North Carolina's March Employment Figures Released

RALEIGH — The state's seasonally adjusted March unemployment rate was 4.4 percent, increasing 0.8 of a percentage point from February's revised rate. The national rate increased 0.9 of a percentage point to 4.4 percent.

North Carolina's March 2020 unemployment rate increased 0.3 of a percentage point from a year ago. The number of people employed decreased 180,275 over the month to 4,751,781 and decreased 100,381 over the year. The number of people unemployed increased 35,020 over the month to 217,626 and increased 12,282 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, decreased 22,600 to 4,589,400 in March. The major industries with the largest over-the-month increases were Financial Activities, 1,000; Construction, 800; Other Services, 800; Government, 600; and Information, 600. Major industries experiencing decreases were Leisure & Hospitality Services, 13,600; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 4,100; Professional & Business Services, 3,600; Education & Health Services, 2,800; and Manufacturing, 2,300. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged over the month.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates since March 2019

	Mar 2019	Apr 2019	May 2019	Jun 2019	Jul 2019	Aug 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020
N.C.	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4
U.S.	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	4.4

Please note: 2019 numbers have undergone annual revision

Since March 2019, Total Nonfarm jobs increased 30,200 with the Total Private sector increasing by 21,800 and Government increasing by 8,400. The largest over-the-year increases among major industries were Financial Activities, 12,400; Leisure & Hospitality Services, 9,200; Government, 8,400; Other Services, 4,200; Information, 3,400; and Construction, 1,900. Major industries experiencing decreases were Professional & Business Services, 4,000; Education & Health Services, 2,400; Manufacturing, 2,200; and Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 700. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged over the year.

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2020 when the county unemployment rates for March 2020 will be released.

NOTE TO EDITORS: the statistics reported in this release are based on activity prior to March 15 and thus do not reflect the full impact of recent COVID-19 related shutdowns in North Carolina.

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, April 17, 2020

	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Month Ago Numeric Change	Month Ago Percent Change	Year Ago Numeric Change	Year Ago Percent Change
North Carolina (Local Area Unemployment Statistics)							
Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted							
Labor Force	4,969,407	5,114,662	5,057,506	-145,255	-2.8	-88,099	-1.7
Employed	4,751,781	4,932,056	4,852,162	-180,275	-3.7	-100,381	-2.1
Unemployed	217,626	182,606	205,344	35,020	19.2	12,282	6.0
Unemployment Rate	4.4	3.6	4.1	0.8	xxx	0.3	xxx
Not Seasonally Adjusted							
Labor Force	4,982,207	5,123,363	5,072,312	-141,156	-2.8	-90,105	-1.8
Employed	4,771,939	4,934,196	4,868,784	-162,257	-3.3	-96,845	-2.0
Unemployed	210,268	189,167	203,528	21,101	11.2	6,740	3.3
Unemployment Rate	4.2	3.7	4.0	0.5	xxx	0.2	xxx
United States (Current Population Survey)							
Seasonally Adjusted							
Labor Force	162,913,000	164,546,000	162,935,000	-1,633,000	-1.0	xxx	xxx
Employed	155,772,000	158,759,000	156,741,000	-2,987,000	-1.9	xxx	xxx
Unemployed	7,140,000	5,787,000	6,194,000	1,353,000	23.4	xxx	xxx
Unemployment Rate	4.4	3.5	3.8	0.9	xxx	xxx	xxx
Not Seasonally Adjusted							
Labor Force	162,537,000	164,235,000	162,823,000	-1,698,000	-1.0	xxx	xxx
Employed	155,167,000	158,017,000	156,441,000	-2,850,000	-1.8	xxx	xxx
Unemployed	7,370,000	6,218,000	6,382,000	1,152,000	18.5	xxx	xxx
Unemployment Rate	4.5	3.8	3.9	0.7	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 27, 2020

