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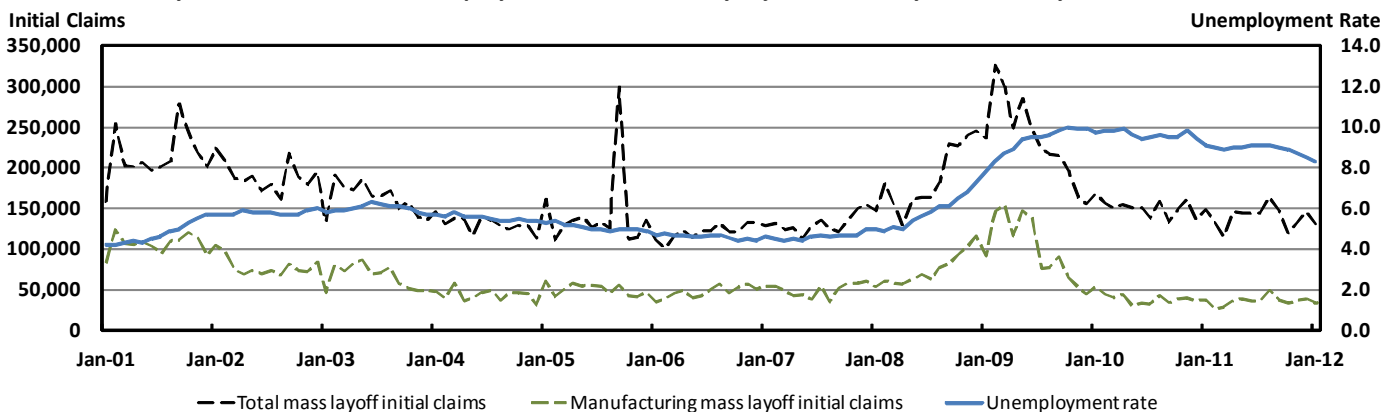
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MASS LAYOFFS – JANUARY 2012

Employers took 1,434 mass layoff actions in January involving 129,920 workers, seasonally adjusted, as measured by new filings for unemployment insurance benefits during the month, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Each mass layoff involved at least 50 workers from a single employer. Mass layoff events in January increased by 50 from December, while the number of associated initial claims decreased by 15,728. In January, 341 mass layoff events were reported in the manufacturing sector, seasonally adjusted, resulting in 33,597 initial claims. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Mass layoff initial claims and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, January 2001-January 2012



The national unemployment rate was 8.3 percent in January, down from 8.5 percent the prior month and from 9.1 percent a year earlier. Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 243,000 over the month and by 1,953,000 over the year.

Changes to Mass Layoff Data

Effective with this release, the Mass Layoff Statistics program updated the basis for industry classification from the 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to the 2012 NAICS. The new conversion reflects definitional changes within the utilities, construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and retail trade sectors. Several industry titles and descriptions were also updated. For more information on the 2012 NAICS update, visit www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html. For more information on the implementation of NAICS 2012 in the Mass Layoff Statistics program, visit www.bls.gov/mls/mls2012naics.htm.

Table A. Six-digit NAICS industries with the largest number of mass layoff initial claims in January 2012, private nonfarm, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Initial Claims	January peak	
		Year	Initial claims
Temporary help services ¹	13,692	1998	26,224
School and employee bus transportation	8,165	2010	15,131
Discount department stores	4,225	2010	8,065
Professional employer organizations ¹	3,157	2009	11,345
Highway, street, and bridge construction	2,889	2000	9,680
Hotels and motels, except casino hotels	2,537	2009	6,592
Supermarkets and other grocery stores	2,515	2009	3,978
Department stores, except discount	2,212	1998	5,600
Full-service restaurants	1,905	2009	2,658
Motion picture and video production	1,649	1998	12,038

¹ See the Technical Note for more information on these industries.

