NEWS RELEASE

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Mixed Metro Area Job Growth as Unemployment Rate Ticks Up Across Illinois in February

Not Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

Metropolitan Area	February 2026*	February 2025**	Over-the-Year Change
Bloomington	4.6%	3.8%	0.8
Champaign-Urbana	4.8%	3.9%	0.9
Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg	5.4%	5.1%	0.3
Davenport-Moline-Rock Island (IL Section)	6.1%	5.6%	0.5
Decatur	6.8%	5.8%	1.0
Elgin	5.9%	5.0%	0.9
Kankakee	7.0%	5.9%	1.1
Lake	6.2%	5.3%	0.9
Peoria	5.8%	5.2%	0.6
Rockford	6.7%	5.7%	1.0
Springfield	5.4%	4.4%	1.0
St. Louis (IL Section)	4.8%	3.9%	0.9
Illinois Statewide	5.5%	5.0%	0.5

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

SPRINGFIELD – Over-the-year, total nonfarm jobs decreased in 8 metropolitan areas and increased in 4, leading to consecutive months with year-over-year growth in Champaign (13 consecutive months). Over-the-year, the unemployment rate increased in all 12 metro areas for the year ending February 2026, according to data released today by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security (DES).

"February's numbers show job growth in a few parts of Illinois, but rising unemployment across metro areas underscores the uncertainty coming from the federal government," said Deputy Governor Andy Manar. "Washington's shifting policies are making it harder for states to maintain momentum. Illinois will continue focusing on growth, supporting employers, and investing in our workforce."

The metro areas which posted the largest over-the-year percentage decreases in total nonfarm jobs were the Springfield MSA (-2.4%, -2,600), the Rockford MSA (-1.7%, -2,500), and the Bloomington MSA (-1.4%, -1,300). The metro areas which had the largest over-the-year percentage increases in total nonfarm jobs were the Peoria MSA (+1.0%, +1,600), the Champaign-Urbana MSA (+0.9%, +1,100), and the Lake County Metro Division (+0.4%, +1,300). Nonfarm jobs in the Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg Metro Division were down -6,500 (-0.2%). Industries that saw job growth in the majority of the twelve metro areas included: Mining and Construction (ten areas), followed by Private Education and Health Services and Government (nine areas each).

The metro areas with the largest unemployment rate increases were the Kankakee MSA (+1.1 point to 7.0%) followed by a tie between the Decatur MSA (+1.0 point to 6.8%), the Rockford MSA (+1.0 point to 6.7%), and Springfield MSA (+1.0 point to 5.4%). The Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg Metro Division unemployment rate grew by +0.3 point to 5.4%. The unemployment rate increased over-the-year in 100 counties and decreased in 2.

Total Nonfarm Jobs (Not Seasonally Adjusted) – February 2026

Metropolitan Area	February 2026*	February 2025**	Over-the-Year Change
Bloomington	92,000	93,300	-1,300
Champaign-Urbana	122,000	120,900	1,100
Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg	3,760,600	3,767,100	-6,500
Davenport-Moline-Rock Island (IL Section)	85,900	86,500	-600
Decatur	46,800	47,100	-300
Elgin	289,100	289,800	-700
Kankakee	41,800	42,200	-400
Lake	334,300	333,000	1,300
Peoria	169,400	167,800	1,600
Rockford	140,700	143,200	-2,500
Springfield	105,100	107,700	-2,600
St. Louis (IL Section)	240,900	240,100	800
Illinois Statewide	6,048,000	6,060,500	-12,500

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

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

Labor Market Area	Feb 2026	Feb 2025	Over-the-Year Change
IL Section of Davenport-Moline-Rock Island, IA-IL MSA			
Henry County	6.2%	5.4%	0.8
Mercer County	6.2%	6.0%	0.2
Rock Island County	6.0%	5.6%	0.4
Cities			
Galesburg City	6.2%	5.0%	1.2
Moline City	6.2%	5.5%	0.7
Rock Island City	5.8%	5.5%	0.3
Counties			
Bureau County	6.4%	5.9%	0.5
Fulton County	6.2%	5.3%	0.9
Henderson County	5.7%	4.4%	1.3
Knox County	6.4%	5.1%	1.3
Stark County	6.9%	5.8%	1.1
Warren County	5.0%	4.4%	0.6
Whiteside County	5.5%	4.5%	1.0

Illinois Section of Davenport-Moline-Rock Island, IA-IL MSA

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 6.1 percent in February 2026 from 5.6 percent in February 2025.

Total nonfarm employment decreased -600 compared to February 2025.

The Government (+400) and Private Education-Health Services (+300) sectors had payroll gains over-the-year. The Manufacturing (-600), Leisure-Hospitality (-200), Wholesale Trade (-100), Retail Trade (-100), Information (-100), Professional-Business Services (-100) and Other Services (-100) sectors recorded employment declines over-the-year.

The unemployment rate identifies those who are out of work and seeking employment. A person who exhausts benefits, or is ineligible, still will be reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work.

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.