	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Month Ago Numeric Change	Month Ago Percent Change	Year Ago Numeric Change	Year Ago Percent Change
North Carolina (Current Employment Statistics)							
Seasonally Adjusted							
Total Nonfarm	4,589,400	4,612,000	4,559,200	-22,600	-0.5	30,200	0.7
Total Private	3,851,200	3,874,400	3,829,400	-23,200	-0.6	21,800	0.6
Mining & Logging	5,700	5,700	5,700	0	0.0	0	0.0
Construction	232,700	231,900	230,800	800	0.3	1,900	0.8
Manufacturing	475,500	477,800	477,700	-2,300	-0.5	-2,200	-0.5
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	845,100	849,200	845,800	-4,100	>-0.1	-700	-0.1
Information	79,600	79,000	76,200	600	0.8	3,400	4.5
Financial Activities	260,500	259,500	248,100	1,000	0.4	12,400	5.0
Professional & Business Services	644,900	648,500	648,900	-3,600	-0.6	-4,000	-0.6
Education & Health Services	621,700	624,500	624,100	-2,800	-0.4	-2,400	-0.4
Leisure & Hospitality Services	522,200	535,800	513,000	-13,600	-2.5	9,200	1.8
Other Services	163,300	162,500	159,100	800	0.5	4,200	2.6
Government	738,200	737,600	729,800	600	0.1	8,400	1.2
North Carolina (Current Employment Statistics)							
Not Seasonally Adjusted							
Total Nonfarm	4,571,500	4,570,200	4,546,800	1,300	0.0	24,700	0.5
Total Private	3,816,500	3,819,100	3,796,700	-2,600	-0.1	19,800	0.5
Mining & Logging	5,700	5,600	5,700	100	1.8	0	0.0
Construction	231,300	227,100	228,900	4,200	1.8	2,400	1.0
Manufacturing	473,000	476,700	476,500	-3,700	-0.8	-3,500	-0.7
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	837,000	835,800	837,000	1,200	0.1	0	0.0
Information	79,500	78,900	76,000	600	0.8	3,500	4.6
Financial Activities	259,000	256,900	245,900	2,100	0.8	13,100	5.3
Professional & Business Services	637,800	641,500	643,500	-3,700	-0.6	-5,700	-0.9
Education & Health Services	622,700	625,600	624,600	-2,900	-0.5	-1,900	-0.3
Leisure & Hospitality Services	507,800	510,100	500,400	-2,300	-0.5	7,400	1.5
Other Services	162,700	160,900	158,200	1,800	1.1	4,500	2.8
Government	755,000	751,100	750,100	3,900	0.5	4,900	0.7

All 2020 Labor Force and CES data for the current month are preliminary.
All 2019 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 https://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/lau/calculation.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 https://www.bls.gov/lau/lauseas.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.

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 2017 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.

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. 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.
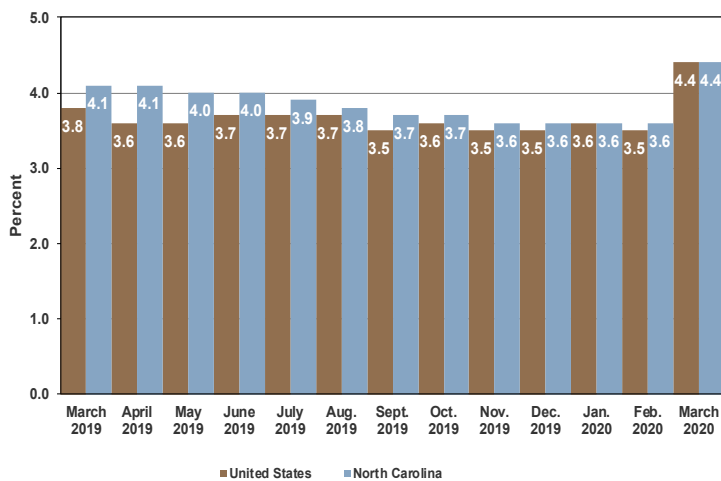
Release Dates

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 2020 when the county unemployment rates for March 2020 will be released.

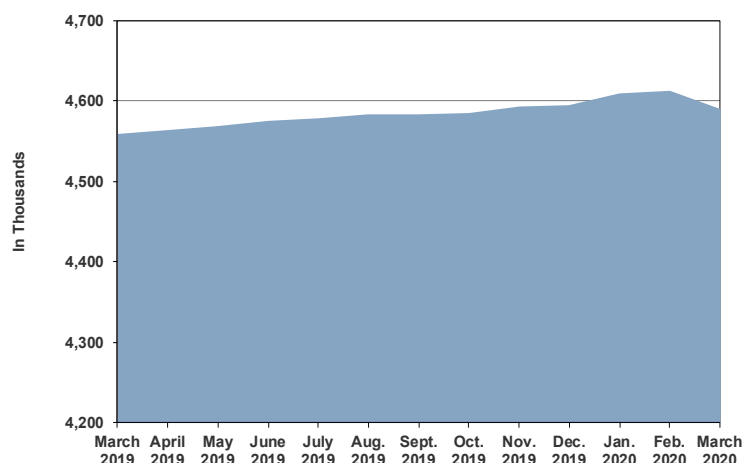The complete data release schedule for 2020 can be accessed here:

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

United States/North Carolina Unemployment Rates
March 2019–March 2020
(Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted)**

