

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 5, 2026

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

Salem MSA's Unemployment Rate Remains at 5.0%

The Salem MSA's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.0% in March, unchanged from February's revised unemployment rate of 5.0%. The Salem MSA's unemployment rate has increased from 4.5% to 5.0% over the past year. Oregon's statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in March was 5.2%.

Employment gains in the Salem MSA in March were normal; total nonfarm employment increased by 700 jobs, when an employment increase of 700 jobs would be expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was unchanged between February and March. Employment is up 8.0% or 14,000 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 1,900 jobs or +1.0%.

Overall, the private sector added 700 jobs in March. The largest private-sector job gains in March were reported in professional and business services (+200 jobs, +1.2%); leisure and hospitality (+200 jobs, +1.3%) and retail trade (+200 jobs, +1.1%).

The public sector overall was unchanged in March. Local government was up 100 jobs in March. State government employment was down 100 in March. Federal government employment was unchanged.

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 on Wednesday, May 20.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

QualityInfo.org

May 5, 2026

Salem MSA Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	March 2026	February 2026	March 2025	February 2026	March 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	227,272	227,443	223,009	-171	4,263
Unemployed	11,498	12,319	11,364	-821	134
Unemployment rate	5.1%	5.4%	5.1%	-0.3	0.0
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>5.0%</i>	<i>5.0%</i>	<i>4.5%</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.5</i>
Employed	215,774	215,124	211,645	650	4,129
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	188,400	187,700	186,400	700	2,000
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>188,500</i>	<i>188,500</i>	<i>186,600</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1,900</i>
Total private	141,300	140,600	140,300	700	1,000
Mining, logging, and construction	12,700	12,600	13,100	100	-400
Mining and logging	600	600	600	0	0
Construction	12,100	12,000	12,500	100	-400
Manufacturing	11,600	11,500	11,300	100	300
Durable goods	5,900	5,900	5,900	0	0
Nondurable goods	5,700	5,600	5,400	100	300
Food manufacturing	3,800	3,800	3,500	0	300
Trade, transportation, and utilities	31,300	31,200	29,400	100	1,900
Wholesale trade	4,000	4,000	4,100	0	-100
Retail trade	18,100	17,900	18,200	200	-100
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	9,200	9,300	7,100	-100	2,100
Information	1,700	1,600	1,800	100	-100
Financial activities	6,500	6,600	6,600	-100	-100
Professional and business services	16,700	16,500	18,600	200	-1,900
Private education and health services	39,400	39,400	37,800	0	1,600
Health care and social assistance	35,300	35,200	33,900	100	1,400
Leisure and hospitality	15,700	15,500	16,000	200	-300
Other services	5,700	5,700	5,700	0	0
Government	47,100	47,100	46,100	0	1,000
Federal government	1,400	1,400	1,500	0	-100
State government	23,600	23,700	23,700	-100	-100
State education	1,100	1,100	1,100	0	0
Local government	22,100	22,000	20,900	100	1,200
Indian tribal	1,800	1,900	1,700	-100	100
Local education	13,200	13,100	12,100	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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