



For Immediate Release: June 24, 2025
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North Carolina’s May Employment Figures Released

RALEIGH — The state’s seasonally adjusted May 2025 unemployment rate was 3.7 percent, unchanged from April’s revised rate. The national rate was unchanged at 4.2 percent.

North Carolina’s unemployment rate increased 0.1 of a percentage point from a year ago. The number of people employed decreased 5,637 over the month to 5,092,894 and decreased 4,394 over the year. The number of people unemployed increased 284 over the month to 196,576 and increased 6,683 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, increased 400 to 5,091,900 in May. Major industries experiencing increases were Construction, 1,600; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 1,300; Government, 300; Leisure & Hospitality Services, 100; and Private Education & Health Services, 100. Major industries experiencing decreases were Professional & Business Services, 2,200; Manufacturing, 400; Information, 200; Financial Activities, 100; and Other Services, 100. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates since May 2024

	May 2024	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025
N.C.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
U.S.	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2

Estimates are subject to monthly and annual revisions

Since May 2024, Total Nonfarm jobs increased 67,900 with the Total Private sector increasing by 54,600 and Government increasing by 13,300. Major industries experiencing increases were Private Education & Health Services, 18,100; Professional & Business Services, 15,500; Government, 13,300; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 13,200; Construction, 7,900; Other Services, 4,800; Financial Activities, 1,300; and Mining & Logging, 200. Major industries experiencing decreases over the year were Manufacturing, 5,400; Information, 800; and Leisure & Hospitality Services, 200.

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, July 2, 2025 when the county unemployment rates for May 2025 will be released.

These data can be accessed on the Commerce website at <https://d4.nccommerce.com/>

North Carolina Department of Commerce

Labor and Economic Analysis Division

NORTH CAROLINA and U.S. LABOR FORCE DATA

North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M. Tuesday, June 24, 2025

	May 2025	April 2025	May 2024	Month Ago		Year Ago	
				Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
North Carolina <i>(Local Area Unemployment Statistics)</i>							
<i>Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	5,289,470	5,294,823	5,287,181	-5,353	-0.1	2,289	< 0.1
Employed	5,092,894	5,098,531	5,097,288	-5,637	-0.1	-4,394	-0.1
Unemployed	196,576	196,292	189,893	284	0.1	6,683	3.5
Unemployment Rate	3.7	3.7	3.6	0.0	xxx	0.1	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	5,276,563	5,288,540	5,303,053	-11,977	-0.2	-26,490	-0.5
Employed	5,084,132	5,108,141	5,121,081	-24,009	-0.5	-36,949	-0.7
Unemployed	192,431	180,399	181,972	12,032	6.7	10,459	5.7
Unemployment Rate	3.6	3.4	3.4	0.2	xxx	0.2	xxx
United States <i>(Current Population Survey)</i>							
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	170,510,000	171,135,000	167,799,000	-625,000	-0.4	xxx	xxx
Employed	163,273,000	163,969,000	161,164,000	-696,000	-0.4	xxx	xxx
Unemployed	7,237,000	7,166,000	6,635,000	71,000	1.0	xxx	xxx
Unemployment Rate	4.2	4.2	4.0	0.0	xxx	xxx	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	170,216,000	170,650,000	167,576,000	-434,000	-0.3	xxx	xxx
Employed	163,401,000	164,069,000	161,341,000	-668,000	-0.4	xxx	xxx
Unemployed	6,815,000	6,582,000	6,235,000	233,000	3.5	xxx	xxx
Unemployment Rate	4.0	3.9	3.7	0.1	xxx	xxx	xxx

Annual population adjustments affect the comparability of national labor force estimates over time. Estimates are subject to monthly and annual revisions.

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NORTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT DATA

