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For Immediate Release: March 22, 2019  
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## North Carolina's February Employment Figures Released

**RALEIGH** — The state's seasonally adjusted February unemployment rate was 3.9 percent, increasing 0.1 of a percentage point from January's revised rate. The national rate decreased 0.2 of a percentage point to 3.8 percent.

North Carolina's February 2019 unemployment rate decreased 0.3 of a percentage point from a year ago. The number of people employed increased 8,831 over the month to 4,817,920 and increased 57,152 over the year. The number of people unemployed increased 3,712 over the month to 194,753 and decreased 12,502 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, increased 3,800 to 4,536,000 in February. The major industries with the largest over-the-month increases were Leisure & Hospitality Services at 3,000, followed by Professional & Business Services, 1,300; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 1,000; Manufacturing, 900; Other Services, 900; Financial Activities, 300; and Government, 200. Major industries experiencing decreases were Education & Health Services, 2,100; Construction, 1,600; and Information, 100. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged.

### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates since February 2018

	Feb 2018	Mar 2018	Apr 2018	May 2018	Jun 2018	Jul 2018	Aug 2018	Sep 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Dec 2018	Jan 2019	Feb 2019
<b>N.C.</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>

*Please note: 2018 numbers have undergone annual revision*

Since February 2018, Total Nonfarm jobs gained 64,800 with the Total Private sector growing by 66,200 and Government decreasing by 1,400. The largest over-the-year increase among major industries was Leisure & Hospitality Services, 19,700, followed by Professional & Business Services, 13,200; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 11,800; Education & Health Services, 7,300; Construction, 6,000; Financial Activities, 5,100; Manufacturing, 3,300; and Other Services, 1,000. Major industries experiencing decreases were Government, 1,400; Information, 1,000; and Mining & Logging, 200.

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, April 3, 2019 when the county unemployment rates for February 2019 will be released.

These data can be accessed on the Commerce website at <https://d4.nccommerce.com/>

# North Carolina Department of Commerce

## Labor and Economic Analysis Division

### NORTH CAROLINA and U.S. LABOR FORCE DATA

*North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M. Friday, March 22, 2019*

	February 2019	January 2019	February 2018	Month Ago		Year Ago	
				Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Local Area Unemployment Statistics)</i>							
<i>Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	5,012,673	5,000,130	4,968,023	12,543	0.3	44,650	0.9
<b>Employed</b>	4,817,920	4,809,089	4,760,768	8,831	0.2	57,152	1.2
<b>Unemployed</b>	194,753	191,041	207,255	3,712	1.9	-12,502	-6.0
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	3.9	3.8	4.2	0.1	xxx	-0.3	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	5,036,581	4,992,100	4,974,728	44,481	0.9	61,853	1.2
<b>Employed</b>	4,825,338	4,766,577	4,756,870	58,761	1.2	68,468	1.4
<b>Unemployed</b>	211,243	225,523	217,858	-14,280	-6.3	-6,615	-3.0
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.2	4.5	4.4	-0.3	xxx	-0.2	xxx
<b>United States</b> <i>(Current Population Survey)</i>							
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	163,184,000	163,229,000	161,900,000	-45,000	> -0.1	xxx	xxx
<b>Employed</b>	156,949,000	156,694,000	155,213,000	255,000	0.2	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployed</b>	6,235,000	6,535,000	6,687,000	-300,000	-4.6	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	3.8	4.0	4.1	-0.2	xxx	xxx	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	162,793,000	162,104,000	161,494,000	689,000	0.4	xxx	xxx
<b>Employed</b>	156,167,000	154,964,000	154,403,000	1,203,000	0.8	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployed</b>	6,625,000	7,140,000	7,091,000	-515,000	-7.2	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.1	4.4	4.4	-0.3	xxx	xxx	xxx

\*Effective January 2019, updated US population estimates are used in the national labor force estimates.

The annual population adjustments affect the comparability of national labor force estimates over time.

2019 estimates for the current month are preliminary. Estimates for the previous month have undergone monthly revision.

2018 estimates have undergone annual revision.

