expressed as a percentage of each locality's labor force. This approach provides a more meaningful comparison across areas by adjusting for differences in labor force size. Yellow represents a lower percentage of continued claims relative to the labor force, while progressively darker shades transitioning from yellow to green and dark green indicate higher percentages. The legend at the bottom shows the color spectrum and its corresponding percentage ranges.

