

# SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN JOBLESS RATES CONTINUE DOWNWARD TREND

## OCTOBER 2020

Seasonally unadjusted unemployment rates continued their downward fall in all 17 Michigan major labor market areas during October 2020, according to data released from the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget (DTMB).

“Regional jobless rates continued to decrease in October with modest recalls of workers from pandemic-related layoffs,” said Wayne Rourke, acting director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. “However, industry jobs remain well below October 2019 levels.” The Kalamazoo-Portage metropolitan statistical area (MSA) continues to be a top five performing MSA in the state at 4.0 percent behind Ann Arbor (3.5 percent), Grand Rapids-Wyoming tied with Midland (3.7 percent), and Lansing-East Lansing (3.9 percent).

Michigan regions in October had large percentage drops in the number of unemployed, which were somewhat difficult to evaluate. The impact of the pandemic on labor market trends can be better seen by a comparison of three-month averages for August through October 2020 with pre-pandemic values in February 2020.

### THE LOCAL STORY: THE COMBINED SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL JOBLESS RATE FALLS ALMOST THREE POINTS

The combined seasonally unadjusted October 2020 jobless rate for the seven-county southwest Michigan region is down almost three percentage points from where the region sat in September 2020. **Based on the state’s suggested comparison to February 2020, the region’s jobless rate is up a point, now at 4.4 percent—still well below its historical 5.2 average benchmark.** Jobless rates range from 4.0 percent in Kalamazoo and Van Buren counties to 5.3 percent in Calhoun County. Visit the DTMB’s site to see [rankings by county](#), county [labor force](#) numbers, and an [overall snapshot](#) of Michigan’s employment.

		U.S.	Michigan	Southwest Michigan	Berrien	Branch	Calhoun	Cass	Kalamazoo	St. Joseph	Van Buren
OCT	Labor Force	161,053,000	4,869,000	272,021	72,361	19,090	60,153	23,791	134,120	28,398	35,108
	Employment	150,433,000	4,621,000	356,700	69,039	18,298	56,994	22,741	128,747	27,193	33,688
	Unemployment	10,620,000	247,000	16,321	3,322	792	3,159	1,050	5,373	1,205	1,420
	Jobless Rate	6.6%	5.1%	4.4%	4.6%	4.1%	5.3%	4.4%	4.0%	4.2%	4.0%
SEP	Jobless Rate	7.7%	8.2%	7.3%	7.6%	7.0%	8.6%	7.4%	6.7%	7.3%	6.7%
FEB	Jobless Rate	3.8%	3.6%	3.4%	3.8%	3.3%	3.6%	3.9%	2.7%	3.2%	4.5%

Source: Michigan DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), October 2020.  
Notes: All estimates are preliminary. Data is not seasonally adjusted.