

BLS Data: Wisconsin March Employment Numbers Released; Unemployment Ticks Up to 3.5%

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced the following information for Wisconsin’s labor market, reflecting March 2026 preliminary estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- **Employment** – There were 3,019,800 people employed in Wisconsin, up 500 over the month and down 7,200 over the year.
- **Labor Force** – The state’s labor force participation rate remained unchanged at 64.4% which is 2.5 percentage points above the national rate of 61.9%.
- **Nonfarm Jobs** – The total nonfarm jobs in the state were 3,021,600, an increase of 1,200 over last month.
- **Unemployment** – The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate ticked up to 3.5%, which is 0.8 percentage points below the national unemployment rate of 4.3%

This Month's Labor Market in Brief:

	March Preliminary	February Revised	Net Change Over One Year
People employed	3,019,800 (+500)	3,019,300	-7,200
Labor force participation rate	64.4% (=)	64.4%	-0.3%
Nonfarm jobs	3,021,600 (+1,200)	3,020,400	-17,200
Unemployment rate	3.5% (+0.1%)	3.4%	+0.3%

One-Year Overview

Month	Total Employment	Unemployment rate
March 2026	3,019,800* (+500)	3.5%*
February 2026	3,019,300 (+1,500)	3.4%
January 2026	3,017,800 (+1,200)	3.3%
December 2025	3,016,600 (+600)	3.2%
November 2025	3,016,000	3.2%
October 2025	NA	NA
September 2025	3,010,700 (+1,400)	3.1%
August 2025	3,009,300 (-1,000)	3.1%
July 2025	3,010,300 (-3,200)	3.0%
June 2025	3,013,500 (-4,800)	3.1%
May 2025	3,018,300 (-4,700)	3.1%
April 2025	3,023,000 (-4,000)	3.2%
March 2025	3,027,000 (-4,200)	3.2%

*Based on preliminary estimate from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
See following pages for informational tables.

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY

Seasonally Adjusted

PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA	PRELIM. Mar-26	REVISED Feb-26	YEAR AGO Mar-25	NET CHANGE OVER 1-Month	1-Year
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Labor Force	3,129,300	3,126,600	3,128,000	2,700	1,300
Employment	3,019,800	3,019,300	3,027,000	500	-7,200
Unemployment	109,500	107,300	101,100	2,200	8,400
Unemployment Rate	3.5%	3.4%	3.2%	0.1%	0.3%
US Unemployment Rate	4.3%	4.4%	4.2%	-0.1%	0.1%
Labor Force Participation Rate	64.4%	64.4%	64.7%	0.0%	-0.3%
US Labor Force Participation Rate	61.9%	62.0%	62.5%	-0.1%	-0.6%

PLACE OF WORK DATA

<i>NONFARM WAGE & SALARY</i>	3,021,600	3,020,400	3,038,800	1,200	-17,200
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,613,600	2,612,800	2,623,100	800	-9,500
GOODS PRODUCING	609,600	609,600	608,000	0	1,600
MINING & LOGGING	4,200	4,200	4,000	0	200
CONSTRUCTION	151,800	153,600	145,200	-1,800	6,600
MANUFACTURING	453,600	451,800	458,800	1,800	-5,200
Durable Goods	260,500	260,400	263,700	100	-3,200
Nondurable Goods	193,100	191,400	195,100	1,700	-2,000
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,412,000	2,410,800	2,430,800	1,200	-18,800
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	2,004,000	2,003,200	2,015,100	800	-11,100
TRADE	416,000	417,500	426,500	-1,500	-10,500
Wholesale Trade	127,600	128,800	131,300	-1,200	-3,700
Retail Trade	288,400	288,700	295,200	-300	-6,800
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	121,900	122,400	124,300	-500	-2,400
INFORMATION	45,400	45,000	46,600	400	-1,200
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	158,200	157,400	159,400	800	-1,200
Real Estate, Rental, & Lease	29,900	29,700	29,300	200	600
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	324,900	324,300	328,800	600	-3,900
Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services	131,900	131,100	131,300	800	600
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services	129,500	129,300	131,900	200	-2,400
PRIVATE EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES	501,600	501,200	494,700	400	6,900
Private Educational Services	64,100	64,000	62,100	100	2,000
Health Care & Social Assistance	437,500	437,200	432,600	300	4,900
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	290,200	290,100	288,700	100	1,500
Arts, Entertain., & Recreation	46,600	46,900	48,000	-300	-1,400
Accommodation & Food Services	243,600	243,200	240,700	400	2,900
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	145,800	145,300	146,100	500	-300
GOVERNMENT	408,000	407,600	415,700	400	-7,700
Federal Government	28,800	28,900	30,900	-100	-2,100
State Government	98,800	98,700	99,900	100	-1,100
Local Government	280,400	280,000	284,900	400	-4,500

