

## California Employment Report for February 2024

The Center for Jobs and the Economy has released our initial analysis of the February Employment Report from the California Employment Development Department. For additional information and data about the California economy visit [www.centerforjobs.org/ca](http://www.centerforjobs.org/ca).

### February Data Shows Weak Results

The March labor force data in general produced weak results for the state. Nonfarm jobs dipped by 3,400 over the month, while January's strong preliminary numbers were revised down sharply from the initially reported 58,100 to 25,600, the lowest since last September and only 38% as high as the gain in January 2023.

Employment came in with yet another monthly loss, the 8<sup>th</sup> in the last 9 months. Employment was off 20,100 for the month and a total of 120,200 in the current 9-month downward trend. As unemployment also has grown in every month except one since September 2022, the unemployment rose to 5.3%, the highest among the states and DC and the highest in California since December 2021.

### California Labor Force

Seasonally Adjusted	California		US	
	Feb 2024	Change from Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Change from Jan 2024
Unemployment Rate	5.3%	0.1	3.9%	0.2
Labor Force	19,348,900	0.0%	167,426,000	0.1%
Participation Rate	62.1%	0.0	62.5%	0.0
Employment	18,321,900	-0.1%	160,968,000	-0.1%
Unemployment	1,027,000	1.3%	6,458,000	5.5%

Not Seasonally Adjusted	California		US	
	Feb 2024	Change from Feb 2023	Feb 2024	Change from Feb 2023
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	0.8	4.2%	0.3
Labor Force	19,394,300	0.2%	167,285,000	0.7%
Participation Rate	62.2%	-0.1	62.5%	0.1
Employment	18,316,000	-0.6%	160,315,000	0.4%
Unemployment	1,078,300	16.5%	6,970,000	7.8%

**5.3%**

California's reported unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) in February again rose 0.1 point, to 5.3% as employment continued to lose ground and the number of unemployed also grew. The US rate weakened by 0.2 point to 3.9%.

California had the highest unemployment rate among the states and DC.

**CA Unemployment  
Rate**

**-20.1k**

Employment dropped 20,100 (seasonally adjusted), with the total employment loss since May 2023 now at 120,200.

US employment was also down, by 184,000.

California unemployment rose 13,400, while US unemployment rose 334,000. For the past 12 months, unemployment is up 165,400 in California, while rising 496,000 in the nation as a whole.

**CA Employment**

**62.1%**

California labor force (seasonally adjusted) was essentially unchanged with a dip of only 8,600, while the labor force participation rate was level at 62.1%. The US labor force rose 150,000, while the participation rate was unchanged at 62.5%.

