

JOBS REPORT SNAPSHOT

March 2026

Quick Facts:

- Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 178,000 in March, and the unemployment rate changed little at 4.3 percent
- Job gains occurred in health care, in construction, and in transportation and warehousing. Federal government employment continued to decline.
- The number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 27 weeks or more) changed little at 1.8 million in March but is up by 322,000 over the year.
- The number of people employed part time for economic reasons, at 4.5 million, changed little in March.

Unemployment Rate

4.3%

Down .1%

Average Hourly Wages

\$37.38

Up \$.06

Looking Forward:

- Nonfarm payrolls rose a seasonally adjusted 178,000 during the month, a reversal from the 133,000 decline in February and better than the Dow Jones consensus estimate for 59,000, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Friday. February's number was revised down by 41,000 while January was revised up by 34,000 to 160,000, putting the three-month average around 68,000.
- As has been the case, health care was responsible for much of the growth, with the sector adding 76,000. A strike at health-care provider Kaiser Permanente in February hit the sector. The BLS said ambulatory health care services rose by 54,000, with 35,000 coming from the strike workers returning.
- Outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas found that employers announced 217,362 job cuts in the first quarter of 2026 – the lowest total for that period since 2022. But hiring in February slowed to a six-year low, according to data released earlier this week, with dips seen in construction and leisure and hospitality. The so-called “quits rate” fell to 1.9%, the lowest since 2020, suggesting that uncertainty in the labor market has prompted more workers to stay put at their jobs.
- Last month, US average gas prices broke through \$4 a gallon, and the squeeze on oil and gas is expected to trickle into other industries. The oil price shock is reminiscent of higher prices that were seen in 2022, after Russia invaded Ukraine. US average gas prices reached \$5 a gallon at the time while inflation reached a generational high of 9%.

Labor Participation

61.9%

Down .1%

Non-Farm
Payroll Jobs Added

178K

92K were lost
in February

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - The Employment Situation - March 2026



J & J Staffing Resources

www.JJStaff.com

Now Let's Get to Work...

Local Unemployment Trends for December

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - State Employment & Unemployment - December 2025

NJ

5.4%

PA

4.2%

DE

5.2%

MD

4.2%

NY

4.6%

VA

3.6%

DC

6.7%