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Louisiana Employment Nears All-Time High as Job Growth Continues

BATON ROUGE, LA – Seasonally adjusted data released today by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that Louisiana continues to show gains in nonfarm employment.

Important data series notes

The figures in today's release reflect data revisions made in the annual benchmarking process. Benchmarking is the BLS adjustment procedure to prior years' data, which impacts every state with the publication of January data. During this procedure, survey data used to prepare monthly reports on nonfarm employment, the labor force, and unemployment rates are replaced by the actual employment data in the quarterly wage and tax reports filed by Louisiana employers. The two data sets that undergo benchmarking are the Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) programs.

The LAUS program revised five years of previous data to incorporate new inputs and population data. CES data was updated, at a minimum, from April 2024 through December 2025.

Near all-time employment highs

Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment totaled 1,998,600 jobs in January 2026. This represents an **increase of 1,400 jobs from the benchmarked December 2025 figure of 1,997,200 jobs**, and an **increase of 2,200 jobs from the benchmarked January 2025 figure**. Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment has seen over-the-year employment gains in 53 of the last 58 months. This also shows gains over the month in 27 of the last 39 months.

Private sector employment totaled 1,674,300 jobs, gaining **1,600 jobs over the month** and **2,600 jobs from one year ago**. The private sector has also experienced **over-the-year gains in 53 of the last 58 months**.

Unemployment rate

Louisiana's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was **4.3 percent**, up 0.1 percentage points from December 2025. The January 2026 rate is unchanged from the January 2025 rate.

- **Employed individuals:** 2,022,494 (up 4,009 from December, and up 26,021 from one year ago)
- **Unemployed individuals:** 90,316 (up 751 from December, and up 324 from one year ago)

Industries with notable job gains (seasonally adjusted)

Month-over-month

- Construction: +2,100
- Trade, Transportation, and Utilities +500
- Private Education and Health Services: +500

Year-over-year

- Private Education and Health Services: +4,000
- Manufacturing: +2,100
- Financial Activities: +500

Regional employment trends

Seasonally adjusted data for January 2026 shows annual growth in five of Louisiana's ten metropolitan areas:

- Alexandria: 62,200 jobs (100 more from December, but 200 less than one year ago)
- Baton Rouge: 434,600 jobs (1,100 more than December, but 200 less than one year ago)
- Hammond: 49,500 jobs (no change from December and no change than one year ago)
- Houma: 86,300 jobs (200 more than December but 300 less than one year ago)
- Lafayette: 189,100 jobs (500 more than December and 1,800 more than one year ago)
- Lake Charles: 106,200 jobs (no change from December, but 1,600 more than one year ago)
- Monroe: 92,400 jobs (no change from December, but 1,200 more than one year ago)
- New Orleans: 468,900 jobs (1,100 less than December and 6,800 less than one year ago)
- Shreveport: 171,400 jobs (500 more than December and 600 more than one year ago)
- Slidell: 102,800 jobs (500 more than December and 700 more than one year ago)

Upcoming data releases

Louisiana Works will no longer publish a separate press release for MSA and parish data. All relevant data will be available on our website and the Bureau of Labor Statistics website on the below dates.

January 2026 MSA and Parish data: April 16

February 2026 Statewide data press release: April 22

February 2026 MSA and Parish data: April 29

Important changes to Not Seasonally Adjusted data

Due to budget constraints, the BLS will be eliminating approximately 900 data series nationally that have low or declining employment and/or poor sample coverage.

Louisiana Statewide not seasonally adjusted employment is losing 16 data series: Merchant Wholesalers-Durable Goods, Merchant Wholesalers-Nondurable Goods, Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers, Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers, Food and Beverage Retailers, Grocery and Convenience Retailers, General Merchandise Retailers, Department Stores, Health and Personal Care Retailers, Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers, Clothing, Clothing Accessories, Shoe, and Jewelry Retailers, Telecommunications, Credit Intermediation and Related Activities including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank, Depository Credit Intermediation including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank, Insurance Carriers and Related Activities, and Repair and Maintenance.

The Baton Rouge MSA is losing 6 series: Grocery and Convenience Retailers, General Merchandise Retailers, Department Stores, Finance and Insurance, Depository Credit Intermediation including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank, and Food Services and Drinking Places.

The Lafayette MSA is losing 1 series: General Merchandise Retailers.

The New Orleans MSA is losing 9 series: Specialty Trade Contractors, Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods, Grocery and Convenience Retailers, General Merchandise Retailers, Finance and Insurance, Credit Intermediation and Related Activities including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank, Depository Credit Intermediation including Monetary Authorities - Central Bank, Administrative and Support Services, and Employment Services.

The Shreveport MSA is losing 3 series: General Merchandise Retailers, Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries, and Gambling Industries.

Not seasonally adjusted data

- Total nonfarm employment: **1,988,200**, down 18,600 over the month but up 4,000 over the year.
- Total private employment: **1,662,800**, down 16,800 over the month but up 4,300 over the year.
- Unemployment rate: **4.5 percent**, up 0.6 percentage points from November and up 0.1 percentage points from one year ago.
- Employed individuals: 1,996,003, down 39,317 over the month, but up 20,434 from last year.
- Unemployed individuals: 94,231, up 10,704 over the month and up 3,829 from last year.

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Seasonally Adjusted vs. Not Seasonally Adjusted Data

Employment data can be viewed in two different ways: seasonally adjusted or not seasonally adjusted. Understanding the difference helps explain why certain numbers move from month to month.

Seasonally adjusted data removes predictable seasonal patterns that occur every year, such as holiday hiring, school calendars, and agricultural cycles. By filtering out these recurring effects, seasonally adjusted data provides a clearer picture of month-to-month changes. It is most useful for tracking short-term trends and comparing Louisiana to other states and the nation.

Not seasonally adjusted data reflects the raw numbers without any adjustments for seasonal influences. These data are most helpful for examining year-over-year changes, because comparing the same month across different years already accounts for seasonal patterns.

Louisiana Works primarily relies on seasonally adjusted data to describe the state's current employment conditions. Both types of data are valuable but serve different purposes depending on the trend being analyzed.

To view all available employment data, visit [Louisiana's Occupational Information System \(LOIS\)](#). Under "Data and Statistics", select "Labor Force Data" for employed and unemployed counts or "Sectoral Employment" for Current Employment Statistics (CES) data.

Data Considerations

All Bureau of Labor Statistics data are preliminary and subject to revision each month, quarter, and year. Updated figures for prior months are available through BLS databases on [bls.gov](#) once new data are published.

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About Louisiana Works

Louisiana Works is the state's comprehensive workforce solution that transforms lives by connecting people to meaningful employment opportunities and empowering businesses with skilled talent. From customers to employers, we bring together solutions for our communities in Louisiana by eliminating barriers and streamlining access to essential workforce services. For more information, visit [www.laworks.net](#).