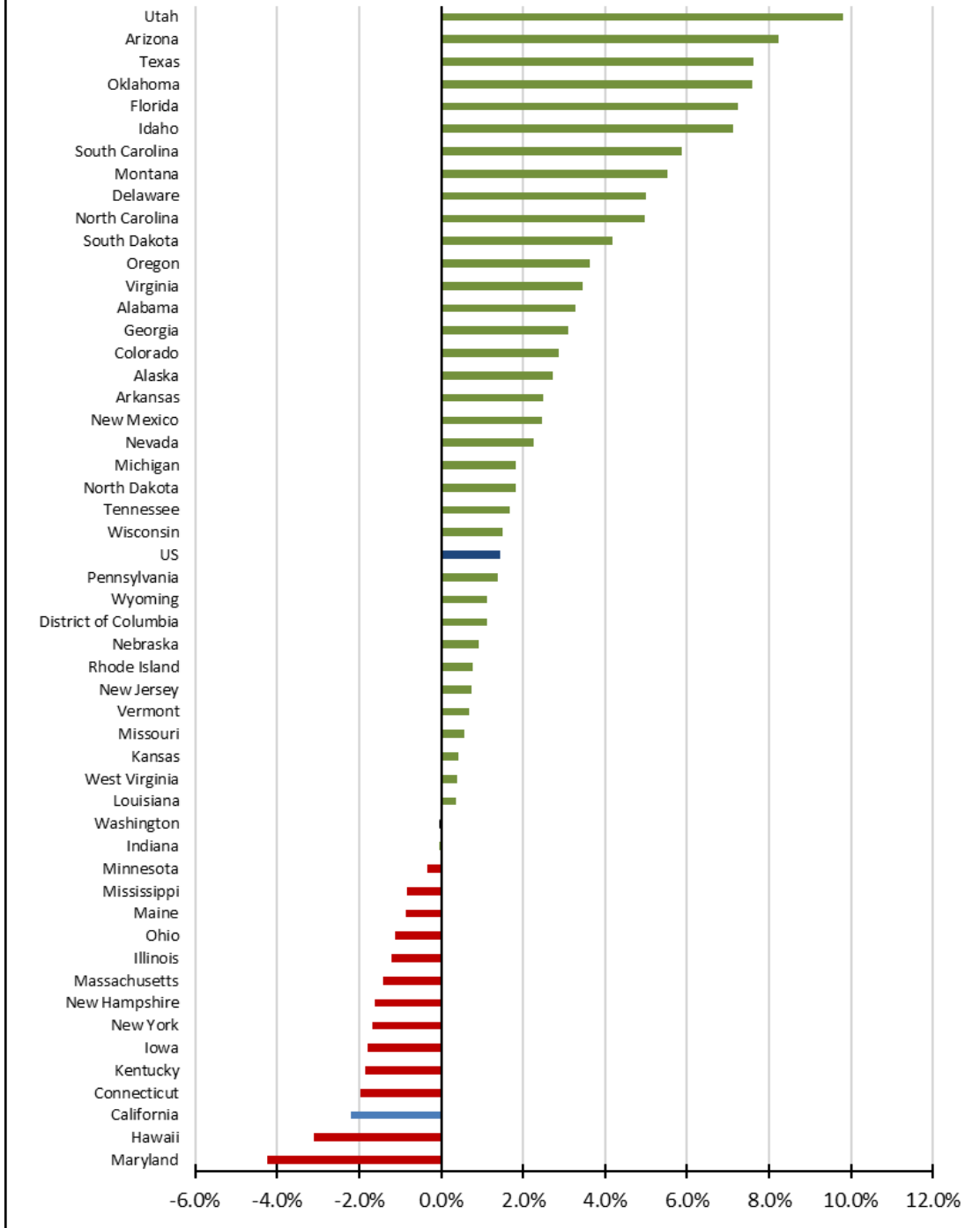
**CA Labor Force  
Participation Rate**

## **Recovery Progress: CA Employment vs. Other States**

Compared to the pre-pandemic peak in February 2020, California's sustained weak employment recovery remained at the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest among the states and DC. Rather than moving towards recovery, total employment fell further to 265,900 below the pre-pandemic peak.

## Employment: February 2024 vs. February 2020

Source: BLS, seasonally adjusted



### Nonfarm Jobs

**-3.4k**

Nonfarm wage and salary jobs dipped 3,400 (seasonally adjusted), while the previously reported January gains were slashed by 32,500 to 25,600.

For the US, nonfarm jobs were up 275,000 in February.






The seasonally adjusted numbers for California showed gains in 5 industries and losses in 13. Increases were led by Healthcare & Social Assistance (14,300), Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (4,000), and Accommodation & Food Services (1,400). Losses were led by Construction (-9,600), Wholesale Trade (-3,500), and Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities (-2,100).

