



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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The Virginia unemployment rate fell to 6.1 percent in August while total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 68,000

— 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 fell 1.8 percentage points in August to 6.1 percent, which is 3.4 percentage points above the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in August, the labor force grew by 26,808, or 0.6 percent, to 4,349,945, as the number of unemployed residents declined by 74,233. The number of employed residents increased by 101,041 to 4,082,536. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which fell to 8.4 percent.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, rose by 68,000 jobs in August to 3,850,200. July's preliminary estimates were revised upward by 7,200, adding to that month's job gains. In August, private sector employment increased by 27,200 jobs to 3,132,400, while public sector payrolls increased by 40,800 jobs to 717,800.

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Employment rose in eight of eleven major industry sectors, was unchanged in one, and declined in two. The largest job gain during August occurred in **government** with a gain of 40,800 jobs to 717,800. Much of the increase within that sector occurred in local government (+32,100 jobs), but employment also rose in federal government (+5,700 jobs) and state government (+3,000 jobs). Other employment gains included **trade and transportation** (+10,500 jobs) to 643,800, **leisure and hospitality** (+6,300 jobs) to 324,900, **professional and business services** (+4,700 jobs) to 735,900, **miscellaneous services** (+3,300 jobs) to 193,500, **construction** (+1,400 jobs) to 208,400, **education and health services** (+1,300 jobs) to 518,500, and **finance** (+700 jobs) to 207,500. **Information** was unchanged at 66,300 jobs over the month while **mining** employment dropped by 100 jobs to 7,000 and **manufacturing** declined by 900 jobs to 226,600 in August.

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			July 2020 to August 2020		August 2019 to August 2020	
	August 2020	July 2020	August 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	3,850,200	3,782,200	4,062,800	68,000	1.8%	-212,600	-5.2%
Total Private Sector	3,132,400	3,105,200	3,328,200	27,200	0.9%	-195,800	-5.9%
Goods-Producing	442,000	441,600	454,600	400	0.1%	-12,600	-2.8%
Mining	7,000	7,100	7,800	-100	-1.4%	-800	-10.3%
Construction	208,400	207,000	204,000	1,400	0.7%	4,400	2.2%
Manufacturing	226,600	227,500	242,800	-900	-0.4%	-16,200	-6.7%
Service-Providing	3,408,200	3,340,600	3,608,200	67,600	2.0%	-200,000	-5.5%
Private Service-Providing	2,690,400	2,663,600	2,873,600	26,800	1.0%	-183,200	-6.4%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	643,800	633,300	658,000	10,500	1.7%	-14,200	-2.2%
Information	66,300	66,300	68,200	0	0.0%	-1,900	-2.8%
Finance	207,500	206,800	212,400	700	0.3%	-4,900	-2.3%
Professional and Business Services	735,900	731,200	769,300	4,700	0.6%	-33,400	-4.3%
Education and Health Services	518,500	517,200	555,300	1,300	0.3%	-36,800	-6.6%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	324,900	318,600	407,900	6,300	2.0%	-83,000	-20.3%
Miscellaneous Services	193,500	190,200	202,500	3,300	1.7%	-9,000	-4.4%
Government	717,800	677,000	734,600	40,800	6.0%	-16,800	-2.3%
Federal Government	190,400	184,700	182,000	5,700	3.1%	8,400	4.6%
State Government	149,200	146,200	160,700	3,000	2.1%	-11,500	-7.2%
Local Government	378,200	346,100	391,900	32,100	9.3%	-13,700	-3.5%

**Current month's estimates are preliminary.*

From August 2019 to August 2020, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia lost 212,600 jobs, a decrease of 5.2%. Over-the-year employment growth in Virginia had been positive for 72 consecutive

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months leading up to April's sharp decline. In August, the private sector recorded an over-the-year loss of 195,800 jobs, while employment in the public sector lost 16,800 jobs.

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 83,000 jobs (-20.3%). The next largest over-the-year job loss occurred in **education and health services**, down 36,800 jobs (-6.6%). **Professional and business services** experienced the third largest over-the-year job loss of 33,400 jobs (-4.3%). **Government** employment declined by 16,800 (-2.3%). Within government, there were decreases in local government employment (-13,700 jobs) and state government employment (-11,500 jobs). Federal government experienced an increase in employment (+8,400 jobs). **Manufacturing** lost 16,200 jobs (-6.7%) while **trade and transportation** shed 14,200 jobs (-2.2%). Other losses were in **miscellaneous services**, down 9,000 jobs (-4.4%); **finance**, down 4,900 jobs (-2.3%); **information**, down 1,900 jobs (-2.8%); and **mining** down 800 jobs (-10.3%). The sole increase occurred in **construction**, up 4,400 jobs (+2.2%).

Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			July 2020 to August 2020		August 2019 to August 2020	
	August 2020	July 2020	August 2019	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	3,850,200	3,782,200	4,062,800	68,000	1.8%	-212,600	-5.2%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA	74,700	71,700	78,400	3,000	4.2%	-3,700	-4.7%
Charlottesville MSA	116,000	114,900	120,900	1,100	1.0%	-4,900	-4.1%
Harrisonburg MSA	66,100	64,600	69,300	1,500	2.3%	-3,200	-4.6%
Lynchburg MSA	100,400	99,500	105,500	900	0.9%	-5,100	-4.8%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,437,800	1,407,700	1,518,300	30,100	2.1%	-80,500	-5.3%
Richmond MSA	648,500	639,800	685,100	8,700	1.4%	-36,600	-5.3%
Roanoke MSA	153,600	152,300	163,000	1,300	0.9%	-9,400	-5.8%
Staunton-Waynesboro MSA	52,800	52,600	51,700	200	0.4%	1,100	2.1%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	753,500	745,800	795,100	7,700	1.0%	-41,600	-5.2%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	60,300	60,100	66,100	200	0.3%	-5,800	-8.8%

*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In August, all ten metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains. The largest absolute job increase occurred in Northern Virginia (+30,100 jobs). The second largest absolute job gain occurred in Richmond (+8,700 jobs). The third largest absolute job gain was in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+7,700 jobs). Other increases include Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+3,000 jobs), Harrisonburg (+1,500 jobs), Roanoke (+1,300 jobs), Charlottesville (+1,100 jobs), Lynchburg (+900 jobs), Staunton-Waynesboro (+200 jobs), and Winchester (+200 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 80,500 jobs (-5.3%). Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ranked second, with a loss of 41,600 jobs (-5.2%). Richmond ranked third with a decline of 36,600 jobs (-5.3%). Staunton-Waynesboro added 1,100 jobs (+2, 1%) and was the only metropolitan area with a positive change over the year.

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate decreased 1.7 percentage points in August to 6.3 percent, and was up 3.4 percentage points from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed increased by 144,567, household employment decreased by 218,500, and the labor force decreased by 73,933. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which fell by 2.0 percentage points in August to 8.5 percent.

Compared to last month, the August **unadjusted** workweek for Virginia's 152,700 manufacturing production workers increased by 0.8 hours to 40.7 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers decreased by \$.04 to \$20.06 in August and average weekly earnings rose \$14.45 to \$816.44.

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

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of August 9-15, 2020.

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the August local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, September 30, 2020. The data will be available on our website, www.VirginiaWorks.com.

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