# NEWS RELEASE

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## Unemployment Rate Ticks Up Across All Metro Areas in March

*Champaign metro payrolls climb to 14 months of consecutive year over year growth*

**Not Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates**

| Metropolitan Area | March 2026* | March 2025** | Over-the-Year Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bloomington | 4.5% | 3.6% | 0.9 |
| Champaign-Urbana | 4.6% | 3.5% | 1.1 |
| Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg | 5.0% | 4.9% | 0.1 |
| Davenport-Moline-Rock Island (IL Section) | 5.7% | 5.2% | 0.5 |
| Decatur | 6.6% | 5.6% | 1.0 |
| Elgin | 5.7% | 4.7% | 1.0 |
| Kankakee | 6.6% | 5.4% | 1.2 |
| Lake | 6.0% | 5.0% | 1.0 |
| Peoria | 5.7% | 4.7% | 1.0 |
| Rockford | 6.5% | 5.4% | 1.1 |
| Springfield | 5.2% | 4.1% | 1.1 |
| St. Louis (IL Section) | 4.6% | 3.7% | 0.9 |
| Illinois Statewide | 5.2% | 4.7% | 0.5 |

**** Preliminary | ** Revised***

**SPRINGFIELD** – Over-the-year, total nonfarm jobs decreased in 8 metropolitan areas, increased in 3 and was unchanged in 1, leading to consecutive months with year-over-year growth in Champaign (14 consecutive months) and Lake (4 consecutive months). Over-the-year, the unemployment rate increased in all 12 metro areas for the year ending March 2026, according to data released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (DES).

"Metro areas across Illinois are continuing to feel the effects of economic uncertainty coming from Washington, creating added pressure for employers and workers," said **Deputy Governor Andy Manar**. "Even with those headwinds, some regions continue to see steady job growth, Illinois will continue focusing on policies that support job creation, economic stability, and long-term growth in communities across the state."

The metro areas which posted the largest over-the-year percentage decreases in total nonfarm jobs were the Springfield MSA (-3.0%, -3,300), the Decatur MSA (-1.7%, -800), and a tie between the Kankakee MSA (-1.6%, -700) and the Rockford MSA (-1.6%, -2,300). The metro areas which had over-the-year percentage increases in total nonfarm jobs were the Lake County Metro Division (+0.3%, +1,100) and the Champaign-Urbana MSA (+0.2%, +300). Nonfarm jobs in the Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg Metro Division were down -4,500 (-0.1%). The Illinois section of the Davenport-Moline-Rock Island MSA saw no change in total nonfarm jobs over-the-year. Industries that saw job growth in the majority of the twelve metro areas included: Private Education and Health Services and Government (nine areas each), followed by Mining and Construction (eight areas).

The metro areas with the largest unemployment rate increases were the Kankakee MSA (+1.2 point to 6.6%) followed by a tie between the Champaign-Urbana MSA (+1.1 point to 4.6%), the Rockford MSA (+1.1 point to 6.5%), and Springfield MSA (+1.1 point to 5.2%). The Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg Metro Division unemployment rate grew by +0.1 point to 5.0%. The unemployment rate increased over-the-year in 101 counties and decreased in 1.

**Total Nonfarm Jobs (Not Seasonally Adjusted) – March 2026**

| Metropolitan Area | March 2026* | March 2025** | Over-the-Year Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bloomington | 92,200 | 92,800 | -600 |
| Champaign-Urbana | 122,600 | 122,300 | 300 |
| Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg | 3,778,900 | 3,783,400 | -4,500 |
| Davenport-Moline-Rock Island (IL Section) | 87,100 | 87,100 | 0 |
| Decatur | 46,800 | 47,600 | -800 |
| Elgin | 290,400 | 291,000 | -600 |
| Kankakee | 42,000 | 42,700 | -700 |
| Lake | 335,600 | 334,500 | 1,100 |
| Peoria | 168,700 | 169,000 | -300 |
| Rockford | 141,100 | 143,400 | -2,300 |
| Springfield | 105,600 | 108,900 | -3,300 |
| St. Louis (IL Section) | 243,600 | 243,500 | 100 |
| Illinois Statewide | 6,082,100 | 6,090,500 | -8,400 |

****Preliminary | **Revised***

## Not Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates (percent) for Local Counties and Areas

| Labor Market Area | Mar 2026 | Mar 2025 | Over-the-Year Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Rockford MSA** | | | |
| Boone County | 6.9% | 5.8% | 1.1 |
| Winnebago County | 6.4% | 5.3% | 1.1 |
| **Cities** | | | |
| Belvidere City | 7.5% | 6.4% | 1.1 |
| Freeport City | 5.6% | 4.9% | 0.7 |
| Rockford City | 7.2% | 5.9% | 1.3 |
| **Counties** | | | |
| Bureau County | 5.9% | 5.5% | 0.4 |
| Carroll County | 5.6% | 5.3% | 0.3 |
| DeKalb County | 5.2% | 4.4% | 0.8 |
| Henry County | 5.8% | 5.1% | 0.7 |
| Jo Daviess County | 5.3% | 4.6% | 0.7 |
| Kane County | 6.0% | 4.9% | 1.1 |
| Lee County | 5.3% | 4.5% | 0.8 |
| McHenry County | 4.8% | 4.6% | 0.2 |
| Ogle County | 5.7% | 4.8% | 0.9 |
| Stephenson County | 5.2% | 4.7% | 0.5 |
| Whiteside County | 5.2% | 4.5% | 0.7 |

## Rockford MSA

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 6.5 percent in March 2026 from 5.4 percent in March 2025.

Total nonfarm employment decreased -2,300 compared to March 2025.

The Mining-Construction (+400) and Government (+400) sectors had payroll gains over-the-year. The Manufacturing (-800), Professional-Business Services (-600), Transportation-Warehousing-Utilities (-600), Retail Trade (-400), Wholesale Trade (-200), Private Education-Health Services (-200), Leisure-Hospitality (-200) and Financial Activities (-100) sectors had employment declines from a year ago.

### Ogle County

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 5.7 percent in March 2026 from 4.8 percent in March 2025.

Total nonfarm employment decreased -625 compared to March 2025.

The Government (+75) and Information (+25) sectors had payroll gains over-the-year. The Financial Activities (-200), Construction (-175), Manufacturing (-125), Private Education-Health Services (-75), Other Services (-75) and Professional-Business Services (-25) sectors had employment declines from a year ago.

### Stephenson County

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 5.2 percent in March 2026 from 4.7 percent in March 2025.

Total nonfarm employment decreased -175 compared to March 2025.

The Financial Activities (+125), Government (+100), Trade-Transportation-Utilities (+75), Leisure-Hospitality (+75) and Private Education-Health Services (+75) sectors had payroll gains over-the-year. The Professional-Business Services (-400), Manufacturing (-125), Construction (-75) and Other Services (-25) sectors had employment declines from a year ago.

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**Note:** Monthly 2025 unemployment rates and total nonfarm jobs for Illinois metro areas were revised in February and March 2026, as required by the U.S. BLS. Comments and tables distributed for prior metro area news releases should be discarded as any records or historical analysis previously cited may no longer be valid.

**Disclaimer:** The data contained in the metro area employment numbers press releases are not seasonally adjusted, and therefore are subject to seasonal fluctuations due to factors such as changes in weather, harvests, major holidays and school schedules. Current monthly metro data should be compared to the same month from prior years (January 2026 data compared to January 2025 data) as data for these months have similar seasonal patterns. Comparisons should not be made to data for the immediate previous month or other previous non-matching months, as any changes in the data within these time periods may be the result of seasonal fluctuations and not economic factors.