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Employment in Salem MSA (Marion and Polk Counties): February 2026

Salem MSA's Unemployment Rate Edges Down to 5.0%

The Salem MSA's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.0% in February, essentially unchanged from January's revised unemployment rate of 5.1%. The Salem MSA's unemployment rate has increased from 4.4% to 5.0% over the past year. Oregon's statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in February was 5.2%.

Employment gains in the Salem MSA in February were less than normal; total nonfarm employment increased by 500 jobs, when an employment increase of 800 jobs would be expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was down -300 between January and February. With February's loss, employment is up 8.1% or 14,200 jobs above the pre-pandemic employment level in February 2020.

Over the past year the Salem MSA's seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment is up 2,100 jobs or +1.1%.

Overall, the private sector added 300 jobs in February. The largest private-sector job gains in February were reported in professional and business services (+300 jobs, +1.9%) and private education and health services (+300 jobs, +0.8%).

The public sector added 200 jobs in February. Local government was up 100 jobs in February. State government employment was up 100 in February. Federal government employment was unchanged.

Next Press Releases

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the March county and metropolitan area unemployment rates on Tuesday, May 5 and the statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data on Friday, May 1.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

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Salem MSA Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

| | --Change From-- | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | February 2026 | January 2026 | February 2025 | January 2026 | February 2025 |
| Labor Force Status | | | | | |
| Civilian labor force | 227,460 | 225,699 | 222,268 | 1,761 | 5,192 |
| Unemployed | 12,328 | 12,759 | 11,332 | -431 | 996 |
| Unemployment rate | 5.4% | 5.7% | 5.1% | -0.3 | 0.3 |
| <i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 5.0% | 5.1% | 4.4% | -0.1 | 0.6 |
| Employed | 215,132 | 212,940 | 210,936 | 2,192 | 4,196 |
| Nonfarm Payroll Employment | | | | | |
| Total nonfarm employment | 187,700 | 187,200 | 185,500 | 500 | 2,200 |
| <i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 188,700 | 189,000 | 186,600 | -300 | 2,100 |
| Total private | 140,600 | 140,300 | 139,500 | 300 | 1,100 |
| Mining, logging, and construction | 12,600 | 12,500 | 13,000 | 100 | -400 |
| Mining and logging | 600 | 600 | 600 | 0 | 0 |
| Construction | 12,000 | 11,900 | 12,400 | 100 | -400 |
| Manufacturing | 11,500 | 11,500 | 11,200 | 0 | 300 |
| Durable goods | 5,900 | 5,900 | 5,800 | 0 | 100 |
| Nondurable goods | 5,600 | 5,600 | 5,400 | 0 | 200 |
| Food manufacturing | 3,800 | 3,700 | 3,500 | 100 | 300 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 31,200 | 31,500 | 29,500 | -300 | 1,700 |
| Wholesale trade | 4,000 | 4,000 | 4,100 | 0 | -100 |
| Retail trade | 17,900 | 18,000 | 18,200 | -100 | -300 |
| Transportation, warehousing, and utilities | 9,300 | 9,500 | 7,200 | -200 | 2,100 |
| Information | 1,600 | 1,700 | 1,800 | -100 | -200 |
| Financial activities | 6,600 | 6,600 | 6,600 | 0 | 0 |
| Professional and business services | 16,500 | 16,200 | 18,500 | 300 | -2,000 |
| Private education and health services | 39,400 | 39,100 | 37,700 | 300 | 1,700 |
| Health care and social assistance | 35,200 | 35,000 | 33,700 | 200 | 1,500 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 15,500 | 15,600 | 15,600 | -100 | -100 |
| Other services | 5,700 | 5,600 | 5,600 | 100 | 100 |
| Government | 47,100 | 46,900 | 46,000 | 200 | 1,100 |
| Federal government | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,500 | 0 | -100 |
| State government | 23,700 | 23,600 | 23,700 | 100 | 0 |
| State education | 1,100 | 1,100 | 1,100 | 0 | 0 |
| Local government | 22,000 | 21,900 | 20,800 | 100 | 1,200 |
| Indian tribal | 1,900 | 1,800 | 1,700 | 100 | 200 |
| Local education | 13,100 | 13,000 | 12,000 | 100 | 1,100 |

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: Official Oregon Series. 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 Salem MSA includes Marion and Polk counties.

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.

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 QualityInfo.org, select Tools, and choose LAUS or CES from the dropdown menu. To request the press release as a Word document, contact the person shown at the top of this press release.

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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 help finding jobs and training resources, go to: www.WorkSourceOregon.org.

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