



LABOR SITUATION

Office of Research
Danté Bartolomeo, Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 2026 Data
CT Unemployment Rate = 4.7%
US Unemployment Rate = 4.4%

CT jobless rate up to 4.7%; February job losses (-4,200) offset January gains

WETHERSFIELD, April 21, 2026 – Connecticut's nonfarm payrolls dropped 4,200 jobs (-0.2%) in February 2026, to a level of 1,717,000 (preliminary, seasonally adjusted data), 1,000 jobs higher than a year ago. The state's unemployment rate rose two-tenths of a percentage point to 4.7%. The Connecticut jobless rate is now up a full percentage point since February 2025 (3.7%). The statewide January 2026 nonfarm job estimate was revised lower to a gain of 4,200 (0.2%) from the initially posted 5,300 gain (0.3%) on the preliminary release. Connecticut's unemployment rate is above the U.S. rate (4.4% in February 2026) for the second month in a row. *This labor statistics release presents current estimated data from two different monthly surveys (businesses and households) produced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in association with the states.*

"Seasonal adjustment factors in the data and the weather have caused an up-and-down pattern at the start of 2026," said Patrick Flaherty, Director of the Office of Research at the Connecticut Department of Labor. "January's data were reported before the cold weather and storms of late January and early February. Manufacturing, which lost jobs in 2025, has now added jobs for two consecutive months."

Connecticut's private sector employment was down by 4,000 positions (-0.3%) in February 2026 to 1,481,900 but is up by 2,200 jobs (0.1%) from the February 2025 level. January was revised to a 3,900 gain (previously +5,000). The aggregate **government supersector** was also lower by 200 (-0.1%) in February to a level of 235,100 jobs and is now lower by 1,200 (-0.5%) positions over the year. Federal government employment in Connecticut is down 900 jobs (-4.9%, 17,400) from the year ago level. *Connecticut's total government supersector consists of all civilian federal, state, local, and tribal government employment, including public education and Native American casino jobs located on federally recognized tribal reservations.*

Just three of the ten major industry *supersectors* added jobs in February 2026, while seven *supersectors* declined.

The three industry *supersectors* that increased employment in February 2026 included:

Increasing Supersectors			
Industry Supersector	Amount of Increase	Percent Change	February 2026 Employment
Information	+500	1.6%	30,900
Manufacturing	+400	0.3%	152,600
Education & Health Services	+400	0.1%	380,700

The seven industry *supersector* that declined jobs in February 2026 were:

Declining Supersectors			
Industry Supersector	Amount of Decrease	Percent Change	February 2026 Employment
Professional and Business Services	-1,600	-0.7%	220,900
Other Services	-1,200	-1.8%	63,800
Construction & Mining	-900	-1.4%	64,700
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	-900	-0.3%	296,400
Leisure & Hospitality	-500	-0.3%	155,200
Financial Activities	-200	-0.2%	116,700
Government	-200	-0.1%	235,100

Connecticut Labor Market Areas (LMAs): Four of the five major Connecticut **LMAs** (the 5 Metros formed from the CT Councils of Governments or COG regions) that are seasonally adjusted by the BLS (about 93.7% coverage of the state) posted nonfarm job losses in February 2026, while the **Norwich-New London-Willimantic LMA** (0.2%, 129,300) increased by 300 positions. The largest **Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford LMA** (-0.2%, 619,400) led in numerical losses, dropping 1,400 jobs while the **Bridgeport-Stamford-Danbury LMA** (-0.3%, 411,400) decreased employment by 1,200 jobs had the largest percentage loss. The **New Haven LMA** (-0.2%, 288,700) was lower by 700 payrolls, and the **Waterbury-Shelton LMA** (-0.1%, 159,200) declined 200 jobs.

Note: The five major Connecticut LMAs are independently estimated from the statewide data by the BLS and cover over 93% of the nonfarm employment in the state. As a result, estimates will not exactly sum to the statewide total. Furthermore, monthly Seasonal Adjustment (SA) on these five labor markets may undergo some shifting seasonality effects due to the concurrent seasonal process exaggerating some movements on the new geographies due to the lack of more precise historical seasonal factors.

