

Employment Situation Report

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Weekly Claims

Data collected by the **Bureau of Labor Statistics**

Data collected by the **Employment and Training Administration**

Data collected **monthly**

Data collected **weekly**

Data collected from **surveys**

- [Household Survey](#) (Current Population Survey or CPS)
- [Establishment Survey](#) (Current Employment Statistics or CES)

Data provided by **state/territory employment offices**

- Workers who lose their jobs typically file claims which indicate they are beginning a period of unemployment

Reference period

- Household Survey: the week that includes the 12th of the month
- Establishment Survey: the pay period that includes the 12th of the month

Reference period is Sunday through Saturday

- Submitted weekly by the state where the claim was filed
- Updated the following week to reflect the claimants' state of residence

Household Survey:

- **Unemployed people:** they are not employed. They could have taken a job if one had been offered. They had made at least one specific, active effort to find employment in the last 4 weeks OR were on temporary layoff.
- **Unemployment rate:** unemployed people as a percentage of the U.S. labor force (Americans who have a job or are seeking one)

Establishment Survey:

- **Nonfarm employment:** total number of people on establishment payrolls who receive pay (whether they worked or not) for any part of the pay period. Estimate of jobs; a person with 2 jobs is counted twice.

Regular State UI Programs:

Initial claims: first-time UI claims

Continued claims/Insured unemployment: people who have already filed initial claims and been unemployed more than a week

People can be classified as unemployed in the household survey even if they:

- Are not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits
- Have exhausted their benefits
- Did not apply for benefits
- Have not worked before

UI claims data are not used to measure the national unemployment rate. UI data don't give the full picture on unemployment because:

- Benefits can expire
- Some people file, but are not eligible for UI
- Some people delay filing or never apply for benefits
- UI eligibility requirements can change, and they vary by state (i.e., many states removed the looking for work requirement recently)
- Claimants may still be working but at reduced hours which could allow them to qualify for benefits through partial-unemployment. These individuals would be counted employed under the standard monthly BLS figures.

The definition of unemployment has not changed in decades.

Learn more about the [Employment Situation Report](#)
Learn more about [BLS programs responses to COVID-19](#)

Learn more about [the UI program](#)
Learn more about [new UI programs related to COVID-19](#)