MASS LAYOFFS IN APRIL 2004

In April 2004, employers took 1,458 mass layoff actions, as measured by new filings for unemployment insurance benefits during the month, according to data from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. Each action involved at least 50 persons from a single establishment, and the number of workers involved totaled 157,314. (See table 1.) The number of events was the lowest for any April since 2001, and the number of initial claims was the lowest for April since 2000. From January through April 2004, the total number of events, at 5,747, and of initial claims, at 573,523, were lower than in January-April 2003 (6,466 and 624,833, respectively).

Industry Distribution

School and employee bus transportation, with 16,589 initial claims, and temporary help services, with 12,254 initial claims, together accounted for over 18 percent of all initial claims in April. The 10 industries reporting the highest number of mass-layoff initial claims accounted for 57,329 initial claims in April, 36 percent of the total. (See table A.)

The manufacturing sector had 24 percent of all mass layoff events and 23 percent of all initial claims filed in April—the lowest shares for any April since 1995, when the monthly series began. A year ago, manufacturing reported 32 percent of events and 39 percent of initial claims. Within manufacturing, the number of claimants was highest in food processing (13,582, mainly in frozen fruits and vegetables and in fresh and frozen seafood processing), followed by transportation equipment (4,625, largely automotive-related). (See table 2.)

The administrative and waste services sector accounted for 13 percent of events and initial claims filed in April, with layoffs mostly in temporary help services. Ten percent of all layoff events and 13 percent of initial claims filed during the month were in transportation and warehousing, mainly in school and employee bus transportation. Retail trade accounted for 8 percent of events and initial claims, largely in general merchandise stores. Construction accounted for 10 percent of events and 8 percent of initial claims during the month, primarily among specialty trade contractors. An additional 6 percent of events and initial claims were in accommodation and food services, mostly among food service contractors.

Government establishments accounted for 4 percent of events and 5 percent of initial claims filed during the month. The number of mass-layoff initial claims in government was 7,508. In April 2003, there were 3,851 such claims filed.
Table A. Industries with the largest mass-layoff initial claims in April 2004*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Initial claims</th>
<th>April peak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School and employee bus transportation</td>
<td>16,589</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary help services</td>
<td>12,254</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion picture and video production</td>
<td>6,007</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service contractors</td>
<td>5,496</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax preparation services</td>
<td>3,329</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional employer organizations</td>
<td>3,262</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm labor contractors and crew leaders</td>
<td>3,103</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and motels, except casino hotels</td>
<td>2,647</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets and other grocery stores</td>
<td>2,405</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial building construction</td>
<td>2,237</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p=preliminary.

Compared with April 2003, the largest decreases in initial claims were reported in transportation equipment manufacturing (-10,689), computer and electronic product manufacturing (-3,610), plastic and rubber products manufacturing (-2,853), and machinery manufacturing (-2,710). The largest over-the-year increases in initial claims was reported in transit and ground passenger transportation (+7,015), and food processing (+5,185).

Geographic Distribution

Among the four regions, the highest number of initial claims in April due to mass layoffs was reported in the West, 57,414. (See table 3.) Administrative and support services and motion picture and sound recording industries accounted for 31 percent of all initial claims in that region during the month. The Northeast region was next, with 40,728 initial claims, followed by the Midwest, with 31,619, and the South, with 27,553.

The number of initial claimants in mass layoffs declined over the year in two of the four regions, with the larger decrease in the Midwest (-11,847). The Northeast had the largest over-the-year increase in initial claims (+9,836). Seven of the nine geographic divisions had over-the-year decreases in the number of initial claims associated with mass layoffs, with the largest decrease in the East North Central division (-9,219). The Middle Atlantic division had the largest over-the-year increase (+10,137).

Among the states, California recorded the highest number of initial claims filed in mass layoff events in April (44,311), mostly in administrative and support services and in motion picture and sound recording industries. New York reported 19,056 initial claims, followed by Pennsylvania (10,897), Wisconsin (8,690), and Illinois (7,471). These five states accounted for 55 percent of all layoff events and 57 percent of all initial claims for unemployment insurance. (See table 4.)

Ohio reported the largest over-the-year decrease in the number of initial claims (-4,893), followed by Indiana (-4,599), Minnesota (-2,521), and Georgia (-2,188). The largest over-the-year increases occurred in New York (+9,905) and California (+5,271).
From January to April, California reported 151,301 mass layoff initial claims, 26 percent of the national total. The states with the next largest number of claims over this period were New York (49,495), Pennsylvania (34,086), and Ohio (29,289).

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. Because monthly figures include short-term layoffs of 30 days or less, the sum of the figures for the 3 months in a quarter will be higher than the quarterly figure for mass layoffs of more than 30 days. (See table 1.) See the Technical Note for more detailed definitions.