Hours and Earnings: The February 2026 **private sector** average work week, *not seasonally adjusted*, averaged 33.7 hours (AWH), higher by three-tenths of an hour from the February 2025 average (0.9%, 33.4). Average hourly earnings (AHE) at \$40.26 in February 2026, *not seasonally adjusted*, were up by \$0.97 (2.5%) from the January 2025 average estimate of \$39.29. The resulting February 2026 private sector average weekly earnings (AWE = AWH x AHE) were estimated at \$1,356.76, higher by \$44.47 (3.4%) from a year ago (\$1,312.29). The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U, U.S. City Average, not seasonally adjusted - all items index) for February 2026 was up 2.4% from a year ago.

Note: Current all-employee private sector hours and earnings estimates can be volatile due to fluctuating sample responses.

Labor Force Data (residential household survey)

The preliminary February 2026 unemployment rate for Connecticut was estimated by the BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics program (LAUS) to be **4.7%** (seasonally adjusted). CT's unemployment rate is up two-tenths percentage point from the January 2026 rate (4.5%) and a full percentage point from a year ago (3.7%). The U.S. unemployment rate for February 2026 was 4.4%, up one-tenth of a percentage point (4.3%) from January 2026 and up two-tenths of a percentage point over-the-year from February 2025 (4.2%).

Average weekly initial unemployment claims (*not seasonally adjusted*) for first-time filers (AWIC) in Connecticut for February 2026 were 3,248. This is 821 (-20.2%) claims lower than January 2026 (4,069) but higher by 503 claims (18.3%) than the February 2025 (2,745) level.

The nonfarm employment estimate, derived from a survey of businesses, is a measure of jobs in the state; the unemployment rate and labor force estimates are based on a household survey and measure the work status of people who live in Connecticut. Because of the distinct differences both in concept and scope between the two estimates, nonfarm employment and unemployment do not necessarily move in the same economic direction month to month. Job and employment estimates are best understood in the context of their movement over several months rather than observed changes in a single month's value.

Preliminary March 2026 Labor Situation release date is Tuesday, May 5, 2026.

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CTDOL.Communications@ct.gov

Labor Market Information is available at: www.ctworkforce.info
 200 Folly Brook Boulevard, Wethersfield, CT 06109-1114 www.ct.gov/dol
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

Jobs - by Place of Work

CONNECTICUT AND THE UNITED STATES - Seasonally Adjusted

	February 2026 P	January 2026 R	December 2025 R	November 2025	February 2025	Over Month Change	Over Month Rate	Over Year Change	Over Year Rate
CONNECTICUT	1,717,000	1,721,200	1,717,000	1,716,600	1,716,000	-4,200	-0.2%	1,000	0.1%
Total Private	1,481,900	1,485,900	1,482,000	1,481,800	1,479,700	-4,000	-0.3%	2,200	0.1%
Goods Producing Industries									
Mining	400	500	500	500	500	-100	-20.0%	-100	-20.0%
Construction	64,300	65,100	64,800	64,800	64,000	-800	-1.2%	300	0.5%
Manufacturing	152,600	152,200	151,200	151,800	153,800	400	0.3%	-1,200	-0.8%
Durable Goods	119,100	118,900	118,200	118,300	120,100	200	0.2%	-1,000	-0.8%
Nondurable Goods	33,500	33,300	33,000	33,500	33,700	200	0.6%	-200	-0.6%
Service Providing Industries									
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	296,400	297,300	296,300	296,300	298,600	-900	-0.3%	-2,200	-0.7%
Wholesale	59,800	59,900	59,700	59,600	60,200	-100	-0.2%	-400	-0.7%
Retail	162,900	162,800	162,900	163,900	164,900	100	0.1%	-2,000	-1.2%
Transp, Warehousing & Utilities	73,700	74,600	73,700	72,800	73,500	-900	-1.2%	200	0.3%
Information	30,900	30,400	30,100	30,000	30,600	500	1.6%	300	1.0%
Financial Activities	116,700	116,900	117,300	117,500	116,900	-200	-0.2%	-200	-0.2%
Finance & Insurance	97,100	97,300	97,600	97,800	97,500	-200	-0.2%	-400	-0.4%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	19,600	19,600	19,700	19,700	19,400	0	0.0%	200	1.0%
Professional & Business Services	220,900	222,500	221,300	220,700	221,900	-1,600	-0.7%	-1,000	-0.5%
Prof, Scientific & Tech Services	102,300	102,200	101,500	101,300	102,600	100	0.1%	-300	-0.3%
Management of Companies	30,300	30,600	30,000	30,100	30,500	-300	-1.0%	-200	-0.7%
Admn & Support & Waste Mgt Serv	88,300	89,700	89,800	89,300	88,800	-1,400	-1.6%	-500	-0.6%
Educational & Health Services	380,700	380,300	379,800	379,500	374,100	400	0.1%	6,600	1.8%
Private Educational Services	73,500	74,100	75,000	74,900	75,400	-600	-0.8%	-1,900	-2.5%
Health Care & Social Assistance	307,200	306,200	304,800	304,600	298,700	1,000	0.3%	8,500	2.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	155,200	155,700	155,900	156,300	154,700	-500	-0.3%	500	0.3%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	29,400	29,500	29,600	29,200	28,700	-100	-0.3%	700	2.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	125,800	126,200	126,300	127,100	126,000	-400	-0.3%	-200	-0.2%
Other Services	63,800	65,000	64,800	64,400	64,600	-1,200	-1.8%	-800	-1.2%
Government**	235,100	235,300	235,000	234,800	236,300	-200	-0.1%	-1,200	-0.5%
UNITED STATES	158,466,000	158,558,000	158,432,000	158,449,000	158,310,000	-92,000	-0.1%	156,000	0.1%

LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs, COG-based)

Labor Market Area employment estimates are made independently of Statewide estimates.

Seasonally Adjusted data (Metros) Metropolitan Statistical Areas (5 CT MSAs)	February 2026 P	January 2026 R	December 2025 R	November 2025	February 2025	Over Month Change	Over Month Rate	Over Year Change	Over Year Rate
Bridgeport-Stamford-Danbury	411,400	412,600	412,600	412,300	409,500	-1,200	-0.3%	1,900	0.5%
Hartford	619,400	620,800	620,500	620,300	619,800	-1,400	-0.2%	-400	-0.1%
New Haven	288,700	289,400	289,300	288,600	288,200	-700	-0.2%	500	0.2%
Norwich-New London-Willimantic	129,300	129,000	129,300	129,300	128,000	300	0.2%	1,300	1.0%
Waterbury - Shelton	159,200	159,400	159,100	159,200	160,900	-200	-0.1%	-1,700	-1.1%
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted data (Non-Classified Areas, 2 Micropolitan Statistical Areas - Micros, State estimated - not BLS)</i>									
Putnam - Northeastern	28,600	28,700	29,000	29,100	28,400	-100	-0.3%	200	0.7%
Torrington - Northwest Hills	37,000	37,300	38,000	38,000	36,900	-300	-0.8%	100	0.3%