North Carolina Department of Commerce  
 Labor and Economic Analysis Division  
**NORTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT DATA**

*North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M., Friday, March 22, 2019*

				<i>Month Ago</i>		<i>Year Ago</i>	
	<i>February 2019</i>	<i>January 2019</i>	<i>February 2018</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i>							
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Total Nonfarm	4,536,000	4,532,200	4,471,200	3,800	0.1	64,800	1.4
Total Private	3,805,600	3,802,000	3,739,400	3,600	0.1	66,200	1.8
Mining & Logging	5,600	5,600	5,800	0	0.0	-200	-3.4
Construction	223,000	224,600	217,000	-1,600	-0.7	6,000	2.8
Manufacturing	475,500	474,600	472,200	900	0.2	3,300	0.7
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	845,000	844,000	833,200	1,000	0.1	11,800	1.4
Information	78,600	78,700	79,600	-100	-0.1	-1,000	-1.3
Financial Activities	243,200	242,900	238,100	300	0.1	5,100	2.1
Professional & Business Services	642,000	640,700	628,800	1,300	0.2	13,200	2.1
Education & Health Services	616,300	618,400	609,000	-2,100	-0.3	7,300	1.2
Leisure & Hospitality Services	521,100	518,100	501,400	3,000	0.6	19,700	3.9
Other Services	155,300	154,400	154,300	900	0.6	1,000	0.6
Government	730,400	730,200	731,800	200	<0.1	-1,400	-0.2
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i>							
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Total Nonfarm	4,495,700	4,472,400	4,433,000	23,300	0.5	62,700	1.4
Total Private	3,751,300	3,737,000	3,687,400	14,300	0.4	63,900	1.7
Mining & Logging	5,500	5,500	5,800	0	0.0	-300	-5.2
Construction	218,500	217,800	211,800	700	0.3	6,700	3.2
Manufacturing	473,700	473,100	471,100	600	0.1	2,600	0.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	834,400	836,100	821,000	-1,700	-0.2	13,400	1.6
Information	78,600	78,100	79,600	500	0.6	-1,000	-1.3
Financial Activities	240,400	240,800	235,400	-400	-0.2	5,000	2.1
Professional & Business Services	632,800	629,000	621,200	3,800	0.6	11,600	1.9
Education & Health Services	617,900	614,900	610,300	3,000	0.5	7,600	1.2
Leisure & Hospitality Services	495,500	489,100	478,800	6,400	1.3	16,700	3.5
Other Services	154,000	152,600	152,400	1,400	0.9	1,600	1.0
Government	744,400	735,400	745,600	9,000	1.2	-1,200	-0.2

All 2019 Labor Force and CES data for the current month are preliminary.  
 All 2018 Labor Force and CES estimates have been benchmarked.  
 Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding.

## **Accessing Data**

The data presented in this press release, as well as historical data, can be accessed from NC Commerce's Demand Driven Data Delivery ("D4") system:

<https://d4.nccommerce.com/LausSelection.aspx>

<https://d4.nccommerce.com/CesSelection.aspx>

## **Technical Notes**

This release presents labor force and unemployment estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Also presented are nonfarm payroll employment estimates the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The LAUS and CES programs are both federal-state cooperative endeavors.

### **Labor force and unemployment--from the LAUS program**

**Definitions.** The labor force and unemployment estimates are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as bad weather, labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on lay-off expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

**Method of estimation.** Statewide estimates are produced using an estimation algorithm administered by the BLS. This method, which underwent substantial enhancement at the beginning of 2015, utilizes data from several sources, including the CPS, the CES, and state unemployment insurance (UI) programs. Each month, census division estimates are controlled to national totals, and state estimates are then controlled to their respective division totals. Substate estimates are controlled to their respective state totals. For more information about LAUS estimation procedures, see the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm)

**Revisions.** Labor force and unemployment data for the previous month reflect adjustments made in each subsequent month, while data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year. The monthly revisions incorporate updated model inputs, while the annually revised estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. In most years, historical data for the most recent five years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates.

Seasonal adjustment. The LAUS program introduced smoothed seasonally adjusted (SSA) estimates in January 2010. These are seasonally-adjusted data that have incorporated a long-run trend smoothing procedure, resulting in estimates that are less volatile than those previously produced. The estimates are smoothed using a filtering procedure, based on moving averages, to remove the irregular fluctuations from the seasonally-adjusted series, leaving the trend. The same process is used on both historical and current year estimates. For more information about the smoothing technique, see the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/lau/lassaqa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lassaqa.htm).

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the delineations that were issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget on April 10, 2018. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm).

### Employment--from the CES program

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2012 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

Method of estimation. CES State and Area employment data are produced using several estimation procedures. Where possible these data are produced using a "weighted link relative" estimation technique in which a ratio of current-month weighted employment to that of the previous-month weighted employment is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are then obtained by multiplying these ratios by the previous month's employment estimates. The weighted link relative technique is utilized for data series where the sample size meets certain statistical criteria.

