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Employment in Eastern Oregon: March 2020

Initial UI Claims Signal Employment Change

The economic impact of COVID-19 won't begin to show in the usual employment data until our May press release. However, initial unemployment insurance claims signal the employment situation is significantly changing. [During the week of April 5 to April 11](#), the Oregon Employment Department received 53,800 initial claims for unemployment benefits. That's in addition to a revised total of 243,000 initial claims filed during the prior three weeks, March 15 to April 4. In comparison, the Employment Department received just 14,820 initial claims during the comparable four-week period in 2019 (March 17 to April 13). This surge in claims is unprecedented and the Employment Department is rapidly redeploying staff, opening additional phone lines, and hiring new staff to address the situation.

In Eastern Oregon, initial claims have surged as well, with 2,473 processed initial unemployment insurance claims for the four-week period, March 15 to April 11. This represents a significant increase over the 379 claims during the comparable four-week period in 2019. All Eastern Oregon counties have seen a relatively large upswing in unemployment insurance claims. The majority of claims have come from four industries: accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and retail trade.

For info on Unemployment Insurance benefits: Govstatus.egov.com/ORUnemployment_COVID19

For data and analysis related to COVID-19: <https://Qualityinfo.org/covid-19>

Here Is What the Employment Situation Looked Like in March

Estimates reveal the raw unemployment rate decreased in all Eastern Oregon counties over the year. The largest decrease came in Wallowa County where the raw rate fell 2.4 percentage points to hit 7.3 percent. The smallest decrease came in Baker County as the rate dropped 0.8 percentage point to hit 5.3 percent. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased as well in all Eastern Oregon counties. Harney County saw the largest decrease, dropping 2.1 percentage points to 4.5 percent. Baker (-1.1 percentage points) saw the smallest decrease over the year, dropping to 4.3 percent.

Baker County's nonfarm payroll employment increased by 60 since March 2019. The private sector accounted for the gain while the public sector remained flat. Education and health services rose by 50 to lead gains. Manufacturing saw the largest decrease, down 40 jobs. Over the month, total employment

ticked up by 20. The private sector rose by 30 with light gains in four industries. The public sector slipped by 10. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dipped 0.1 percentage point in March to 4.3 percent. The raw rate was unchanged at 5.3 percent.

Grant County's nonfarm payroll employment was unchanged over the year. Both the private sector and the public sector showed no overall gain. Movement was light in several industries with local government making the most headway, up 20. Over the month, nonfarm employment ticked up by 20 jobs as government employment rose by 40. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dipped by 0.1 percentage point in March to 6.0 percent. The raw rate decreased 0.5 percentage point to 8.9 percent.

Harney County's nonfarm payroll employment dipped by 10 jobs over the year. The private sector was unchanged while the public sector inched down. Industry gains were light. The largest losses came in local government (-30) and the goods-producing industry (-20). Moving into the new month, nonfarm employment rose by 40 with gains in professional and business services (+30) and federal government (+10). The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was unchanged over the month at 4.5 percent. The raw rate decreased 0.5 percentage point to 5.8 percent.

Malheur County's nonfarm payroll employment increased by 290 over the year. The private sector added 180 jobs while the public sector added 110. Strong growth occurred in manufacturing (+150). Transportation, warehousing, and utilities took a hit (-70). Nonfarm employment rose by 50 jobs over the month with the majority of the gain seen in retail trade and in leisure and hospitality. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dipped 0.1 percentage point to 3.6 percent. The raw rate decreased 0.6 percentage point to 3.9 percent.

Union County's total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 20 over the year. The private sector gained 40 jobs as the public sector scaled back by 20. Construction showed a sizeable gain, adding 40 jobs. Over the month, nonfarm employment added 50 jobs; gains were largely in the private sector. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.3 percent in March. The raw rate dipped 0.1 percentage point to 5.4 percent.

Wallowa County's nonfarm payroll employment rose by 30 from March 2019 to March 2020. The private sector added 50 jobs while the public sector dropped 20. Gains were largely in wholesale and retail trade and in construction. Over the month, total nonfarm employment rose by 30. Gains were light and concentrated in a few industries. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate slipped 0.2 percentage point for the month to 5.1 percent. The raw rate dipped 0.1 percentage point to 7.3 percent.

Next Press Releases

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the April county and metropolitan area unemployment rates on Wednesday, May 27 and the statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data for April on Tuesday, May 19.