* Less than 0.05% ** Includes Native American tribal government employment

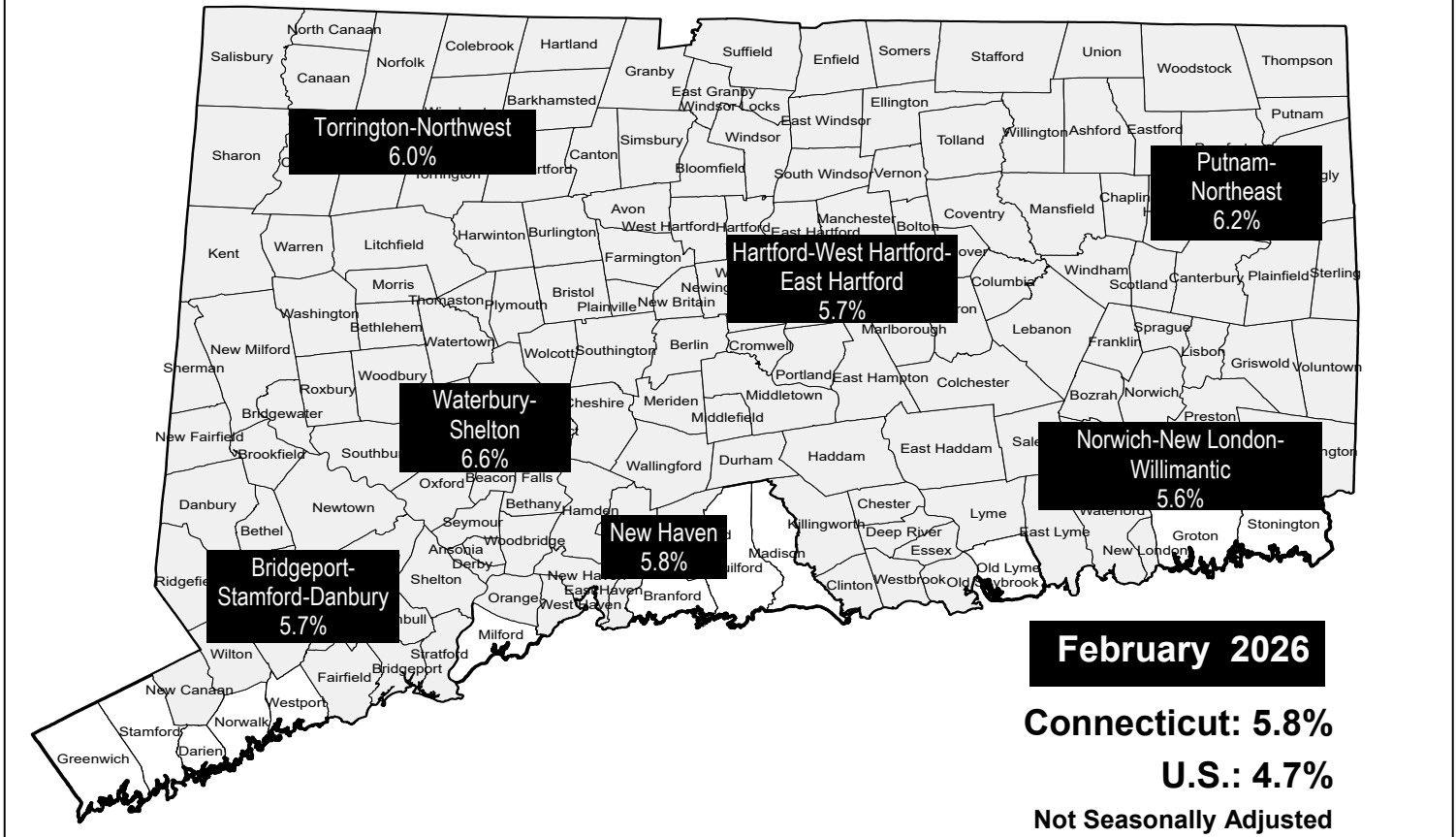
P = Preliminary R = Revised

Starting in March, 2011, our monthly statewide and major LMA nonfarm job estimates have been taken over by the US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is the final phase of transition in this program, which began in 2008. As a result of changes in the estimation procedures, you are likely to see more variability in month-to-month estimates of job counts. Caution should be used in interpreting any single month's estimate. The data are best interpreted to identify trends and cycles over several months and quarters. If you have any questions about these changes, please email us at: dol.lmi@ct.gov. COG - Council of Government regions.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Not Seasonally Adjusted

Labor Market Areas



HOURS AND EARNINGS

CONNECTICUT Statewide - Not Seasonally Adjusted

Average Weekly Earnings

Average Weekly Hours

Average Hourly Earnings

	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours				Average Hourly Earnings				
	Feb. 2026 P	Feb. 2025	Change over Yr.	Jan. 2026 R	Feb. 2026 P	Feb. 2025	Change over Yr.	Jan. 2026 R	Feb. 2026 P	Feb. 2025	Change over Yr.	Jan. 2026 R
Private Industry All Employees	\$1,356.76	\$1,312.29	\$44.47	\$1,340.33	33.7	33.4	0.3	33.3	\$40.26	\$39.29	\$0.97	\$40.25
Manufacturing*												
Production Workers	\$1,170.12	\$1,224.11	-\$53.99	\$1,165.63	40.1	39.5	0.6	40.6	\$29.18	\$30.99	-\$1.81	\$28.71

* Production worker data have been impacted by the loss of a large, high-paying manufacturer from the monthly sample.

P = Preliminary

R = Revised

Hours and earnings are also developed for the state's major industry sectors and Labor Market Areas. They can be found on our website at: www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi

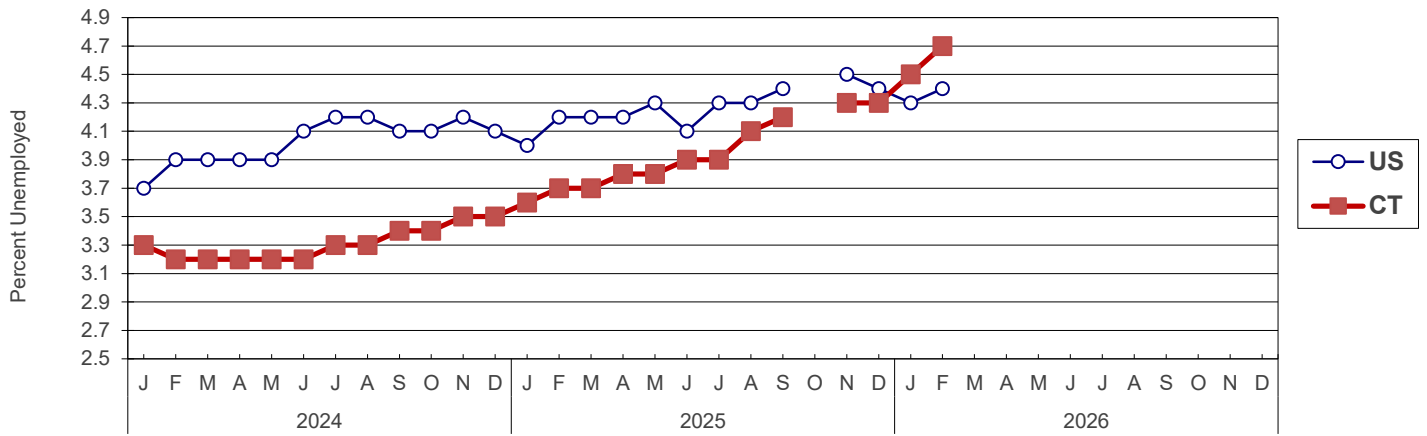
UNEMPLOYMENT

Persons Unemployed - by Place of Residence

CONNECTICUT AND THE UNITED STATES - Seasonally Adjusted

	Feb 2026 P		Feb 2025 R		Change		Jan 2026 R	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Points	Number	Rate
CONNECTICUT								
Unemployed	90,500	4.7	71,400	3.7	19,100	1.0	86,900	4.5
Labor Force	1,929,100		1,943,200		-14,100		1,931,300	
UNITED STATES								
Unemployed	7,571,000	4.4	7,104,000	4.2	467,000	0.2	7,368,000	4.3
Labor Force	170,483,000		170,441,000		42,000		170,465,000	

U.S. AND CONNECTICUT UNEMPLOYMENT RATES - Seasonally Adjusted 2024 - 2026



LABOR MARKET AREAS - Not Seasonally Adjusted

	Feb 2026 P		Feb 2025 R		Change		Jan 2026 R	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Points	Number	Rate
Bridpt-Stamford-Danbury	28,600	5.7	22,100	4.3	6,500	1.4	26,800	5.3
Hartford-W.Htfd-E.Htfd	34,700	5.7	27,100	4.4	7,600	1.3	33,000	5.4
New Haven	17,500	5.8	13,500	4.3	4,000	1.5	16,800	5.5
Norwich-New Lon.-Willi.	8,000	5.6	6,200	4.4	1,800	1.2	7,600	5.4
Putnam-Northeast	2,600	6.2	2,000	4.8	600	1.4	2,400	5.8
Torrington-Northwest	2,700	6.0	2,100	4.6	600	1.4	2,500	5.6
Waterbury-Shelton	15,500	6.6	12,200	5.1	3,300	1.5	14,800	6.3
CONNECTICUT	110,900	5.8	86,300	4.5	24,600	1.3	105,200	5.5
UNITED STATES	8,052,000	4.7	7,572,000	4.5	480,000	0.2	7,942,000	4.7

P = Preliminary

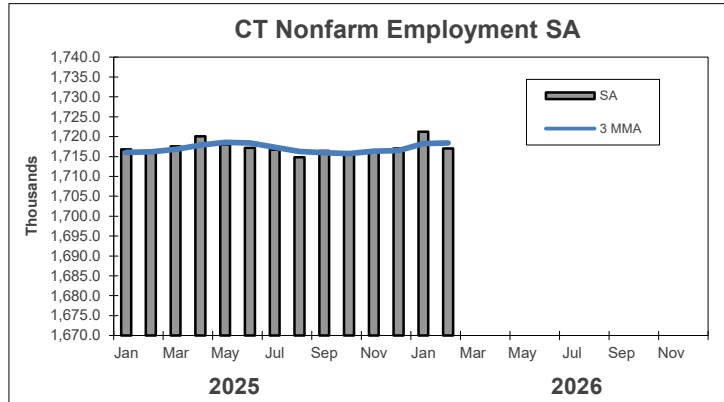
R = Revised

Labor force data included in this publication are developed in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