Industry Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

The number of mass layoff events in January was 1,705, not seasonally adjusted, resulting in 141,703 initial claims for unemployment insurance. (See table 2.) Over the year, the number of average weekly mass layoff events decreased by 86 to 426, and associated average weekly initial claims decreased by 13,867 to 35,426. Sixteen of the 19 major industry sectors in the private economy reported over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in manufacturing. (See table 3.) The six-digit industry with the largest number of private nonfarm initial claims in January 2012 was temporary help services. (See table A.)

In January the manufacturing sector accounted for 25 percent of mass layoff events and 28 percent of associated initial claims in the private economy. A year earlier, manufacturing made up 28 percent of events and 32 percent of initial claims. Within manufacturing, the numbers of mass layoff claimants in January 2012 were greatest in transportation equipment and food. Fifteen of the 21 manufacturing subsectors experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in transportation equipment. Five subsectors recorded January series' lows in terms of average weekly initial claims—beverage and tobacco products, textile product mills, wood products, fabricated metal products, and transportation equipment. (See table 3.)

Geographic Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Among the census regions, the South registered the greatest number of initial claims in January. All four regions experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decline occurring in the Midwest. (See table 4.)

Among the states, California recorded the highest number of mass layoff initial claims in January, followed by New York, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. Forty-one states and the District of Columbia

experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly initial claims, led by California, Pennsylvania, and Michigan. (See table 4.)

Note

The monthly data series in this release cover mass layoffs of 50 or more workers beginning in a given month, regardless of the duration of the layoffs. For private nonfarm establishments, information on the length of the layoff is obtained later and issued in a quarterly release that reports on mass layoffs lasting more than 30 days (referred to as “extended mass layoffs”). The quarterly release provides more information on the industry classification and location of the establishment and on the demographics of the laid-off workers. The monthly data series in this release are subjected to average weekly analysis, which mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. See the Technical Note for more detailed definitions and for a description of average weekly analysis.

The Mass Layoffs news release for February 2012 is scheduled to be released on Friday, March 23, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program is a federal-state program that uses a standardized automated approach to identifying, describing, and tracking the effects of major job cutbacks, using data from each state's unemployment insurance database. Each month, states report on employers which have at least 50 initial claims filed against them during a consecutive 5-week period. These employers then are contacted by the state agency to determine whether these separations lasted 31 days or longer, and, if so, other information concerning the layoff is collected. States report on layoffs lasting more than 1 month on a quarterly basis.

A given month contains an aggregation of the weekly unemployment insurance claims filings for the Sunday through Saturday weeks in that month. All weeks are included for the particular month, except if the first day of the month falls on Saturday. In this case, the week is included in the prior month's tabulations. This means that some months will contain 4 weeks and others, 5 weeks. The number of weeks in a given month may be different from year to year, and the number of weeks in a year may vary. Therefore, data users who intend to perform analysis of over-the-year change in the not seasonally adjusted series should use the average weekly mass layoff figures displayed in tables 3 and 4 of this release. The average weekly adjustment process produces a consistent series for each month across all years, permitting over-the-year analysis to be performed using strictly comparable data.

The MLS program resumed operations in April 1995 after it had been terminated in November 1992 due to lack of funding. Prior to April 1995, monthly layoff statistics were not available.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339

Definitions

Average weekly mass layoff events and initial claimants. The number of events and initial claimants in a given month divided by the number of weeks contained within that month.

Employer. Employers in the MLS program include those covered by state unemployment insurance laws. Information on employers is obtained from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, which is administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Industry. Employers are classified according to the 2007 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For temporary help and professional employer

organization industries, monthly MLS-related statistics generally reflect layoffs related to underlying client companies in other industries. An individual layoff action at a client company can be small, but when initial claimants associated with many such layoffs are assigned to a temporary help or professional employer organization firm, a mass layoff event may trigger.

Initial claimant. A person who files any notice of unemployment to initiate a request either for a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation, or for a temporary period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Mass layoff event. Fifty or more initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits filed against an employer during a 5-week period, regardless of duration.

Seasonal adjustment

Effective with the release of data for January 2005, BLS began publishing six seasonally adjusted monthly MLS series. The six series are the numbers of mass layoff events and mass layoff initial claims for the total, private nonfarm, and manufacturing sectors.

