

**STATE OF HAWAI'I  
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAI'I**

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**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**  
**KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I**

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## HAWAII DECEMBER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE REMAINS AT 2.2 PERCENT

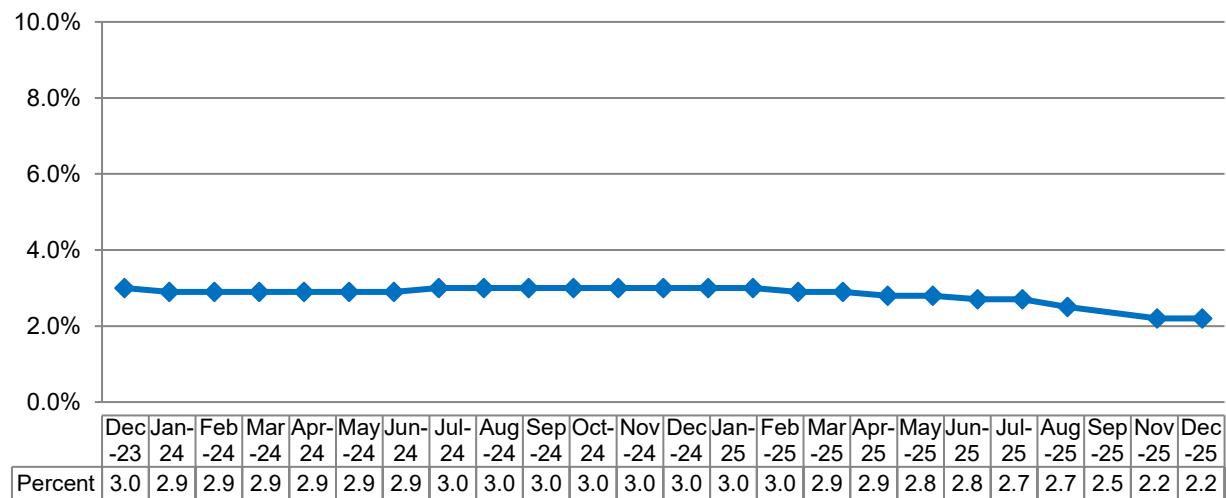
### *Jobs Increased by 7,400 Year Over Year*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 26, 2026

HONOLULU — The Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) today announced that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for December was 2.2 percent, the same as in November. In December, 674,050 persons were employed and 15,200 were unemployed, for a total seasonally adjusted labor force of 689,250 statewide. Nationally, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.4 percent in December, down from the revised rate of 4.5 percent in November.

**Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate  
State of Hawaii  
December 2023- December 2025**



The unemployment rate figures for the state of Hawaii and the U.S. in this release are seasonally adjusted in accordance with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) methodology. The not-seasonally adjusted rate for the state was also 2.2 percent in December, compared to 2.4 percent in November.

<b>State of Hawaii Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Data**</b>		
	<u>Dec 2025</u>	<u>Nov 2025</u>
Labor Force	689,250	687,950
Employment	674,050	672,650
Unemployment	15,200	15,300
		661,600
		20,700

\* benchmarked data

\*\*totals may not add due to rounding

<b>Unemployment Rate</b>			
	DEC 2025	NOV 2025	DEC* 2024
<b><u>Seasonally Adjusted</u></b>			
STATE	2.2	2.2	3.0
U. S.	4.4	4.5	4.1
<b><u>Not Seasonally Adjusted</u></b>			
STATE	2.2	2.4	2.8
HONOLULU	2.1	2.3	2.6
HAWAII COUNTY	2.5	2.7	3.1
KAUAI	2.2	2.2	2.7
MAUI COUNTY	2.4	2.5	3.5
Maui Island	2.4	2.5	3.5
Molokai	3.3	3.9	3.4
Lanai	1.8	1.0	2.6
U. S.	4.1	4.3	3.8