Baker County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	7,036	7,007	7,022	29	14
Unemployed	374	372	430	2	-56
Unemployment rate	5.3%	5.3%	6.1%	0.0	-0.8
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	4.3%	4.4%	5.4%	-0.1	-1.1
Employed	6,662	6,635	6,592	27	70
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	5,400	5,380	5,340	20	60
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	5,590	5,580	5,530	10	60
Total private	4,260	4,230	4,200	30	60
Mining, logging, and construction	260	260	240	0	20
Mining and logging	20	20	20	0	0
Construction	240	240	220	0	20
Manufacturing	560	550	600	10	-40
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,100	1,100	1,090	0	10
Wholesale trade	70	70	80	0	-10
Retail trade	790	800	780	-10	10
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	240	230	230	10	10
Information	50	50	50	0	0
Financial activities	160	160	170	0	-10
Professional and business services	320	320	310	0	10
Education and health services	1,020	1,010	970	10	50
Leisure and hospitality	590	580	570	10	20
Other services	200	200	200	0	0
Government	1,140	1,150	1,140	-10	0
Federal government	160	160	160	0	0
State government	220	220	210	0	10
Local government	760	770	770	-10	-10

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

Grant County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	3,105	3,064	3,123	41	-18
Unemployed	275	288	313	-13	-38
Unemployment rate	8.9%	9.4%	10.0%	-0.5	-1.1
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>6.0%</i>	<i>6.1%</i>	<i>8.0%</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>-2.0</i>
Employed	2,830	2,776	2,810	54	20
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	2,290	2,270	2,290	20	0
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>2,430</i>	<i>2,440</i>	<i>2,430</i>	<i>-10</i>	<i>0</i>
Total private	1,280	1,300	1,280	-20	0
Mining, logging, and construction	170	190	190	-20	-20
Mining and logging	120	130	130	-10	-10
Construction	50	60	60	-10	-10
Manufacturing	110	110	110	0	0
Trade, transportation, and utilities	310	310	290	0	20
Wholesale trade	30	30	20	0	10
Retail trade	230	230	220	0	10
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	50	50	50	0	0
Information	40	40	40	0	0
Financial activities	50	50	60	0	-10
Professional and business services	120	120	130	0	-10
Education and health services	200	200	200	0	0
Leisure and hospitality	210	210	200	0	10
Other services	70	70	60	0	10
Government	1,010	970	1,010	40	0
Federal government	200	190	210	10	-10
State government	110	110	120	0	-10
Local government	700	670	680	30	20

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

Harney County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	3,475	3,435	3,514	40	-39
Unemployed	202	218	257	-16	-55
Unemployment rate	5.8%	6.3%	7.3%	-0.5	-1.5
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	4.5%	4.5%	6.6%	0.0	-2.1
Employed	3,273	3,217	3,257	56	16
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	2,280	2,240	2,290	40	-10
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	2,350	2,360	2,360	-10	-10
Total private	1,270	1,240	1,270	30	0
Goods-producing	70	70	90	0	-20
Trade, transportation, and utilities	460	460	440	0	20
Wholesale trade	60	60	50	0	10
Retail trade	350	350	340	0	10
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	50	50	50	0	0
Information	10	10	20	0	-10
Financial activities	60	60	70	0	-10
Professional and business services	120	90	120	30	0
Education and health services	230	230	230	0	0
Leisure and hospitality	250	250	240	0	10
Other services	70	70	60	0	10
Government	1,010	1,000	1,020	10	-10
Federal government	200	190	190	10	10
State government	110	110	100	0	10
Local government	700	700	730	0	-30

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

Malheur County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	12,285	12,180	12,122	105	163
Unemployed	484	547	631	-63	-147
Unemployment rate	3.9%	4.5%	5.2%	-0.6	-1.3
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	3.6%	3.7%	4.8%	-0.1	-1.2
Employed	11,801	11,633	11,491	168	310
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	12,120	12,070	11,830	50	290
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	12,100	12,140	11,810	-40	290
Total private	8,570	8,530	8,390	40	180
Mining, logging, and construction	440	440	380	0	60
Manufacturing	1,170	1,180	1,020	-10	150
Trade, transportation, and utilities	2,790	2,770	2,830	20	-40
Wholesale trade	510	510	530	0	-20
Retail trade	1,950	1,930	1,900	20	50
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	330	330	400	0	-70
Information	190	190	190	0	0
Financial activities	310	310	310	0	0
Professional and business services	410	410	440	0	-30
Education and health services	1,730	1,730	1,690	0	40
Leisure and hospitality	1,180	1,160	1,180	20	0
Other services	350	340	350	10	0
Government	3,550	3,540	3,440	10	110
Federal government	190	180	180	10	10
State government	1,220	1,220	1,170	0	50
Local government	2,140	2,140	2,090	0	50