Seasonal adjustment is the process of estimating and removing the effect on time series data of regularly recurring seasonal events such as changes in the weather, holidays, and the beginning and ending of the school year. The use of seasonal adjustment makes it easier to observe fundamental changes in time series, particularly those associated with general economic expansions and contractions.

The MLS data are seasonally adjusted using the X-12-ARIMA seasonal adjustment method on a concurrent basis. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available monthly estimates, including those for the current month, in developing seasonal adjustment factors. Revisions to the most recent 5 years of seasonally adjusted data will be made once a year with the issuance of December data. Before the data are seasonally adjusted, prior adjustments are made to the original data to adjust them for differences in the number of weeks used to calculate the monthly data. Because weekly unemployment insurance claims are aggregated to form monthly data, a particular month's value could be calculated with 5 weeks of data in 1 year and 4 weeks in another. The effects of these differences could seriously distort the seasonal factors if they were ignored in the seasonal adjustment process. These effects are modeled in the X-12-ARIMA program and are permanently removed from the final seasonally adjusted series.

Table 1. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, February 2008 to January 2012, seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2008						
February	1,724	179,955	1,567	168,003	485	60,752
March	1,515	151,628	1,400	141,316	441	58,254
April	1,290	128,643	1,157	117,639	453	57,044
May	1,567	160,475	1,432	150,893	470	62,776
June	1,612	163,425	1,471	152,133	491	68,862
July	1,589	163,572	1,452	153,060	465	62,210
August	1,763	181,853	1,632	172,147	578	77,464
September	2,159	229,180	1,990	215,749	629	82,011
October	2,201	226,853	2,043	213,454	698	93,252
November	2,406	239,239	2,247	225,404	907	103,836
December	2,437	244,889	2,261	230,621	935	116,181
2009						
January	2,254	235,371	2,083	221,653	726	92,293
February	3,059	326,392	2,901	310,378	1,251	145,839
March	2,999	299,322	2,800	282,414	1,230	154,168
April	2,566	249,129	2,349	232,632	1,007	116,051
May	2,710	284,468	2,516	267,869	1,181	147,184
June	2,466	247,597	2,257	230,502	1,048	137,649
July	2,186	222,941	1,979	203,911	636	75,728
August	2,340	216,047	2,115	197,172	751	77,894
September	2,261	214,018	2,048	198,761	786	91,125
October	1,969	195,752	1,772	178,172	571	65,217
November	1,757	164,454	1,588	151,172	472	52,855
December	1,719	155,056	1,543	140,835	424	44,096
2010						
January	1,707	168,044	1,529	154,187	471	53,817
February	1,631	156,292	1,465	141,831	374	43,620
March	1,676	149,816	1,469	134,518	356	40,705
April	1,637	154,558	1,452	138,503	368	44,506
May	1,608	150,996	1,357	130,273	302	29,932
June	1,695	151,435	1,475	132,742	325	33,298
July	1,519	138,091	1,316	122,162	304	32,253
August	1,588	159,329	1,399	136,697	390	43,154
September	1,510	133,576	1,295	115,349	328	34,333
October	1,654	149,589	1,446	132,146	354	38,937
November	1,592	161,145	1,410	145,494	360	39,977
December	1,477	135,849	1,271	121,171	322	36,267
2011						
January	1,536	148,952	1,348	131,869	337	37,477
February	1,434	131,569	1,242	116,745	297	26,696
March	1,275	115,391	1,118	102,722	251	28,988
April	1,548	145,836	1,383	131,317	341	37,053
May	1,600	144,412	1,404	127,793	374	39,180
June	1,513	143,384	1,334	128,410	344	36,265
July	1,562	145,078	1,348	125,285	346	36,312
August	1,551	164,275	1,347	149,874	382	49,194
September	1,447	147,353	1,306	134,038	364	38,026
October	1,335	118,924	1,205	107,330	341	33,926
November	1,332	131,627	1,192	120,760	324	36,563
December	1,384	145,648	1,238	130,583	351	39,081
2012						
January	1,434	129,920	1,298	119,102	341	33,597

