

## California Employment Report for December 2023

The Center for Jobs and the Economy has released our initial analysis of the December Employment Report from the California Employment Development Department. The additional information we generally address from US Bureau of Labor Statistics will not be released until next Tuesday, at which time we will do a more complete analysis in our Full Jobs Report. For additional information and data about the California economy visit [www.centerforjobs.org/ca](http://www.centerforjobs.org/ca).

On a data note, the annual revision process began with updates to the national labor force numbers beginning with January 2019. The Center’s website has been updated with this information. The revisions will continue through March, when updates to the jobs numbers and the state and county labor force data will be completed. Comparisons between geographic areas in the meantime should consider this difference in the release of the adjusted numbers.

### December Data Again Shows Jobs Up—Employment Down

Nonfarm jobs rose 23,400 in December while the November numbers saw a more modest adjustment to 8,100, down only 1,200 from the initial estimate. The December number was above the 20,500 average experienced in pre-pandemic 2019. For the year, job gains averaged 26,000 a month in the initial estimates, but as discussed in our report [last month](#), are likely to be adjusted lower in the annual revisions.

Employment—the number of people working—dropped for the 6<sup>th</sup> month in a row, with a loss of 32,700 for December and a total loss of 180,500 since June. Combined with a 29,200 rise in the number of unemployed, the unemployment rate rose 0.2 point to 5.1%, its highest point since January 2022.

### California Labor Force

	Seasonally Adjusted		California		US	
	Dec 2023	Change from Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Change from Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Change from Nov 2023
Unemployment Rate	5.1%	0.2	3.7%	0.0	3.7%	0.0
Labor Force	19,356,900	0.0%	167,451,000	-0.4%	167,451,000	-0.4%
Participation Rate			62.5%	-0.3	62.5%	-0.3
Employment	18,373,900	-0.2%	161,183,000	-0.4%	161,183,000	-0.4%
Unemployment	983,000	3.1%	6,268,000	0.1%	6,268,000	0.1%

**5.1%**  
CA Unemployment  
Rate

California's reported unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) in December was up 0.2 point to 5.1% as employment continued to go down and unemployment continued to go up. The US rate was unchanged at 3.7%.

**-32.7k**

CA Employment

Employment dropped 32,700 (seasonally adjusted), adding to a total loss over the past 6 months of 180,500.

US employment was down 683,000.

California unemployment rose 29,200, while US unemployment was essentially unchanged with an increase of only 6,000. For the past 12 months, unemployment is up 192,700 in California, while rising 570,000 in the nation as a whole.

## Nonfarm Jobs by Region

In spite of continuing tech industry layoffs, the Bay Area again posted a positive jobs growth in December, and the Los Angeles Region again showed higher jobs numbers. Overall jobs recovery since the pandemic in the budget-critical Bay Area remains weak.

### Nonfarm Jobs by Region

Source: EDD, seasonally adjusted

	Change from November 2023	Change from February 2020
Inland Empire	6,400	112,900
Central Valley	2,600	87,300
Sacramento	2,400	65,100
San Diego	5,700	62,700
Los Angeles	18,300	55,800
Orange County	6,800	45,200
Bay Area	10,600	40,000
Central Coast	1,800	10,600

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.

## Counties with Double-Digit Unemployment

**4**

Counties with  
Unemployment Above  
10%

The number of counties with an unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) at 10% or edged up to 4. The unadjusted rates ranged from 3.2% in San Mateo to 18.3% in Imperial.

## MSAs with the Worst Unemployment Rates

In November, California contained over half (15) of the MSAs among the 25 urban areas with the worst unemployment rates, including the worst region of the country in El Centro MSA (Imperial County). Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim MSA fell just on the other side of this group, tying with three other MSAs—including Oxnard-Thousand Oaks-Ventura MSA—at #353. San Luis Obispo-Paso Robles-Arroyo Grande MSA was the highest ranked California urban area, tying with 17 other MSAs at #234 (3.5%).

MSA	November Unemp. Rate	Rank (out of 389)
El Centro MSA	18.7%	389
Visalia-Porterville MSA	10.2%	387
Merced MSA	8.5%	386
Hanford-Corcoran MSA	8.0%	384
Bakersfield MSA	7.8%	383
Fresno MSA	7.6%	382
Madera MSA	7.2%	381
Yuba City MSA	6.8%	380
Stockton-Lodi MSA	6.4%	377
Modesto MSA	6.4%	377
Salinas MSA	5.6%	372
Santa Cruz-Watsonville MSA	5.5%	371
Redding MSA	5.2%	368
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario MSA	5.1%	363
Chico MSA	5.1%	363