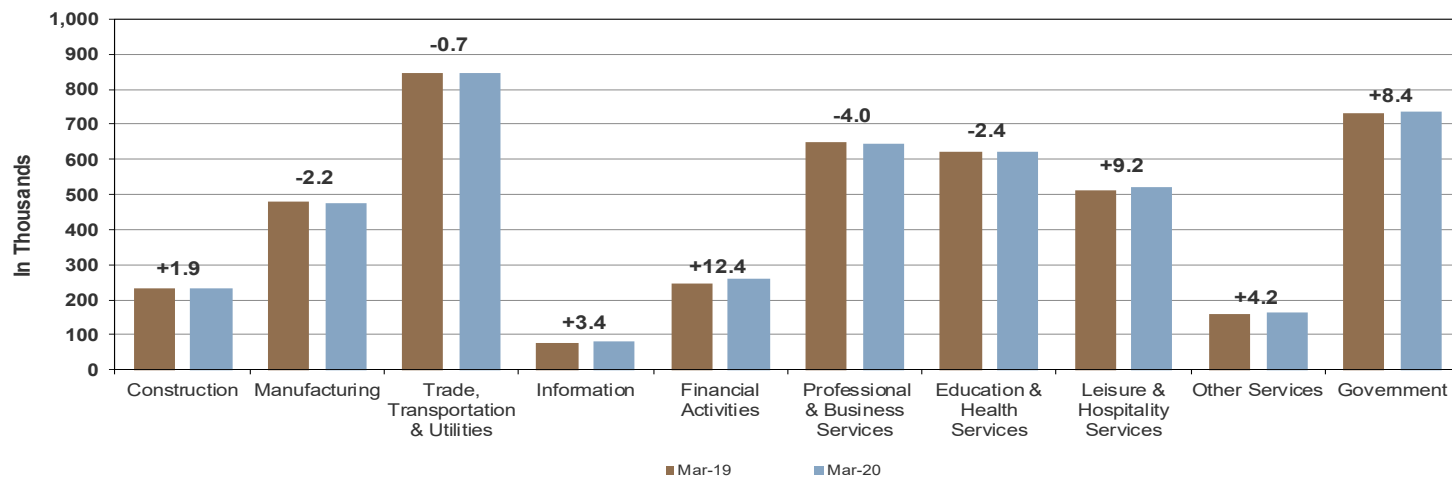**United States**   **North Carolina**

**US data are not smoothed.

North Carolina Total Nonfarm Employment
March 2019–March 2020
(Seasonally Adjusted)

Changes in Employment by NAICS Industries
March 2019 Compared to March 2020
(Seasonally Adjusted)

Construction +1.9, Manufacturing -2.2, Trade, Transportation & Utilities -0.7, Information +3.4, Financial Activities +12.4, Professional & Business Services -4.0, Education & Health Services -2.4, Leisure & Hospitality Services +9.2, Other Services +4.2, Government +8.4

Mar-19   **Mar-20**

The North Carolina smoothed seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.4 percent in March, increasing 0.8 of a percentage point from the previous month and growing 0.3 of a percentage from March 2019. Over the month, the number of persons unemployed increased by 35,020 (19.2%). The civilian labor force fell by 145,255 (2.8%) to 4,969,407.

Nationally, March's unemployment rate was 4.4 percent. The number of persons unemployed was 7,140,000, while the civilian labor force was 162,913,000.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment (4,589,400) decreased 22,600 (0.5%) since February 2020 and increased 30,200 (0.7%) since March 2019.[1] Private sector employment fell 23,200 (0.6%) over the month and increased 21,800 (0.6%) over the year.

Of the major industries for which payroll data are seasonally adjusted, Financial Activities (1,000; 0.4%) had the largest over-the-month gain in jobs, followed by Other Services (800; 0.5%), Construction (800; 0.3%), Government (600; 0.1%), and Information (600; 0.8%). Leisure & Hospitality Services (13,600; 2.5%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities (4,100; 0.5%), Professional & Business Services (3,600; 0.6%), Education & Health Services (2,800; 0.4%), and Manufacturing (2,300; 0.5%). Mining & Logging remained unchanged.

Since March 2019, Financial Activities added the largest number of jobs (12,400; 5.0%), followed by Leisure & Hospitality Services (9,200; 1.8%), Government (8,400; 1.2%), Other Services (4,200; 2.6%), Information (3,400; 4.5%), and Construction (1,900; 0.8%). Professional & Business Services (4,000; 0.6%) reported the largest over-the-year decrease, followed by Education & Heath Services (2,400; 0.4%), Manufacturing (2,200; 0.5%), and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (700; 0.1%). Mining & Logging remained unchanged.

[1]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 may 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.

The March 2020 not seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment level of 4,571,500 was 1,300 (<0.1%) higher than the February 2020 not seasonally adjusted employment level of 4,570,200. Among the major industries in North Carolina, Construction had the largest over-the-month increase in employment at 4,200 (1.9%), followed by Government (3,900; 0.5%), Financial Activities (2,100; 0.8%), Other Services (1,800; 1.1%), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (1,200; 0.1%), Information (600; 0.8%), and Mining & Logging (100; 1.8%). Manufacturing (3,700; 0.8%) and Professional & Business Services (3,700; 0.6%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Education & Health Services (2,900; 0.5%), and Leisure & Hospitality Services (2,300; 0.5%).

