

STATE AND REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES DECLINE IN APRIL

APRIL 2021

Michigan's seasonally adjusted jobless rate decreased slightly by two-tenths of a percentage point to 4.9 percent in April, according to data released by the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget. Employment in Michigan edged up modestly by 6,000 and unemployment moved down by 8,000, resulting in the state workforce inching down by 2,000 over the month.

"Michigan's employment situation has improved markedly one year after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic-related layoffs in the state," said Wayne Rourke, associate director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives. "However, auto-related layoffs in Michigan occurred in April 2021 due to the national shortage of semiconductor chips and the resulting impact on auto production."

Overall, Michigan employment levels were little changed in April, inching up by 0.1 percent. This change was comparable to the employment increase exhibited by the U.S. (+0.2 percent). Over the year, the state labor force rose by 2.5 percent, while the national workforce advanced by 2.9 percent since April 2020. Michigan employment levels were 968,000, or 27.6 percent, above the year-ago, pandemic-related lows, about double the percent gain nationally (+13.4 percent). Total unemployment fell by 853,000, or 78.7 percent, over the year, a decrease substantially larger than the percentage U.S. decline (-57.5 percent).

THE LOCAL STORY:

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN FOUR COUNTIES FALL BELOW 5.0 PERCENT IN APRIL

Branch, Cass, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph counties all posted seasonally unadjusted jobless rates below 5.0 percent in April 2021. For the first time since the pandemic, the 5.0 percent combined regional jobless rate fell below its historical average of 5.2 percent. In the region, Cass County posted the lowest unemployment rate at 4.3 percent, followed by Branch County with a rate of 4.5 percent, and Kalamazoo and St. Joseph counties with a rate of 4.6 percent. Cass and Van Buren counties had the highest reduction in unemployment rate month-over-month of 0.9 percentage points. 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
APR 2021	Labor Force	160,379,000	4,646,000	360,889	70,321	19,206	59,436	23,518	127,118	27,801	33,489
	Employment	151,160,000	4,433,000	342,755	66,661	18,344	55,894	22,504	121,247	26,523	31,582
	Unemployment	9,220,000	214,000	18,134	3,660	862	3,542	1,014	5,871	1,278	1,907
	Jobless Rate	5.7%	4.6%	5.0%	5.2%	4.5%	6.0%	4.3%	4.6%	4.6%	5.7%
MAR 2021	Jobless Rate	6.2%	5.2%	5.6%	5.8%	5.0%	6.4%	5.2%	5.1%	4.9%	6.6%
FEB 2021	Jobless Rate	6.6%	5.1%	5.7%	6.0%	4.9%	6.5%	5.6%	5.0%	5.2%	6.8%

Source: Michigan DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), April 2021.
Notes: All estimates are preliminary. Data is not seasonally adjusted.