A special report on offshoring and outsourcing associated with mass layoffs is planned for June. The report on Mass Layoffs in May 2004 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 23, 2004.
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 establishments which have at least 50 initial claims filed against them during a consecutive 5-week period. These establishments 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, and the number of weeks in a given month may be different from year to year. Therefore, analysis of over-the-month and over-the-year change should take this calendar effect into consideration.

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; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Definitions

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 subsequent 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 establishment during a 5-week period, regardless of duration.
Table 1. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, April 2002 to April 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total mass layoffs</th>
<th>Private nonfarm</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Events</td>
<td>Initial claimants</td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mass layoffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>1,506</td>
<td>165,814</td>
<td>1,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>1,723</td>
<td>179,799</td>
<td>1,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>162,189</td>
<td>1,266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Quarter</td>
<td>4,813</td>
<td>507,802</td>
<td>4,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>2,042</td>
<td>245,294</td>
<td>1,819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1,248</td>
<td>128,103</td>
<td>1,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1,062</td>
<td>124,522</td>
<td>957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quarter</td>
<td>4,352</td>
<td>497,919</td>
<td>3,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1,497</td>
<td>171,100</td>
<td>1,270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>2,153</td>
<td>240,171</td>
<td>1,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>2,474</td>
<td>284,158</td>
<td>2,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Quarter</td>
<td>6,124</td>
<td>675,429</td>
<td>5,454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>2,315</td>
<td>225,430</td>
<td>2,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>124,965</td>
<td>1,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1,207</td>
<td>113,026</td>
<td>1,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Quarter</td>
<td>4,885</td>
<td>463,421</td>
<td>4,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>161,412</td>
<td>1,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>1,703</td>
<td>174,204</td>
<td>1,536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1,691</td>
<td>157,552</td>
<td>1,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Quarter</td>
<td>4,975</td>
<td>493,168</td>
<td>4,344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>2,087</td>
<td>226,435</td>
<td>1,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1,258</td>
<td>133,839</td>
<td>1,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>82,647</td>
<td>756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Quarter</td>
<td>4,213</td>
<td>442,921</td>
<td>3,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1,523</td>
<td>158,240</td>
<td>1,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1,438</td>
<td>138,543</td>
<td>1,234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1,929</td>
<td>192,633</td>
<td>1,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Quarter</td>
<td>4,890</td>
<td>489,416</td>
<td>4,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>2,428</td>
<td>239,454</td>
<td>2,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>84,201</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March (^p)</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>92,554</td>
<td>847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Quarter (^p)</td>
<td>4,289</td>
<td>416,209</td>
<td>3,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April (^p)</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>157,314</td>
<td>1,316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The event realization rate is the percentage of all private nonfarm mass layoff events lasting more than 30 days. The initial claimant realization rate is the percentage of all private nonfarm mass layoff initial claimants associated with layoffs lasting more than 30 days.

\(^2\) These quarterly numbers are provisional and will be revised as more data on these layoffs become available. Experience suggests that the number of extended mass layoff events is generally revised upwards by less than 10 percent and the number of initial claimants associated with such events increases by 25-40 percent.

\(^p\) = preliminary.

\(^r\) = revised.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Mass layoff events</th>
<th>Initial claimants for unemployment insurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, private</td>
<td>1,534</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total, private nonfarm</td>
<td>1,470</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverage and tobacco products</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile mills</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile product mills</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather and allied products</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood products</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and related support activities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum and coal products</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastics and rubber products</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonmetallic mineral products</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary metals</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated metal products</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer and electronic products</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical equipment and appliances</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation equipment</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and related products</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous manufacturing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate and rental and leasing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and technical services</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of companies and enterprises</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and waste services</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care and social assistance</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, and recreation</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and food services</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services, except public administration</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Data were reported by all states and the District of Columbia.
2 Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.
3 = preliminary.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.
### Table 3. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance by census region and division

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census region and division</th>
<th>Mass layoff events</th>
<th>Initial claimants for unemployment insurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Atlantic</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East South Central</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West South Central</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East North Central</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West North Central</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>394</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 See footnote 1, table 2.
2 = preliminary.

**NOTE:** The States (including the District of Columbia) that comprise the census divisions are: New England: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; Middle Atlantic: New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania; South Atlantic: Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia; East South Central: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee; West South Central: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas; East North Central: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin; West North Central: Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota; Mountain: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming; and Pacific: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.
### Table 4. State distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Mass layoff events</th>
<th>Initial claimants for unemployment insurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alabama</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alaska</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arizona</strong></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arkansas</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>California</strong></td>
<td>455</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colorado</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connecticut</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delaware</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District of Columbia</strong></td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Florida</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Georgia</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hawaii</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Idaho</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Illinois</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indiana</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iowa</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kansas</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kentucky</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Louisiana</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
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1. See footnote 1, table 2.

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

P = preliminary.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.