

ADMINISTRATIVE USES OF LOCAL AREA UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

User Agency / Program	Geographic Areas Used	Reference Period	Allocation Formulas / Qualifying Criteria
Department of Labor – Employment and Training Administration			
Youth Workforce Investment Activities (WIOA, Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 2)	States and Areas of Substantial Unemployment (ASUs). An ASU is a contiguous geographic area within a state with an unemployment rate of at least 6.5 percent a population of at least 10,000.	Most recent program year (July-June).	Funding based on the following proportions: 1/3 on relative number of unemployed in ASUs, 1/3 on relative number of excess unemployed (i.e., number of unemployed in excess of 4.5 percent of labor force), and 1/3 on relative number of economically disadvantaged youth, age 16-21.
Adult Employment and Training Activities (WIOA, Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 3)	States and ASUs.	Most recent program year (July-June).	Funding based on the following proportions: 1/3 on relative number of unemployed in ASUs, 1/3 on relative number of excess unemployed (i.e., number of unemployed in excess of 4.5 percent of labor force), and 1/3 on relative number of economically disadvantaged adults, age 22-72.
Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities (WIOA, Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 3)	States.	Most recent program year (July-June) for unemployed and excess unemployed; most recent calendar year for unemployed 15 weeks or more.	Funding based on the following proportions: 1/3 on relative number of unemployed, 1/3 on relative number of excess unemployed, and 1/3 on relative number of individuals unemployed for 15 weeks or more.
Employment Service Grants to States (Wagner-Peyser Act, Section 5)	States.	Most recent calendar year.	State funding algorithm is based on the following proportions: 2/3 of relative number of civilian labor force and 1/3 on relative number of unemployed.
Labor Surplus Areas (LSAs)	Counties, cities over 25,000 population, and county balances.	Most recent 2-calendar-year average.	An area qualifies as a LSA when its average unemployment rate is 20 percent or more above the national average rate (including Puerto Rico) for the period, with the threshold being no lower than 6 percent and no higher than 10 percent.
Federal-State Extended Unemployment Benefits (EB)	States.	Most recent 3 months for total unemployment trigger (TUR) or most recent 13 weeks for insured unemployment trigger (IUR).	State is eligible to pay EB if: (1) the seasonally-adjusted total unemployment rate (TUR) for the most recent 3-month period is at least 6.5 percent and at least 10 percent above the state TUR for the same 3-month period in either of the 2 preceding years, or (2) the insured unemployment rate (IUR) is at least 5 percent and at least 120 percent of the average IUR for the same 13-week period in either of the 2 preceding years.
YouthBuild Program	Census tracts and non-metropolitan counties.	Not specified.	An area can qualify if it is an underserved area, which is defined as an area comprised of census tracts with the following distress criteria: (1) the unemployment rate remains at least 50 percent above the national unemployment rate and (2) a high rate of poverty persists.
Senior Community Service Employment Program (or Community Service Employment for Older Americans)	Counties and cities.	Annual averages for the most recent 3 years.	Participants must be unemployed, 55 years of age or older, and have incomes no more than 125 percent of the Federal poverty level. They qualify as most in need if they reside in an area with persistent unemployment. (Persistent unemployment means that the annual average unemployment rate for a county or city is more than 20 percent higher than the national average for 2 out of the last 3 years). Unemployed means an individual who is without a job and who wants and is available for work, including an individual who may have occasional employment that does not result in a consistent source of income.
National Apprenticeship Act	States.	Most recent ASU program year (July-June) for the total unemployed and civilian labor force data.	One-third of the funding is distributed as a minimum allotment to all eligible states and territories, while two-thirds of the funding is distributed formulaically using relative shares, with: (1) 50 percent based on state shares of total registered apprentices and (2) 50 percent based on state shares of total job openings, total unemployed, and total civilian labor force.
Department of Labor – Veterans’ Employment and Training Service			
Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002	States.	Most recent 3-calendar year average.	Funding is based on an estimate of the number of veterans seeking employment in a state as a portion of the number of veterans seeking employment nationwide.
Department of Agriculture			
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)	States.	Ten-month average of most recent October-July period.	Farm commodities and funds are allocated based on the following proportions: 3/5 on relative number of persons in households below the poverty line and 2/5 on relative number of unemployed persons.
Waivers to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Time Limits for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD)	States, metropolitan areas, counties, cities, Indian reservations, and specially-designated areas (e.g., census tracts).	Generally 12-month periods, but no less than 3 months for unemployment rate. Not specified for insufficient jobs criterion.	Waivers are granted to areas with: (1) an unemployment rate over 10 percent for the latest 12-month (or 3-month) period; (2) a historical seasonal unemployment rate over 10 percent (3); a Labor Surplus Area designation from DOL; (4) a 24-month average unemployment rate 20 percent above national average; (5) a low and declining employment-population ratio; (6) a lack of jobs in declining occupations or industries; (7) described in an academic study or publication as an area with a lack of jobs; or (8) qualifies for extended unemployment benefits.