Note: Differences in totals may occur as a result of rounding.

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

Numbers in **blue** are statistically significant changes.

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY

Not Seasonally Adjusted

PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA	PRELIM.	REVISED	YEAR AGO	NET CHANGE OVER	
	Mar-26	Feb-26	Mar-25	1-Month	1-Year
Labor Force	3,120,500	3,120,400	3,119,900	100	600
Employment	2,994,400	2,985,500	3,003,200	8,900	-8,800
Unemployment	126,200	135,000	116,700	-8,800	9,500
Unemployment Rate	4.0%	4.3%	3.7%	-0.3%	0.3%
US Unemployment Rate	4.3%	4.7%	4.2%	-0.4%	0.1%
Labor Force Participation Rate	64.2%	64.3%	64.5%	-0.1%	-0.3%
US Labor Force Participation Rate	61.9%	61.9%	62.5%	0.0%	-0.6%

PLACE OF WORK DATA

<i>NONFARM WAGE & SALARY</i>	2,985,900	2,976,400	3,002,100	9,500	-16,200
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,569,800	2,560,300	2,579,300	9,500	-9,500
<i>GOODS PRODUCING</i>	597,000	594,400	595,200	2,600	1,800
MINING & LOGGING	4,100	4,000	3,800	100	300
CONSTRUCTION	142,000	141,400	135,200	600	6,800
MANUFACTURING	450,900	449,000	456,200	1,900	-5,300
Durable Goods	258,600	258,400	263,100	200	-4,500
Nondurable Goods	192,300	190,600	193,100	1,700	-800
<i>SERVICE PROVIDING</i>	2,388,900	2,382,000	2,406,900	6,900	-18,000
<i>PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING</i>	1,972,800	1,965,900	1,984,100	6,900	-11,300
TRADE	411,000	411,700	421,600	-700	-10,600
Wholesale Trade	126,500	126,900	130,400	-400	-3,900
Retail Trade	284,500	284,800	291,200	-300	-6,700
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	119,700	119,800	122,700	-100	-3,000
Utilities	8,500	8,400	8,300	100	200
INFORMATION	45,500	45,200	46,200	300	-700
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	157,600	156,700	157,900	900	-300
Finance and Insurance	128,400	127,700	129,700	700	-1,300
Real Estate, Rental, & Lease	29,200	29,000	28,200	200	1,000
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	319,500	317,200	323,900	2,300	-4,400
Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services	132,800	131,700	131,900	1,100	900
Mgmt. Of Companies and Enterprises	62,900	63,400	65,200	-500	-2,300
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services	123,800	122,100	126,800	1,700	-3,000
PRIVATE EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES	501,200	502,000	494,600	-800	6,600
Private Educational Services	65,300	66,000	64,000	-700	1,300
Health Care & Social Assistance	435,900	436,000	430,600	-100	5,300
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	272,200	269,600	272,000	2,600	200
Arts, Entertain., & Recreation	37,100	36,800	40,900	300	-3,800
Accommodation & Food Services	235,100	232,800	231,100	2,300	4,000
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	146,100	143,700	145,200	2,400	900
GOVERNMENT	416,100	416,100	422,800	0	-6,700
Federal Government	28,800	28,900	30,800	-100	-2,000
State Government	103,700	103,800	105,200	-100	-1,500
Local Government	283,600	283,400	286,800	200	-3,200

Note: Differences in totals may occur as a result of rounding.

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

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