For some employment series, relatively small sample sizes limit the reliability of the weighted link-relative estimates. In these cases, BLS uses the CES small domain model (SDM) to generate employment estimates. The SDM combines the direct sample estimates (described above) and forecasts of historical (benchmarked) data to decrease the volatility of the estimates. For more detailed information about the CES small domain model, refer to the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Annual revisions. Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports that are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months. Information on recent benchmark revisions is available online at [www.bls.gov/web/laus/benchmark.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/web/laus/benchmark.pdf).

Seasonal adjustment. Payroll employment data are seasonally adjusted at the statewide supersector level. In some states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is computed by aggregating the independently adjusted supersector series. In other states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is independently adjusted. Revisions of historical data for the most recent 5 years are made once a year, coincident with annual benchmark adjustments.

### Reliability of the estimates

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used. Model-based error measures for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data and for over-the-month and over-the-year changes to LAUS estimates are available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm). Measures of sampling error for state CES data at the total nonfarm and supersector levels are available online at [www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm).

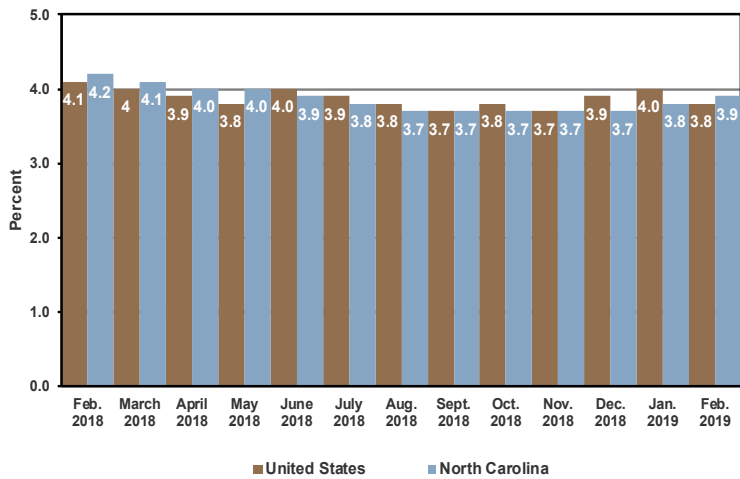
### **Release Dates**

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, April 3, 2019 when the county unemployment rates for February 2019 will be released.

The complete data release schedule for 2019 can be accessed here:

<https://www.nccommerce.com/documents/release-dates-unemployment-rates>

## United States/North Carolina Unemployment Rates February 2018–February 2019 (Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted\*\*)



\*\*US data are not smoothed.

The North Carolina smoothed seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.9 percent in February, increasing 0.1 of a percentage point from the previous month and falling 0.3 of a percentage point from February 2018. Over the month, the number of persons unemployed increased by 3,712 (1.9%). The civilian labor force grew by 12,543 (0.3%) to 5,012,673.

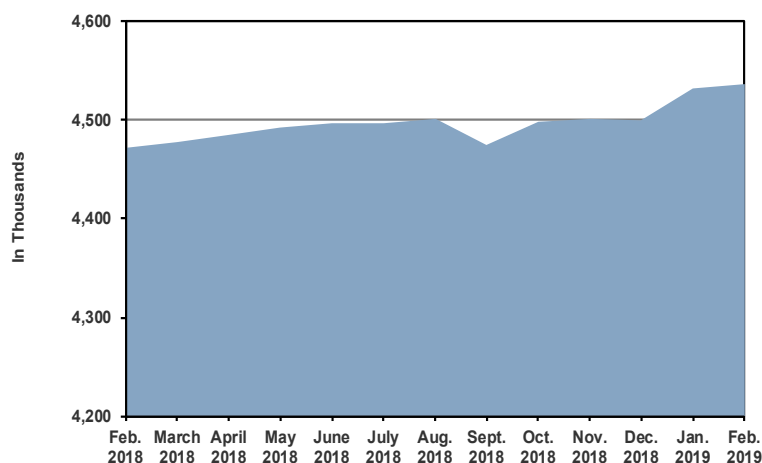
Nationally, February's unemployment rate was 3.8 percent. The number of persons unemployed was 6,235,000, while the civilian labor force was 163,184,000.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment (4,536,000) increased 3,800 (0.1%) since January 2019 and increased 64,800 (1.4%) since February 2018.<sup>1</sup> Private sector employment grew 3,600 (0.1%) over the month and 66,200 (1.8%) over the year.