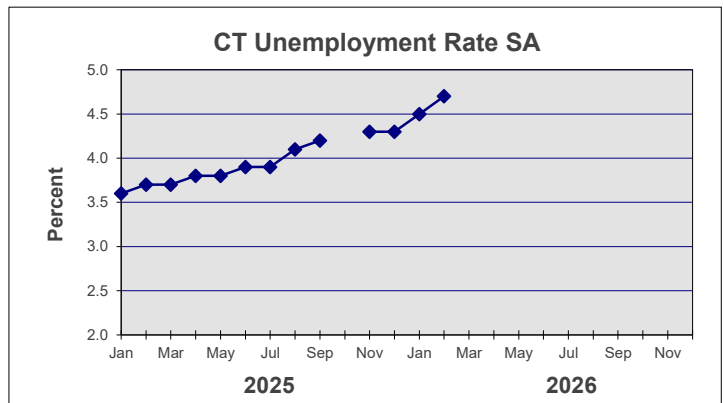
TRENDS

Seasonally Adjusted

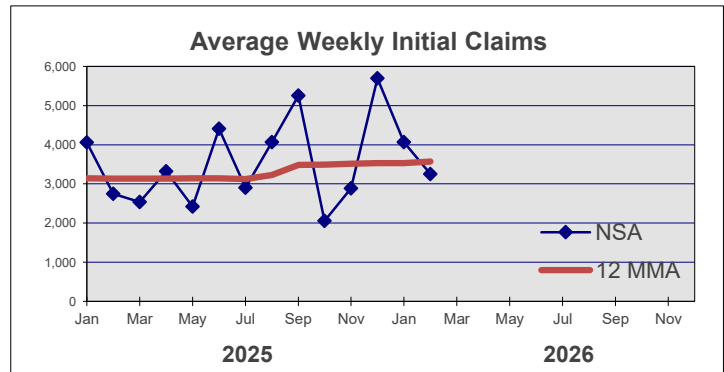
	Nonfarm Employment (000s)	Total Unemployment Rate
2025		
Jan	1,716.8	3.6
Feb	1,716.0	3.7
Mar	1,717.6	3.7
Apr	1,720.1	3.8
May	1,718.0	3.8
Jun	1,717.2	3.9
Jul	1,716.7	3.9
Aug	1,714.8	4.1
Sep	1,716.4	4.2
Oct	1,716.0	
Nov	1,716.6	4.3
Dec	1,717.0	4.3



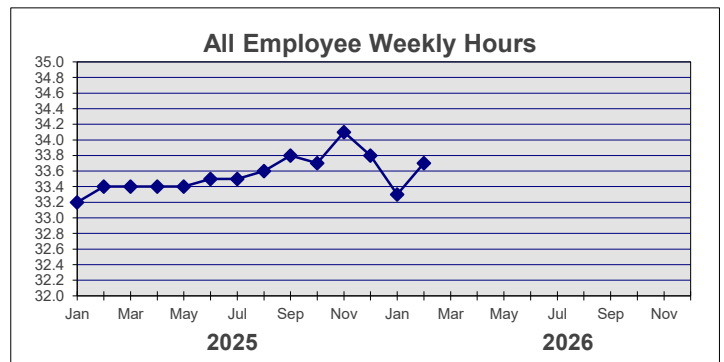
2026		
Jan	1,721.2 R	4.5 R
Feb	1,717.0 P	4.7 P
Mar		
Apr		
May		
Jun		
Jul		
Aug		
Sep		
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		



	NSA Avg Weekly Initial Claims	All Employee Weekly Hours*
2025		
Jan	4,059	33.2
Feb	2,745	33.4
Mar	2,534	33.4
Apr	3,322	33.4
May	2,423	33.4
Jun	4,409	33.5
Jul	2,898	33.5
Aug	4,066	33.6
Sep	5,251	33.8
Oct	2,052	33.7
Nov	2,885	34.1
Dec	5,694	33.8



2026		
Jan	4,069	33.3 R
Feb	3,248	33.7 P
Mar		
Apr		
May		
Jun		
Jul		
Aug		
Sep		
Oct		
Nov		
Dec		



* Not seasonally adjusted

P = Preliminary

R = Revised

** Labor-management dispute

NA, not available/shutdown