**Nonfarm Jobs  
Change**

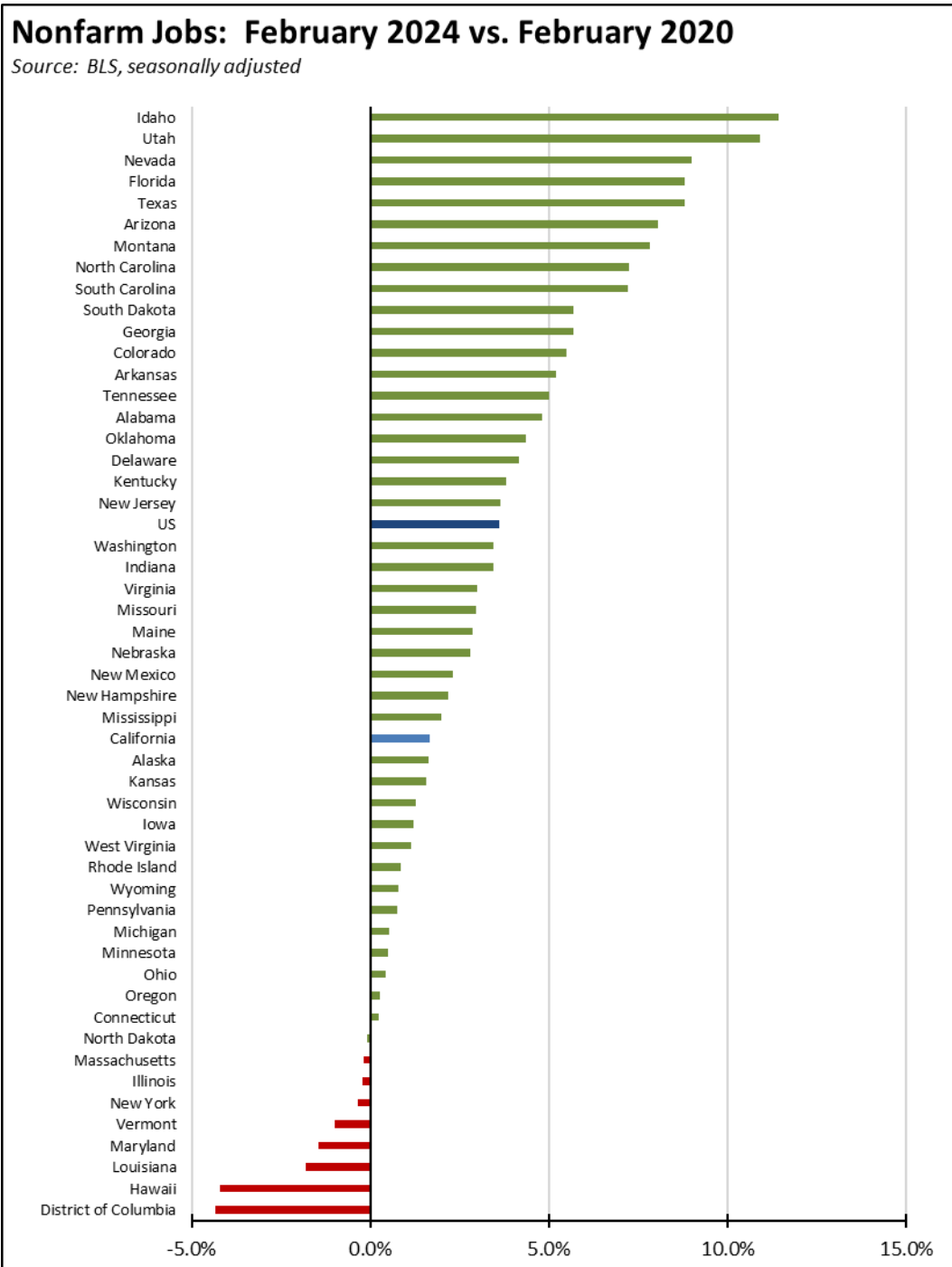
### Recovery Progress: CA Nonfarm Jobs vs. Other States

California's monthly job performance in February was the 49<sup>th</sup> highest among the states and DC. Texas led with 49,800, followed by Illinois at 23,100 and Michigan at 15,200.

Compared to the pre-pandemic peak, California has now gained 294,100 nonfarm jobs, still in 4<sup>th</sup> place among the states and DC.

	Nonfarm Job Gains, Feb 2020 - Feb 2024	
Texas	1,140,600	
Florida	800,500	
North Carolina	335,800	
California	294,100	
Georgia	265,200	

Adjusted for size, California again ranked 29th highest, below the US average.



### Nonfarm Jobs by Region

Both the budget critical Bay Area and Los Angeles Region posted nonfarm job losses (seasonally adjusted) over the month, leaving the post-pandemic recovery rankings unchanged.

### Nonfarm Jobs by Region

Source: EDD, seasonally adjusted

	Change from January 2024	Change from February 2020
Inland Empire	800	103,100
Central Valley	-1,300	90,600
Sacramento	1,200	55,200
San Diego	-1,700	39,700
Orange County	3,100	12,700
Central Coast	-400	-12,900
Bay Area	-4,200	-57,000
Los Angeles	-3,300	-65,900

Because the data in the table is seasonally adjusted, the numbers should be considered as the total for the counties in each region rather than the regional number. This job series also is not available for all areas in California.