Table 2. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, February 2008 to January 2012, not seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2008						
February	1,269	119,508	1,178	113,587	361	42,527
March	1,089	114,541	1,039	110,147	333	43,740
April	1,272	130,810	1,172	121,625	394	48,188
May	1,552	159,471	1,438	150,462	388	51,698
June	1,622	166,742	1,315	140,916	309	42,097
July	1,891	200,382	1,687	186,018	760	108,733
August	1,427	139,999	1,343	133,146	414	51,912
September	1,292	129,586	1,202	122,505	361	46,391
October	2,125	221,784	1,917	205,553	689	100,457
November	2,574	241,589	2,389	226,657	997	107,620
December	3,377	351,305	3,232	340,220	1,378	172,529
2009						
January	3,806	388,813	3,633	375,293	1,461	172,757
February	2,262	218,438	2,173	210,755	945	103,588
March	2,191	228,387	2,107	221,397	940	114,747
April	2,547	256,930	2,385	243,321	887	100,872
May	2,738	289,628	2,572	274,047	1,005	123,683
June	2,519	256,357	2,051	216,063	674	85,726
July	3,054	336,654	2,659	296,589	1,133	154,208
August	1,428	125,024	1,334	117,193	436	41,151
September	1,371	123,177	1,258	115,141	448	51,126
October	1,934	193,904	1,678	172,883	566	69,655
November	1,870	164,496	1,679	150,751	517	55,053
December	2,310	214,648	2,166	203,655	615	64,540
2010						
January	2,860	278,679	2,682	265,074	962	104,846
February	1,183	102,818	1,091	96,022	282	30,728
March	1,197	111,727	1,111	105,514	273	29,745
April	1,840	199,690	1,697	184,654	424	55,178
May	1,354	123,333	1,170	109,203	216	19,334
June	1,861	171,190	1,355	125,872	212	21,083
July	2,124	206,254	1,732	172,248	532	64,200
August	976	92,435	897	83,021	230	23,088
September	920	77,654	806	67,987	187	19,403
October	1,642	148,638	1,373	127,865	351	40,861
November	1,676	158,048	1,477	142,591	389	41,383
December	1,931	184,130	1,763	172,881	465	52,816
2011						
January	2,558	246,463	2,372	229,765	693	75,006
February	1,024	85,585	919	78,718	222	18,471
March	908	85,095	844	80,014	191	20,869
April	1,750	189,919	1,625	176,478	397	47,104
May	1,367	119,911	1,221	108,531	270	25,199
June	1,661	159,930	1,238	122,821	226	22,986
July	2,176	216,774	1,759	174,078	602	71,814
August	961	99,213	875	93,159	228	26,916
September	1,189	117,232	1,095	107,300	296	32,058
October	1,101	96,914	950	83,748	265	28,447
November	1,393	127,750	1,245	117,474	349	37,799
December	2,433	263,665	2,258	247,916	658	75,033
2012						
January	1,705	141,703	1,587	132,754	415	38,021

