Oregon’s Job Growth Slows to 5,100 in September

Oregon’s unemployment rate dropped to 8.0 percent in September from 8.5 percent, as revised, in August. For the past few months, Oregon’s unemployment rate has closely tracked the national unemployment rate which fell to 7.9 percent in September from 8.4 percent in August.

Oregon’s total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 5,100 jobs in September, following a revised gain of 16,200 jobs in August. Over the past three months the rate of job growth slowed, with 39,000 jobs added in that time, following more rapid growth in May and June, when 83,100 jobs were added. Despite the recent slowdown, Oregon employers added jobs in each of the past five months, and the state has recovered 45 percent of the jobs cut in March and April.

Over-the-month job gains in September were largest in leisure and hospitality (+2,600 jobs); financial activities (+1,600); health care and social assistance (+1,600); retail trade (+1,500); and information (+1,200). Two industries cut a substantial number of jobs in September: construction (-2,600 jobs) and private educational services (-1,400).

Leisure and hospitality continues to be the industry most impacted by the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Its employment bounced back substantially in May and June, but job gains have slowed over the past three months. Employment totaled 163,200 in September, which was down 53,400 jobs, or 24.7%, since its peak month of February.

Manufacturing lost a substantial number of jobs this spring and hasn't rebounded. Employment stood at 180,000 jobs in September, which was close to its level of the past five months. Since September 2019, manufacturing cut 18,100 jobs with losses widespread throughout most component industries. During that time, primary metals manufacturing dropped the most in percentage terms, shedding 2,600 jobs, or 28 percent. Next in line was transportation equipment manufacturing which cut 19 percent. Two other manufacturing industries dropped at least 10 percent: food manufacturing (-4,200 jobs, or -14%) and electronic instrument manufacturing (-600 jobs, or -11%). None of the published manufacturing industries added a substantial number of jobs over the past 12 months.

In contrast, two major industries rose closer to pre-pandemic employment levels. Retail trade rebounded rapidly, adding 4,700 jobs over the past two months. This left the industry down only 4,800 jobs, or 2.3 percent, since February. Certain retailers responded to strong demand lately, with food and beverage stores up 900 jobs, or 2.1 percent, since last September. Similarly, building material and garden supply stores added 900 jobs, or 5.4 percent in that time, while general merchandise stores added 1,100 jobs or 2.7 percent. Clearly consumer preferences and demands have shifted substantially,
as reflected by job losses in several categories including clothing stores, which cut 8,100 jobs, or 51.6 percent, over the year, and miscellaneous store retailers, which shed 2,800 jobs, or 16.5 percent.

Health care and social assistance added 2,300 jobs over the past two months and was only 8,200 jobs, or 3.1 percent, below its recent high in February. Over the past 12 months, social assistance cut 4,900 jobs, or 8.4 percent. However, health care declined only 800 jobs in that time.

Next Press Releases
The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the September county and metropolitan area unemployment rates on Tuesday, October 20th, and the next statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data for October on Tuesday, November 17th.
Seasonal Expectations and Over-the-Month Employment Changes
August to September 2020

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<th>INDUSTRY</th>
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Notes:
All numbers in the above narrative are seasonally adjusted except for the detailed industries within manufacturing, retail trade, and health care and social assistance.

The Oregon Employment Department and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) work cooperatively to develop and publish monthly Oregon payroll employment and labor force data. 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 publishes payroll employment estimates that are revised quarterly by using employment counts from employer unemployment insurance tax records. All department publications use this Official Oregon Series data unless noted otherwise. This month's release incorporates the January, February and March 2020 tax records data. The department continues to make the original nonfarm payroll employment series available; these data are produced by the BLS.

The PDF version of the news release can be found at QualityInfo.org/press-release. To obtain the data in other formats such as in Excel, visit QualityInfo.org, then within the top banner, select Economic Data, then 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 a claim for unemployment benefits or get more information about unemployment programs, visit unemployment.oregon.gov.

Equal Opportunity program — auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact: (503) 947-1794. For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, call 711 Telecommunications Relay Services.
### Labor Force Status

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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.

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

U-6 is the total unemployed plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force plus total employed part-time for economic reasons, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all persons marginally attached to the 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. These survey-based estimates are revised quarterly, based on more complete information from employer tax records.