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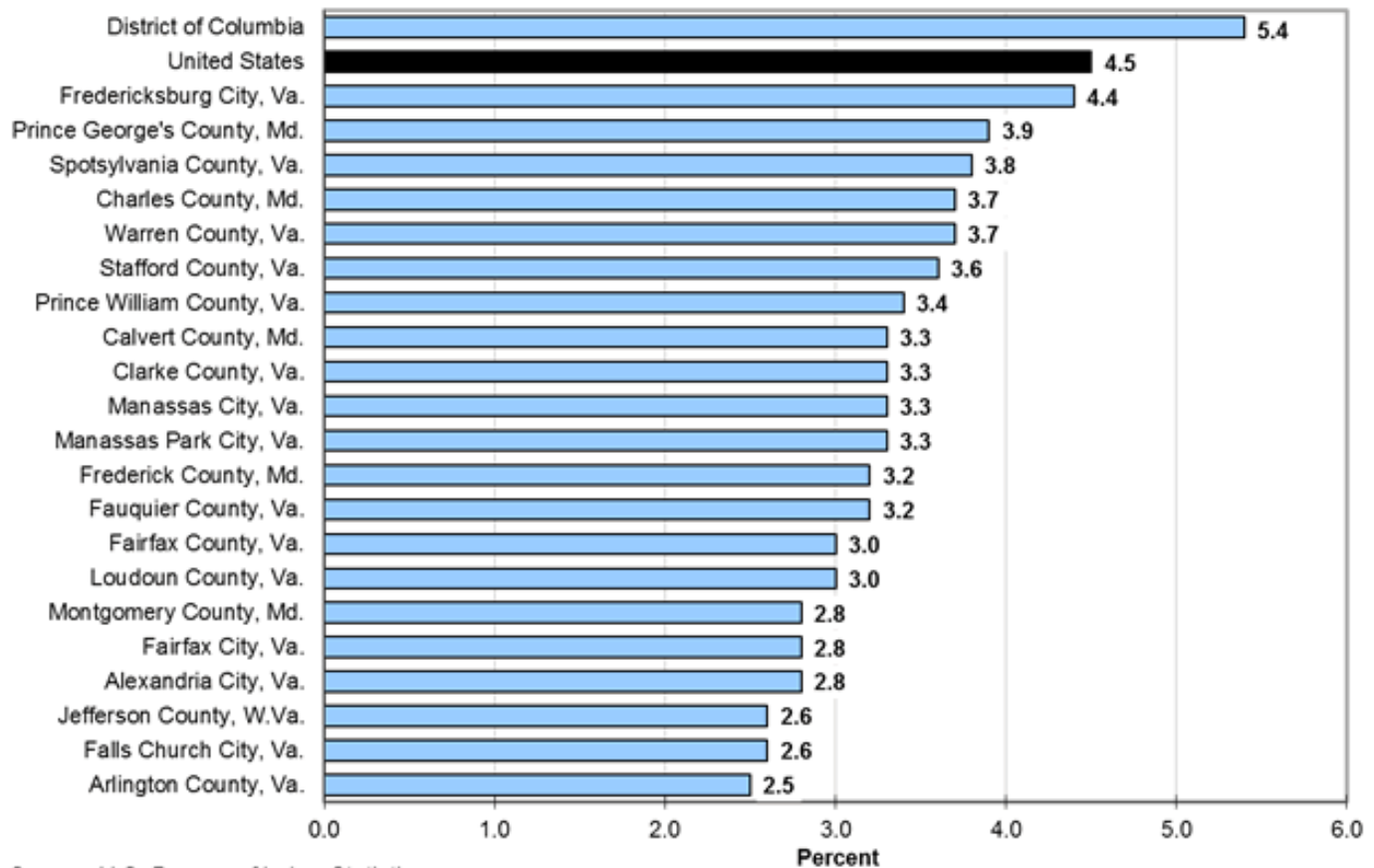
Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic

Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

Unemployment in the Washington Area by County – December 2016 **Only the District of Columbia had an Unemployment Rate Higher than the National Average**

In December, Arlington County, Va., had the lowest unemployment rate in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area at 2.5 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that the District of Columbia had an unemployment rate of 5.4 percent, the highest among the 22 counties that make up the metropolitan area, and the only area county to exceed the 4.5-percent national rate. The rates for the remaining 19 counties in the area ranged from 4.4 percent in Fredericksburg City, Va., to 2.6 percent in Falls Church City, Va., and Jefferson County, W.Va. (See [chart 1](#) and [chart 2](#). The Technical Note at the end of this release contains the metropolitan area definitions. All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

Chart 1. Unemployment rates for the United States and counties in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area, December 2016, not seasonally adjusted



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.


