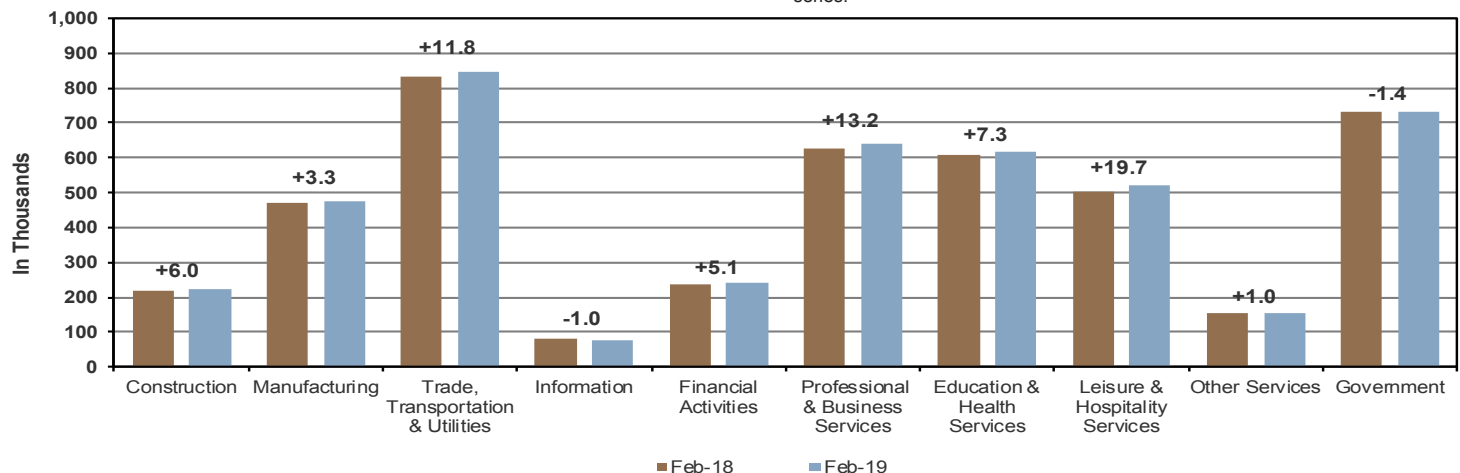
Of the major industries for which payroll data are seasonally adjusted, Leisure & Hospitality Services (3,000; 0.6%) had the largest over-the-month gain in jobs, followed by Professional & Business Services (1,300; 0.2%), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (1,000; 0.1%), Other Services (900; 0.6%), Manufacturing (900; 0.2%), Financial Activities (300; 0.1%), and Government (200; <0.1%). Education & Health Services (2,100; 0.3%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Construction (1,600; 0.7%), and Information (100; 0.1%). Mining & Logging report no over-the-month change.

Since February 2018, Leisure & Hospitality Services added the largest number of jobs (19,700; 3.9%), followed by Professional & Business Services (13,200; 2.1%), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (11,800; 1.4%), Education & Health Services (7,300; 1.2%), Construction (6,000; 2.8%), Financial Activities (5,100; 2.1%), Manufacturing (3,300; 0.7%), and Other Services (1,000; 0.6%). Government (1,400; 0.2%) reported an over-the-year decrease, followed by Information (1,000; 1.3%), and Mining & Logging (200; 3.4%).

## North Carolina Total Nonfarm Employment February 2018–February 2019 (Seasonally Adjusted)



## Changes in Employment by NAICS Industries February 2018 Compared to February 2019 (Seasonally Adjusted)



<sup>1</sup>It is important to note that industry employment estimates are subject to large seasonal patterns. Seasonal adjustment factors are applied to the data. However, these factors February not be fully capturing the seasonal trend. Therefore, when interpreting the changes in industry employment, it is advisable to focus on over-the-year changes in both the seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted series.

\*N.C. current month data are preliminary, while all other seasonally adjusted data have undergone annual revision. U.S. data have undergone annual revision.

# North Carolina Labor Market Conditions

The February 2019 not seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment level of 4,495,700 was 23,300 (0.5%) higher than the January 2019 revised employment level of 4,472,400. Among the major industries in North Carolina, Government had the largest over-the-month increase in employment at 9,000 (1.2%) followed by Leisure & Hospitality Services with 6,400 (1.3%); Professional & Business Services (3,800; 0.6%), Education & Health Services (3,000; 0.5%), Other Services (1,400; 0.9%), Construction (700; 0.3%), Manufacturing (600; 0.1%) and Information (500; 0.6%). Trade Transportation & Utilities (1,700; 0.2%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Financial Activities (400; 0.2%)

Over the year, the Service Providing sector (all industries except Mining & Logging, Construction, and Manufacturing) showed an increase of 53,700 (1.4%) jobs. Leisure & Hospitality Services experienced the largest employment increase at 16,700 (3.5%), followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities (13,400; 1.6%), Professional & Business Services (11,600; 1.9%), Education & Health Services (7,600; 1.2%), Financial Activities (5,000; 2.1%), and Other Services (1,600; 1.0%). Government (1,200; 0.2%) reported the largest over-the-year decrease, followed by Information (1,000; 1.3%).