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Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration			
Public Works and Economic Development Program	Areas defined by geographic/political boundaries, e.g., States, counties, cities, Indian reservations.	Most recent 24-month average.	An area qualifies if: (1) the unemployment rate is at least one percentage point above the national rate, (2) the per capita income is 80 percent or less of the national average per capita income, or (3) there is a special need, as determined by EDA, arising from actual or threatened severe unemployment or economic adjustment problems resulting from severe short-term or long-term changes in economic conditions.
Economic Adjustment Assistance Program	Same geographic areas used in the Public Works and Economic Development Program.	Most recent 24-month average.	Same qualifying criteria used in the Public Works and Economic Development Program.
Department of Defense – Defense Logistics Agency			
Procurement Technical Assistance (PTA)	States, counties, and cities.	Most recent 24-month average.	An area qualifies for additional assistance if: (1) the unemployment rate is at least one percentage point above the national average for the most recent 24-month period or (2) the per capita income is 80 percent or less of the state average.
Department of Health and Human Services – Administration for Children and Families			
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Contingency Fund	States.	Most recent 3-month average.	States and the District of Columbia can access funds if they are determined to be “needy,” based on a seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate that is at least 6.5 percent for the 3-month period and at least 110 percent of the rate for the corresponding period in either/both of the 2 preceding calendar years; or if the number of food stamp recipients increases at least 10 percent during the 3-month period. (TANF automatically gives block grants to Puerto Rico.)
TANF — Job Search and Job Readiness Activities	States.	Most recent 3-month average.	The time limit on participation in job search and job readiness activities is extended to 12 weeks if the state unemployment rate is at least 50 percent above the national rate or if a state meets either of the qualifying criteria for Contingency Fund drawdowns. (TANF automatically gives block grants to Puerto Rico.)
Department of Health and Human Services – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration			
Community Mental Health Services Block Grants (MHBG)	States and territories.	Most recent state fiscal year.	Maintenance of Effort requirements for grant recipients are waived if they can demonstrate extraordinary economic conditions. To qualify, a recipient must show a decline in total tax revenue of at least 1.5 percent from the previous fiscal year, accompanied by an increase in the unemployment rate of at least 1.0 percentage point or a decrease in employment of at least 1.5 percent.
Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse Block Grants (SABG)	States and territories.	Most recent state fiscal year.	Maintenance of Effort requirements for grant recipients are waived if they can demonstrate extraordinary economic conditions. To qualify, a recipient must show a decline in total tax revenue of at least 1.5 percent from the previous fiscal year, accompanied by an increase in the unemployment rate of at least 1.0 percentage point OR a decrease in employment of at least 1.5 percent.
Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)			
Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP)	Counties and cities.	Most recent 12-month average.	Jurisdictions qualify for FEMA funding if they meet one of the following criteria: (1) 13,000 or more unemployed with a jobless rate of 4.3 percent or more, (2) 300-12,999 unemployed with a jobless rate of at least 6.3 percent, or (3) 300 or more unemployed with a poverty rate of at least 11 percent.
National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program	Counties, cities, and Indian reservations.	Most recent annual average.	Federal cost-share may be increased from 75% to 90% for grants to small, impoverished communities. To qualify, a community must be a rural area of 3,000 people or fewer, have an average per capita income of less than 80 percent of the national average, and have a local unemployment rate 1.0 percentage point or more above the national rate.
Department of Homeland Security – U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services			
Employment Creation Visa (EB-5) Program	Metropolitan areas, counties, cities, and census tracts.	Time of investment or petition for alien investor status.	Visas are granted for reduced investment amounts if made in a rural area or an area with an unemployment rate at least 150 percent that of the national average rate.

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Department of the Treasury			
Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994—Bank Enterprise Awards	Metropolitan areas, counties, cities, and possible sub-areas (e.g., census tracts).	Most recent 12-month period before announcement of application period.	An institution may qualify if part or all of its service area: (1) is located within one unit of general local government, (2) has a contiguous boundary, (3) (a) has a population of 4,000 or more, if in a metropolitan area, or (b) has a population of 1,000 or more, if outside of a metropolitan area, or (c) is entirely within an Indian reservation, (4) has a poverty rate of at least 30 percent, and (5) has an unemployment rate at least 1.5 times the national rate.
North American Development Bank (NADBank) Community Adjustment and Investment Program (CAIP)	Communities (discrete geographical areas) i.e., counties, towns, or cities.	Most recent 12-month average.	Eligibility for CAIP financing is based on: (1) significant job loss connected to the passage of NAFTA and (2) an unemployment rate that is at least 1.0 percentage point above the national rate over the same period.
Energy Community Bonus Tax Credits under the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA)	Metropolitan areas (delineated by OMB) and non-metropolitan areas (from the BLS's OEWS program).	Most recent annual average.	A metropolitan area or non-metropolitan area qualifies as an energy community if the following criteria are met: (1) it has (or, at any time during the period beginning after December 31, 2009, had) 0.17 percent or greater direct employment or 25 percent or greater local tax revenues related to the extraction, processing, transport, or storage of coal, oil, or natural gas and (2) it has an unemployment rate at or above the national average unemployment rate for the previous year.
Appalachian Regional Commission			
Area Development Program Distressed Counties Grants	The 420 counties defined within the Appalachian Region are considered.	Most recent 3-year average.	An area qualifies as distressed if it ranks in the worst 10 percent of the nation's counties according to ARC's index-based County Economic Status Classification System, which compares the national averages with each county's: (1) 3-year average unemployment rate, (2) per capita market income, and (3) poverty rate.
Small Business Administration			
Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUB Zones)	Census tracts, non-metropolitan counties, and Indian reservations.	Most recent annual average for unemployment rate.	An area qualifies if it is: (1) a "qualified" census tract (as defined in the 1986 IRS code), (2) a non-metropolitan county with (a) a median household income less than 80% of the statewide non-metropolitan median or (b) an unemployment rate at least 140% of the statewide average or the national average, or (3) within the boundaries of an Indian reservation, or (4) a military base closed under the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1990.

NOTE: The term "cities" also includes county subdivisions in selected states for various programs. Treatment of the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico varies by program. Treatment of other territories that are not included in the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program also varies.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, April 17, 2024.