Unemployment rates in 18 of the 22 Washington-area counties were lower in December 2016 than in December 2015. (See [table A.](#)) Eight counties had rate declines that exceeded the national decrease of 0.3 percentage point, with the District of Columbia and Prince George's County, Md., having the area's largest decreases at 0.9 percentage point each. Eight counties had unemployment rate declines that were smaller than the national decrease with four counties having the smallest two-year declines of 0.1 percentage point each. Two counties had rate declines that matched the national decline. The unemployment rate was unchanged in three counties—Alexandria City, Va., Fairfax City, Va., and Falls Church City, Va. The unemployment rate increased by 0.1 percentage point over the year in Arlington County, Va.

Table A. Unemployment rates for the United States, the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area, and its components, not seasonally adjusted

Area	Back data	Unemployment rates			Change from	
		Dec 2014	Dec 2015	Dec 2016 ⁽¹⁾	Dec 2014 to Dec 2016 ⁽¹⁾	Dec 2015 to Dec 2016 ⁽¹⁾
United States.....		5.4	4.8	4.5	-0.9	-0.3
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area		4.5	3.9	3.4	-1.1	-0.5
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Division		4.7	4.0	3.6	-1.1	-0.4
District of Columbia		7.3	6.3	5.4	-1.9	-0.9
Arlington County, Va.		2.9	2.4	2.5	-0.4	0.1
Clarke County, Va.		4.1	3.4	3.3	-0.8	-0.1
Fairfax County, Va.		3.6	3.1	3.0	-0.6	-0.1
Fauquier County, Va.		3.9	3.4	3.2	-0.7	-0.2
Loudoun County, Va.		3.7	3.1	3.0	-0.7	-0.1

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Unemployment rates for the United States, the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area, and its components, not seasonally adjusted - Continued

Area	Back data	Unemployment rates			Change from	
		Dec 2014	Dec 2015	Dec 2016(1)	Dec 2014 to Dec 2016(1)	Dec 2015 to Dec 2016(1)
Prince William County, Va.		4.3	3.5	3.4	-0.9	-0.1
Spotsylvania County, Va.		4.8	4.0	3.8	-1.0	-0.2
Stafford County, Va.		4.7	3.9	3.6	-1.1	-0.3
Warren County, Va.		5.1	4.2	3.7	-1.4	-0.5
Alexandria City, Va.		3.4	2.8	2.8	-0.6	0.0
Fairfax City, Va.		3.6	2.8	2.8	-0.8	0.0
Falls Church City, Va.		3.0	2.6	2.6	-0.4	0.0
Fredericksburg City, Va.		5.4	4.6	4.4	-1.0	-0.2
Manassas City, Va.		4.2	3.5	3.3	-0.9	-0.2
Manassas Park City, Va.		4.0	3.6	3.3	-0.7	-0.3
Calvert County, Md.		4.6	4.0	3.3	-1.3	-0.7
Charles County, Md.		5.0	4.5	3.7	-1.3	-0.8
Prince George's County, Md.		5.3	4.8	3.9	-1.4	-0.9
Jefferson County, W.Va.		3.9	3.1	2.6	-1.3	-0.5
Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, Md. Metropolitan Division		3.9	3.5	2.9	-1.0	-0.6
Frederick County, Md.		4.5	3.9	3.2	-1.3	-0.7
Montgomery County, Md.		3.8	3.4	2.8	-1.0	-0.6