Over the year, the Service Providing sector (all industries except Mining & Logging, Construction, and Manufacturing) showed an increase of 25,800 (0.7%) jobs. Financial Activities experienced the largest employment increase at 13,100 (5.3%), followed by Leisure & Hospitality Services (7,400; 1.5%), Government (4,900; 0.7%), Other Services (4,500; 2.8%), and Information (3,500; 4.6%). Professional & Business Services (5,700; 0.9%) reported the largest over-the-year decrease, followed by Education & Health Services (1,900; 0.3%).Trade, Transportation & Utilities remained unchanged.

The Goods Producing sector decreased by 1,100 (0.2%) jobs over the year. Construction had the only increase with 2,400 (1.1%). Manufacturing (3,500; 0.7%) reported the only decrease, while Mining & Logging remained unchanged.

Amongst manufacturing industries, Transportation Equipment had the largest net over-the-year increase at 800. Other manufacturing industries with gains were: Computer & Electronic Product, 700; Machinery, 500; Fabricated Metal Product, 400; and Beverage & Tobacco Product, 400.

Textile Mills had the largest net over-the-year decrease at 1,800 in March 2020. Other industries with decreases were: Plastics & Rubber Products, 1,000; Furniture & Related Product, 700; Apparel, 600; Printing & Related Support Activities, 500; Electrical Equipment, Appliance & Component, 400; Chemical, 300; Textile Product Mills, 300; and Food, 100.
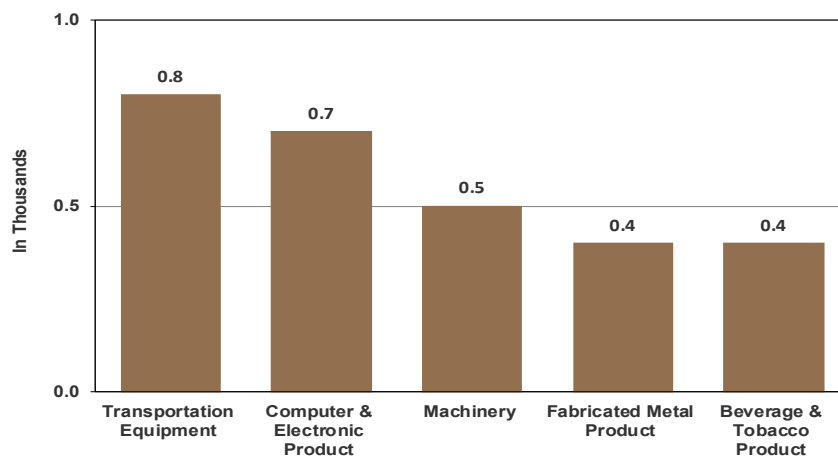
Over the month, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in March increased 18 minutes from February's revised rate of 34.3. Average Hourly Earnings grew by $0.01 to $26.13, as Average Weekly Earnings increased by $8.18 to $904.10.

Over the year, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in March increased 12 minutes from the revised rate of 34.4 in March 2019. Average Hourly Earnings grew by $0.88 and Average Weekly Earnings increased $35.50.

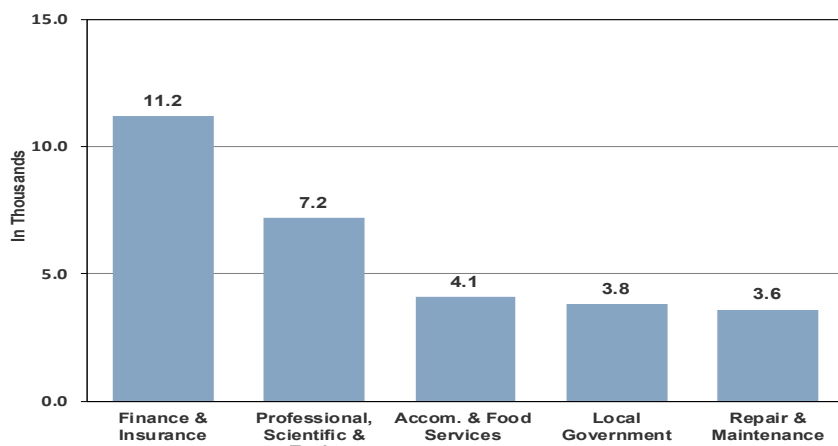**Selected Manufacturing Industries With Job Gains**
March 2019–March 2020
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Selected Service Industries With Job Gains
March 2019–March 2020
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Total Private Average Weekly Wage
March 2017–March 2020
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)