### Unemployment Rates by Region

Looking at employment, no region in the state has yet to pass the pre-pandemic peak. Los Angeles and Bay Area remain the furthest behind.

	Change from Feb 2023	Change from Feb 2020
Central Sierra	1,180	-4,610
Sacramento	440	-28,790
Upstate California	630	-38,830
Central Coast	-18,000	-56,000
Inland Empire	-7,200	-60,200
San Diego/Imperial	-24,400	-86,400
Orange County	-22,400	-102,300
Central Valley	-5,000	-129,000
Bay Area	-103,100	-324,200
Los Angeles	-33,200	-586,800

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) compared to pre-pandemic February 2020 are shown below.

### Unemployment Rate by Region

Source: EDD, not seasonally adjusted

	Feb-24	Feb-20
California	5.6	4.3
Orange County	4.2	2.8
Bay Area	4.5	2.7
Los Angeles	5.1	4.3
Sacramento	5.2	3.7
San Diego/Imperial	5.3	3.8
Inland Empire	5.5	3.9
Central Sierra	5.7	4.5
Upstate California	7.7	6.3
Central Coast	8.4	7.0
Central Valley	9.6	8.4

## Counties with Double-Digit Unemployment

**10**

The number of counties with an unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) at 10% or edged up to 3. The unadjusted rates ranged from 3.7% in San Mateo to 20.4% in Colusa.

Counties with  
Unemployment Above  
10%



## Unemployment Rate by Legislative District

The estimated unemployment rates are shown below for the highest and lowest districts. The full data and methodology are available on the Center's website.

Lowest	CD40 Kim (R)	3.7	SD13 Becker (D)	3.5	AD23 Berman (D)	3.4
	CD11 Pelosi (D)	3.8	SD37 Min (D)	3.8	AD76 Maienschein (D)	3.4
	CD15 Mullin (D)	3.9	SD39 Atkins (D)	3.8	AD19 Ting (D)	3.5
	CD50 Peters (D)	3.9	SD40 Jones (R)	3.8	AD66 Muratsuchi (D)	3.6
	CD16 Eshoo (D)	3.9	SD11 Wiener (D)	3.9	AD26 Low (D)	3.7
	CD38 Sánchez (D)	4.0	SD38 Blakespear (D)	3.9	AD72 Dixon (R)	3.7
	CD47 Porter (D)	4.1	SD30 Archuleta (D)	4.2	AD16 Bauer-Kahan (D)	3.8
	CD28 Chu (D)	4.1	SD27 Stern (D)	4.4	AD21 Papan (D)	3.8
	CD49 Levin (D)	4.2	SD25 Portantino (D)	4.4	AD77 Boerner Horvath (D)	4.0
	CD17 Khanna (D)	4.2	SD34 Umberg (D)	4.4	AD56 Calderon (D)	4.0
Highest	CD10 DeSaulnier (D)	6.7	SD28 Smallwood-Cuevas (D)	5.7	AD13 Villapudua (D)	7.3
	CD48 Issa (R)	7.1	SD33 Gonzalez (D)	5.9	AD03 Gallagher (R)	7.9
	CD46 Correa (D)	7.5	SD21 Wilk (R)	6.2	AD22 Alanis (R)	8.1
	CD14 Swalwell (D)	7.8	SD04 Alvarado-Gil (D)	6.7	AD32 Fong (R)	8.6
	CD02 Huffman (D)	8.2	SD17 Laird (D)	7.2	AD29 Rivas (D)	9.9
	CD51 Jacobs (D)	8.2	SD05 Eggman (D)	7.4	AD36 Garcia (D)	10.
	CD45 Steel (R)	9.1	SD12 Grove (R)	7.8	AD35 Bains (D)	11.
	CD35 Torres (D)	10.8	SD18 Padilla (D)	8.5	AD31 Arambula (D)	11.
	CD31 Napolitano (D)	11.1	SD14 Caballero (D)	11.5	AD27 Soria (D)	12.
	CD03 Kiley (R)	12.3	SD16 Hurtado (D)	12.2	AD33 Mathis (R)	9