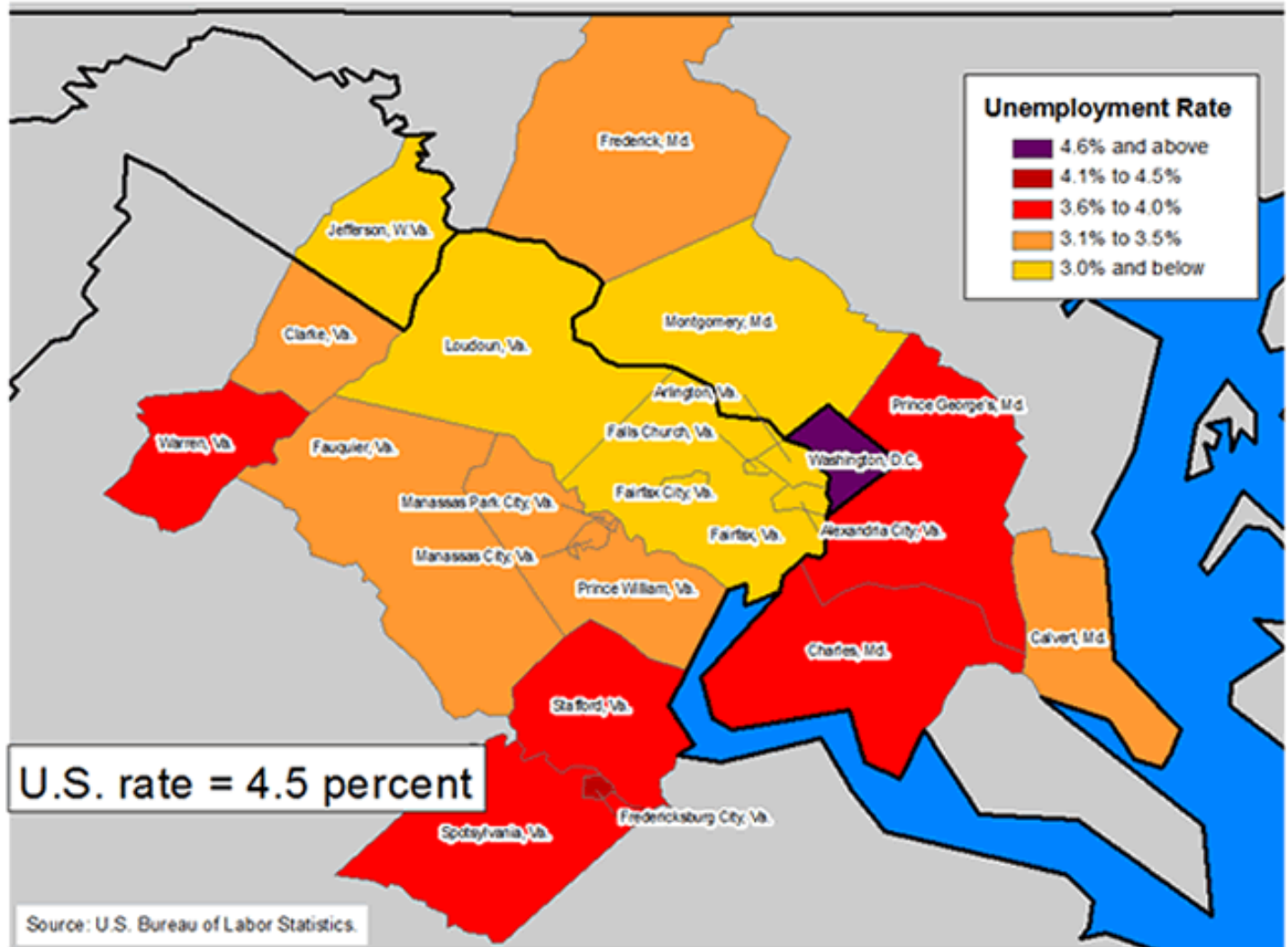
Footnotes (1)Data for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area and its components are preliminary for the most recent month.

All 22 counties in the Washington metropolitan area had lower unemployment rates in December 2016 than two years earlier. Eleven area counties had rate declines that exceeded the national decrease of 0.9 percentage point. Among these, the District of Columbia had the largest two-year rate decline at 1.9 percentage points. Nine counties had unemployment rate declines that were smaller than the national decrease with Arlington County, Va., and Falls Church City, Va., having the smallest two-year decline at 0.4 percentage point each. The remaining two counties had rate decreases that matched the national change.

December 2016 unemployment rates for the two metropolitan divisions in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria metropolitan area were 3.6 percent (Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va.) and 2.9 percent (Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, Md.). The jobless rate in the Washington division declined 0.4 percentage point over the year; the rate decreased 0.6 point in the Silver Spring division.

The Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment news release for January is scheduled to be released on Friday, March 17, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT).

Chart 2. Unemployment rates for counties in the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area, not seasonally adjusted, December 2016



Technical Note

This release presents unemployment rate data for states and counties from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, a federal-state cooperative endeavor.

Definitions. The labor force and unemployment data are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were

currently available for work; persons on layoff expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

Methods of Estimation. The LAUS program is a hierarchy of non-survey methodologies for indirectly estimating employment and unemployment in states and local areas. Statewide data are produced through a modeling technique that uses estimates of payroll jobs from the Current Employment Statistics survey and unemployment insurance claims counts from the state workforce agencies to mitigate volatility in the direct CPS tabulations of employment and unemployment, respectively. Data for labor market areas, such as metropolitan areas and metropolitan divisions, are produced through a building block approach and adjusted proportionally to state model-based totals. Data for counties within labor market areas are produced through a disaggregation technique. A detailed description of the LAUS estimation procedures is available in chapter 4 of the BLS Handbook of Methods at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch4.pdf.

Annual revisions. Labor force and unemployment data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year, usually implemented with January estimates. The adjusted estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. All substate estimates are reestimated and adjusted to add to the revised model-based estimates.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated February 28, 2013. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available at www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm.

The **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes the District of Columbia; Arlington, Clarke, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren Counties, and Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park Cities in Virginia; Calvert, Charles, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; and Jefferson County in West Virginia.

The **Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va. Metropolitan Division** includes the District of Columbia; Arlington, Clarke, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Warren Counties, and Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas, and Manassas Park Cities in Virginia; Calvert, Charles, and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; and Jefferson County in West Virginia.

The **Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, Md. Metropolitan Division** includes Frederick and Montgomery Counties in Maryland.

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.