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Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.
Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.
Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

Union County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	11,894	11,845	11,989	49	-95
Unemployed	640	652	769	-12	-129
Unemployment rate	5.4%	5.5%	6.4%	-0.1	-1.0
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	4.3%	4.3%	5.8%	0.0	-1.5
Employed	11,254	11,193	11,220	61	34
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	10,460	10,410	10,440	50	20
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	10,500	10,520	10,480	-20	20
Total private	7,970	7,910	7,930	60	40
Mining, logging, and construction	500	480	460	20	40
Mining and logging	20	30	20	-10	0
Construction	480	450	440	30	40
Manufacturing	1,310	1,310	1,340	0	-30
Trade, transportation, and utilities	2,170	2,160	2,140	10	30
Wholesale trade	260	260	250	0	10
Retail trade	1,440	1,430	1,420	10	20
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	470	470	470	0	0
Information	90	90	100	0	-10
Financial activities	310	310	300	0	10
Professional and business services	500	490	490	10	10
Education and health services	1,740	1,730	1,740	10	0
Leisure and hospitality	1,050	1,030	1,070	20	-20
Other services	300	310	290	-10	10
Government	2,490	2,500	2,510	-10	-20
Federal government	190	170	190	20	0
State government	350	350	350	0	0
Local government	1,950	1,980	1,970	-30	-20

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.
Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.
Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

Wallowa County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	Mar. 2020	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019	Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	3,275	3,259	3,344	16	-69
Unemployed	240	242	323	-2	-83
Unemployment rate	7.3%	7.4%	9.7%	-0.1	-2.4
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	5.1%	5.3%	6.4%	-0.2	-1.3
Employed	3,035	3,017	3,021	18	14
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	2,380	2,350	2,350	30	30
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	2,610	2,560	2,570	50	40
Total private	1,740	1,720	1,690	20	50
Mining, logging, and construction	200	200	180	0	20
Mining and logging	50	60	50	-10	0
Construction	150	140	130	10	20
Manufacturing	130	130	140	0	-10
Trade, transportation, and utilities	450	440	430	10	20
Wholesale and retail trade	370	360	350	10	20
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	80	80	80	0	0
Information	20	20	20	0	0
Financial activities	130	130	130	0	0
Professional and business services	100	100	100	0	0
Education and health services	420	410	410	10	10
Leisure and hospitality	180	180	180	0	0
Other services	110	110	100	0	10
Government	640	630	660	10	-20
Federal government	70	70	70	0	0
State government	90	80	90	10	0
Local government	480	480	500	0	-20

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence. Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants. Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

The Oregon Employment Department and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) work cooperatively to develop and publish monthly payroll employment and labor force data for Oregon's metropolitan areas and counties. The estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. The estimates of unemployment are based on a survey of households and other sources.

The Oregon Employment Department payroll employment estimates are revised quarterly using information from unemployment insurance tax records. All department publications use data from this *official Oregon series* unless noted.

The department also makes the BLS-produced nonfarm payroll employment series for metropolitan areas available. These are revised annually by BLS.

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The pdf version of the news release, including tables and graphs, can be found at www.qualityinfo.org/press-release/. To obtain the data in other formats such as in Excel, visit www.QualityInfo.org, select *Economic Data*, and choose *LAUS* or *CES*. To request the press release as a Word document, contact the person shown at the top of this press release.

To file an Unemployment Insurance claim, visit our online claims system or call our contact centers, where Employment Department staff are ready to help by phone, at 1-877-FILE-4-UI (1-877-345-3484). For coronavirus questions related to employer and job seeker programs and services, visit Govstatus.egov.com/ORUnemployment_COVID19. For help finding jobs and training resources, go to: www.WorkSourceOregon.org

Equal Opportunity program — auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact: (503) 947-1794. For the deaf and hard of hearing population, call 711 Telecommunications Relay Services.