Table 3. Industry distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Mass layoff totals				Average weekly mass layoffs ¹			
	Events		Initial claimants		Events		Initial claimants	
	January 2011	January 2012	January 2011	January 2012	January 2011	January 2012	January 2011	January 2012
Total ²	2,558	1,705	246,463	141,703	512	426	49,293	35,426
Total, private	2,438	1,634	234,708	135,663	488	409	46,942	33,916
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	66	47	4,943	2,909	13	12	989	727
Total, private nonfarm	2,372	1,587	229,765	132,754	474	397	45,953	33,189
Mining	15	16	1,188	1,019	3	4	238	255
Utilities	5	4	390	350	1	1	78	88
Construction	325	194	23,906	13,743	65	49	4,781	3,436
Construction of buildings	47	33	3,426	2,429	9	8	685	607
Heavy and civil engineering construction	137	69	10,392	4,786	27	17	2,078	1,197
Specialty trade contractors	141	92	10,088	6,528	28	23	2,018	1,632
Manufacturing	693	415	75,006	38,021	139	104	15,001	9,505
Food	94	56	9,313	4,964	19	14	1,863	1,241
Beverage and tobacco products	5	(³)	752	(³)	1	(³)	150	(³)
Textile mills	31	20	4,455	2,274	6	5	891	569
Textile product mills	9	5	793	444	2	1	159	111
Apparel	20	17	1,776	1,899	4	4	355	475
Leather and allied products	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Wood products	43	35	4,930	2,704	9	9	986	676
Paper	14	8	1,049	833	3	2	210	208
Printing and related support activities	12	16	983	1,347	2	4	197	337
Petroleum and coal products	(³)	4	(³)	273	(³)	1	(³)	68
Chemicals	18	13	1,612	1,064	4	3	322	266
Plastics and rubber products	51	24	4,569	1,931	10	6	914	483
Nonmetallic mineral products	56	36	4,239	2,569	11	9	848	642
Primary metals	23	15	3,046	1,649	5	4	609	412
Fabricated metal products	51	23	4,174	1,643	10	6	835	411
Machinery	46	22	5,446	1,938	9	6	1,089	485
Computer and electronic products	14	15	1,020	876	3	4	204	219
Electrical equipment and appliances	15	11	1,572	1,797	3	3	314	449
Transportation equipment	128	47	19,478	5,969	26	12	3,896	1,492
Furniture and related products	44	30	4,263	2,371	9	8	853	593
Miscellaneous manufacturing	14	13	1,073	1,113	3	3	215	278
Wholesale trade	32	29	2,839	2,262	6	7	568	566
Retail trade ⁴	241	181	27,038	16,612	48	45	5,408	4,153
Building material and garden supply stores	21	16	1,777	1,501	4	4	355	375
Food and beverage stores	28	31	2,743	2,575	6	8	549	644
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	26	16	1,944	1,041	5	4	389	260
General merchandise stores	92	77	13,645	8,406	18	19	2,729	2,102
Transportation and warehousing ⁴	212	137	22,440	13,404	42	34	4,488	3,351
Truck transportation	27	27	1,742	1,773	5	7	348	443
Transit and ground passenger transportation	139	75	15,596	8,592	28	19	3,119	2,148
Support activities for transportation	5	5	384	324	1	1	77	81
Information	53	33	7,915	2,925	11	8	1,583	731
Finance and insurance	31	30	2,758	2,076	6	8	552	519
Real estate and rental and leasing	17	4	1,150	207	3	1	230	52
Professional and technical services	52	45	4,019	3,084	10	11	804	771
Management of companies and enterprises	6	6	439	432	1	2	88	108
Administrative and waste services	381	276	34,996	21,596	76	69	6,999	5,399
Educational services	19	17	2,672	1,770	4	4	534	443
Health care and social assistance	56	36	3,880	2,053	11	9	776	513
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	55	33	5,494	3,107	11	8	1,099	777
Accommodation and food services	158	114	12,107	8,725	32	29	2,421	2,181
Accommodation	58	42	4,800	3,371	12	11	960	843
Food services and drinking places	100	72	7,307	5,354	20	18	1,461	1,339
Other services, except public administration	21	12	1,528	1,019	4	3	306	255
Unclassified	-	5	-	349	-	1	-	87
Government	120	71	11,755	6,040	24	18	2,351	1,510
Federal	23	13	2,922	1,196	5	3	584	299
State	32	25	3,272	2,576	6	6	654	644
State government education	13	9	911	602	3	2	182	151
Local	65	33	5,561	2,268	13	8	1,112	567
Local government education	23	12	2,132	788	5	3	426	197

¹ Average weekly analysis mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. There were 5 weeks in January 2011 and 4 weeks in January 2012. Average weekly events and initial claimants may not sum to subtotals and totals due to rounding.

² Data were reported by all states and the District of Columbia.

³ Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

⁴ Includes other industries not shown.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.

Table 4. Region and state distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, not seasonally adjusted

Census region and state	Mass layoff totals				Average weekly mass layoffs ¹			
	Events		Initial Claimants		Events		Initial Claimants	
	January 2011	January 2012	January 2011	January 2012	January 2011	January 2012	January 2011	January 2012
Total ²	2,558	1,705	246,463	141,703	512	426	49,293	35,426
Northeast	591	386	58,802	34,860	118	97	11,760	8,715
Connecticut	11	8	1,048	547	2	2	210	137
Maine	11	8	900	658	2	2	180	165
Massachusetts	34	18	3,225	1,821	7	5	645	455
New Hampshire	9	7	722	504	2	2	144	126
New Jersey	109	51	9,853	4,273	22	13	1,971	1,068
New York	207	166	24,950	17,607	41	42	4,990	4,402
Pennsylvania	194	120	16,952	8,912	39	30	3,390	2,228
Rhode Island	8	5	555	318	2	1	111	80
Vermont	8	3	597	220	2	1	119	55
South	687	496	66,552	43,925	137	124	13,310	10,981
Alabama	70	55	7,730	6,489	14	14	1,546	1,622
Arkansas	6	19	768	1,389	1	5	154	347
Delaware	5	(³)	411	(³)	1	(³)	82	(³)
District of Columbia	(³)	4	(³)	263	(³)	1	(³)	66
Florida	128	87	9,464	6,044	26	22	1,893	1,511
Georgia	84	41	8,952	4,097	17	10	1,790	1,024
Kentucky	47	33	5,472	2,847	9	8	1,094	712
Louisiana	29	8	2,309	518	6	2	462	130
Maryland	25	10	1,888	624	5	3	378	156
Mississippi	13	13	1,163	737	3	3	233	184
North Carolina	100	84	9,865	7,468	20	21	1,973	1,867
Oklahoma	11	6	1,048	443	2	2	210	111
South Carolina	41	32	5,124	3,475	8	8	1,025	869
Tennessee	26	24	2,143	1,820	5	6	429	455
Texas	54	51	5,039	3,981	11	13	1,008	995
Virginia	42	25	4,497	3,362	8	6	899	841
West Virginia	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Midwest	613	386	63,468	31,060	123	97	12,694	7,765
Illinois	86	55	7,516	4,823	17	14	1,503	1,206
Indiana	43	40	6,487	3,594	9	10	1,297	899
Iowa	39	17	4,007	1,271	8	4	801	318
Kansas	23	8	5,440	815	5	2	1,088	204
Michigan	127	53	10,398	3,962	25	13	2,080	991
Minnesota	19	20	1,988	1,591	4	5	398	398
Missouri	55	42	4,713	2,860	11	11	943	715
Nebraska	9	(³)	1,086	(³)	2	(³)	217	(³)
North Dakota	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Ohio	93	67	9,241	5,630	19	17	1,848	1,408
South Dakota	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-
Wisconsin	115	78	12,148	6,014	23	20	2,430	1,504
West	667	437	57,641	31,858	133	109	11,528	7,965
Alaska	(³)	8	(³)	731	(³)	2	(³)	183
Arizona	13	(³)	1,075	(³)	3	(³)	215	(³)
California	530	342	44,274	23,787	106	86	8,855	5,947
Colorado	11	5	1,126	556	2	1	225	139
Hawaii	6	4	388	316	1	1	78	79
Idaho	8	6	698	445	2	2	140	111
Montana	6	5	560	503	1	1	112	126
Nevada	12	14	1,299	1,323	2	4	260	331
New Mexico	7	5	467	299	1	1	93	75
Oregon	36	19	4,390	1,699	7	5	878	425
Utah	7	7	720	514	1	2	144	129
Washington	25	18	2,151	1,446	5	5	430	362
Wyoming	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Puerto Rico	25	15	2,854	1,205	5	4	571	301

¹ See footnote 1, table 3.

³ Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

² See footnote 2, table 3.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.