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	May 2025	April 2025	May 2024	Month Ago		Year Ago	
				Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
North Carolina <i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i>							
Seasonally Adjusted							
Total Nonfarm	5,091,900	5,091,500	5,024,000	400	< 0.1	67,900	1.4
Total Private	4,310,600	4,310,500	4,256,000	100	< 0.1	54,600	1.3
Mining & Logging	6,100	6,100	5,900	0	> -0.1	200	3.4
Construction	279,500	277,900	271,600	1,600	0.6	7,900	2.9
Manufacturing	461,300	461,700	466,700	-400	-0.1	-5,400	-1.2
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	947,800	946,500	934,600	1,300	0.1	13,200	1.4
Information	84,600	84,800	85,400	-200	-0.2	-800	-0.9
Financial Activities	310,200	310,300	308,900	-100	> -0.1	1,300	0.4
Professional & Business Services	760,300	762,500	744,800	-2,200	-0.3	15,500	2.1
Private Education & Health Services	714,800	714,700	696,700	100	< 0.1	18,100	2.6
Leisure & Hospitality Services	544,400	544,300	544,600	100	< 0.1	-200	0.0
Other Services	201,600	201,700	196,800	-100	> -0.1	4,800	2.4
Government	781,300	781,000	768,000	300	< 0.1	13,300	1.7
North Carolina <i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i>							
Not Seasonally Adjusted							
Total Nonfarm	5,111,800	5,090,500	5,048,600	21,300	0.4	63,200	1.3
Total Private	4,315,000	4,295,900	4,263,800	19,100	0.4	51,200	1.2
Mining & Logging	6,100	6,100	5,900	0	0.0	200	3.4
Construction	281,000	277,600	271,600	3,400	1.2	9,400	3.5
Manufacturing	460,400	460,400	466,800	0	0.0	-6,400	-1.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	943,400	938,400	929,900	5,000	0.5	13,500	1.5
Information	84,200	84,500	85,200	-300	-0.4	-1,000	-1.2
Financial Activities	310,100	308,700	308,000	1,400	0.5	2,100	0.7
Professional & Business Services	757,500	762,200	743,500	-4,700	-0.6	14,000	1.9
Private Education & Health Services	714,600	716,800	698,100	-2,200	-0.3	16,500	2.4
Leisure & Hospitality Services	555,800	539,700	557,300	16,100	3.0	-1,500	-0.3
Other Services	201,900	201,500	197,500	400	0.2	4,400	2.2
Government	796,800	794,600	784,800	2,200	0.3	12,000	1.5

2025 estimates for the current month are preliminary. Estimates for the previous month have undergone monthly revision.
2024 estimates have undergone annual revision.
Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding.

Accessing Data

The data presented in this press release, as well as historical data, can be accessed from NC Commerce's Demand Driven Data Delivery ("D4") system:

<https://d4.nccommerce.com/LausSelection.aspx>

<https://d4.nccommerce.com/CesSelection.aspx>

Technical Notes

This release presents labor force and unemployment estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Also presented are nonfarm payroll employment estimates from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The LAUS and CES programs are both federal-state cooperative endeavors.

Labor force and unemployment--from the LAUS program

Definitions. The labor force and unemployment estimates are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as bad weather, labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on lay-off expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

Method of estimation. Statewide estimates are produced using an estimation algorithm administered by the BLS. This method, which underwent substantial enhancement at the beginning of 2021, utilizes data from several sources, including the CPS, the CES, and state unemployment insurance (UI) programs. Each month, census division estimates are controlled to national totals, and state estimates are then controlled to their respective division totals. Substate estimates are controlled to their respective state totals. For more information about LAUS estimation procedures, see the BLS website at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/lau/calculation.htm>

Revisions. Labor force and unemployment data for the previous month reflect adjustments made in each subsequent month, while data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year. The monthly revisions incorporate updated model inputs, while the annually revised estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. In most years, historical data for the most recent five years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates.

Seasonal adjustment. The LAUS program seasonally adjusts statewide estimates using an X-11 type of seasonal adjustment filter. These estimates are then smoothed using a filtering procedure to remove irregular fluctuations from the seasonally-adjusted series. For more information about seasonal adjustment and smoothing procedures, see the BLS website at <https://www.bls.gov/lau/lauseas.htm>.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the delineations that were issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget on July 21, 2023. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available online at <https://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm>.

Employment--from the CES program

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

Method of estimation. CES State and Area employment data are produced using several estimation procedures. Where possible these data are produced using a "weighted link relative" estimation technique in which a ratio of current-month weighted employment to that of the previous-month weighted employment is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are then obtained by multiplying these ratios by the previous month's employment estimates. The weighted link relative technique is utilized for data series where the sample size meets certain statistical criteria.

For some employment series, relatively small sample sizes limit the reliability of the weighted link-relative estimates. In these cases, BLS uses the CES small domain model (SDM) to generate employment estimates. The SDM combines the direct sample estimates (described above) and forecasts of historical (benchmarked) data to decrease the volatility of the estimates. For more detailed information about the CES small domain model, refer to the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Annual revisions. Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports that are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months. Information on recent benchmark revisions is available online at www.bls.gov/web/laus/benchmark.pdf.

Seasonal adjustment. Payroll employment data are seasonally adjusted at the statewide supersector level. In some cases, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is computed by aggregating the independently adjusted supersector series. In other cases, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is independently adjusted. Payroll employment data are seasonally adjusted concurrently, using all available estimates, including those for the current month, to develop sample-based seasonal factors. Concurrent sample-based factors are created every month for the current month's preliminary estimate as well as the previous month's final estimate.

Reliability of the estimates

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used.

Model-based error measures for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data and for over-the-month and over-the-year changes to LAUS estimates are available online at www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm.

Measures of sampling error for state CES data at the total nonfarm and supersector levels are available online at <https://www.bls.gov/sac/additional-resources/reliability-of-state-and-area-estimates.htm>.

Release Dates

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, July 2, 2025 when the county unemployment rates for May 2025 will be released.

The complete data release schedule through 2025 can be accessed here:

<https://www.commerce.nc.gov/documents/release-dates-unemployment-rates>