The Goods Producing sector grew by 9,000 (1.3%) jobs over the year. Construction had the largest increase with 6,700 (3.2%), followed by Manufacturing (2,600; 0.6%). Mining & Logging reported a loss of 300 (5.2%).

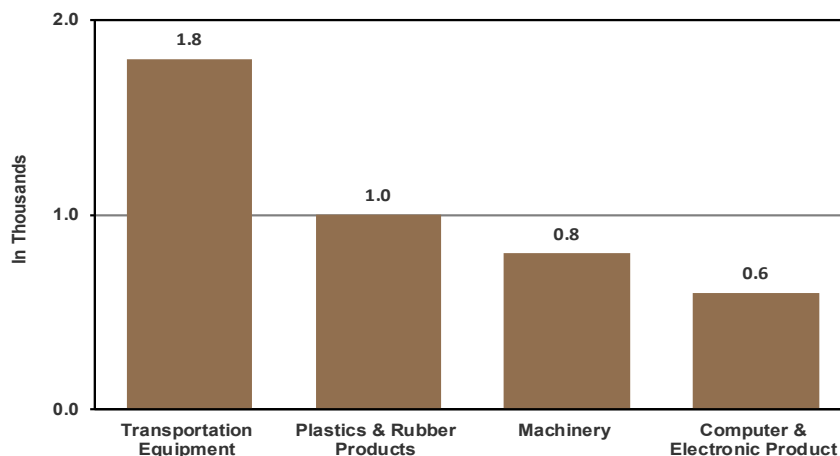
Amongst manufacturing industries, Transportation Equipment had the largest net over-the-year increase at 1,800. Other manufacturing industries with gains were: Plastics & Rubber Products, 1,000; Machinery, 800; Computer & Electronic Product, 600; Fabricated Metal Product, 300; Food, 300; Wood Product, 300; and Electrical Equipment, Appliance, & Component, 100.

Textile Mills had the largest net over-the-year decrease at 900 in February 2019. Other industries with decreases were: Printing & Related Support Activities, 600; Apparel, 400; Beverage & Tobacco Product, 400; Furniture & Related Product, 300; Chemical, 100; and Textile Product Mills, 100.

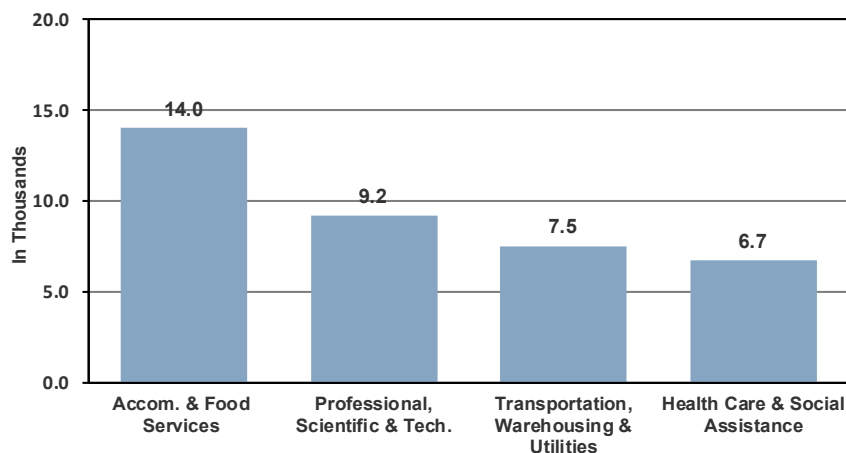
Over the month, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in February increased 12 minutes from January's revised rate of 34.1. Average Hourly Earnings fell by \$0.04 to \$25.25, as Average Weekly Earnings increased by \$3.69 to \$866.08.

Over the year, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in February decreased 24 minutes from the revised rate of 34.7 in February 2018. Average Hourly Earnings grew by \$0.40 and Average Weekly Earnings increased \$3.78.

## Selected Manufacturing Industries With Job Gains February 2018–February 2019 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



## Selected Service Industries With Job Gains February 2018–February 2019 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



## Total Private Average Weekly Wage February 2016–February 2019 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