County and island rates are not seasonally adjusted

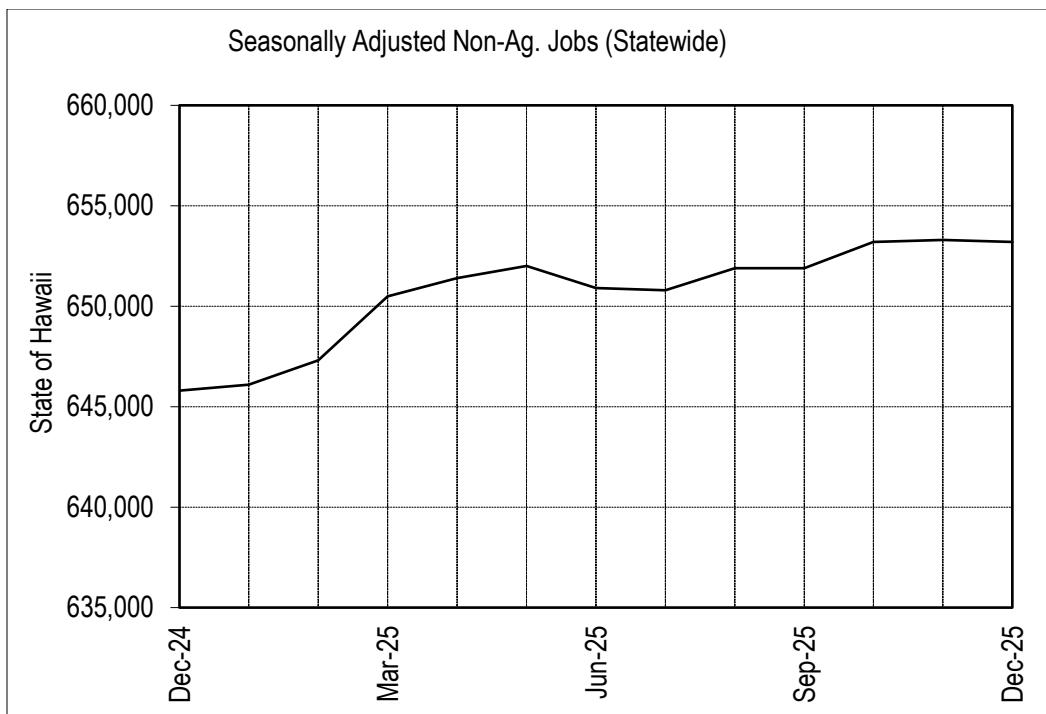
\* benchmarked data

### **Industry Payroll Employment (Establishment Survey)**

In a separate measure of employment, total nonagricultural jobs decreased by 100 month over month, from November 2025 to December 2025. Job gains were experienced in Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+400); Construction (+200); Professional & Business Services (+200); and Other Services (+100). Employment remained unchanged in Information; and Leisure & Hospitality. Job losses occurred in Manufacturing (-100); Financial Activities (-100); and Private Education & Health Services (-100). Government employment went down by 700 jobs, with most of the decline attributed to contraction at the Department of Education, the University of Hawaii system and several state departments. Year over year, nonfarm jobs have gone up by 7,400, or 1.1 percent.

**Seasonally Adjusted Non-Ag. Jobs (Statewide)**

	Dec-25	Nov-25	Dec-24
MINING, LOGGING & CONSTRUCTION	42,300	42,100	38,900
MANUFACTURING	13,000	13,100	12,900
Durable Goods	3,200	3,300	3,500
Non-Durable Goods	9,800	9,800	9,400
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES	118,100	117,700	117,200
Wholesale Trade	17,600	17,700	17,400
Retail Trade	65,800	65,200	65,100
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	34,700	34,800	34,700
INFORMATION	8,100	8,100	8,300
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	27,800	27,900	27,500
Finance & Insurance	15,600	15,700	15,500
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	12,200	12,200	12,000
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	71,600	71,400	72,400
Professional, Scientific, Tech Svcs	26,100	25,800	26,700
Management of Companies & Enterprises	8,700	8,700	8,900
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt	36,800	36,900	36,800
PRIVATE EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES	94,900	95,000	91,700
Private Educational Services	15,100	14,900	14,900
Health Care & Social Assistance	79,800	80,100	76,800
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	126,200	126,200	122,500
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	15,100	14,900	14,000
Accommodation & Food Services	111,100	111,300	108,500
OTHER SERVICES	27,400	27,300	27,600
GOVERNMENT	123,800	124,500	126,800
Federal Government	32,000	32,000	35,500
State Government	72,300	72,900	72,000
Local Government	19,500	19,600	19,300
<b>TOTAL: STATEWIDE</b>	<b>653,200</b>	<b>653,300</b>	<b>645,800</b>
<b>TOTAL: HONOLULU MSA</b>	<b>471,800</b>	<b>471,900</b>	<b>466,300</b>
<b>TOTAL: KAHULUI-WAILUKU MSA</b>	<b>75,400</b>	<b>75,700</b>	<b>73,600</b>



Technical Notes:

### Labor Force Components

The concepts and definitions used by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program are the same as those used in the Current Population Survey for the national labor force data:

- *Civilian labor force.* Included are all persons in the civilian noninstitutional population ages 16 and older classified as either employed or unemployed. (See the definitions below.)
- *Employed persons.* These are all persons who, during the reference week (the week including the 12th day of the month), (a) did any work as paid employees, worked in their own business or profession or on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a member of their family, or (b) were not working but who had jobs from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, bad weather, childcare problems, maternity or paternity leave, labor-management dispute, job training, or other family or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid for the time off or were seeking other jobs. Each employed person is counted only once, even if he or she holds more than one job.

- *Unemployed persons.* Included are all persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the four-week period ending with the reference week. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.
- *Unemployment rate.* The unemployed percent of the civilian labor force [i.e., 100 times (unemployed/civilian labor force)].

### **Seasonal Adjustment**

The seasonal fluctuations in the number of employed and unemployed persons reflect hiring and layoff patterns that accompany regular events such as the winter holiday season and the summer vacation season. These variations make it difficult to tell whether month-to-month changes in employment and unemployment are due to normal seasonal patterns or to changing economic conditions. Therefore, the BLS uses a statistical technique called seasonal adjustment to address these issues. This technique uses the history of the labor force data and the job count data to identify the seasonal movements and to calculate the size and direction of these movements. A seasonal adjustment factor is then developed and applied to the estimates to eliminate the effects of regular seasonal fluctuations on the data. Seasonally adjusted statistical series enable more meaningful data comparisons between months or with an annual average.

### **Current Population (Household) Survey (CPS)**

A survey conducted for employment status in the week that includes the 12th day of each month generates the unemployment rate statistics, which is a separate survey from the Establishment Survey that yields the industry job counts. The CPS survey contacts approximately 1,000 households in Hawaii to determine an individual's current employment status. Employed persons consist of 1) all persons who did any work for pay or profit during the survey reference week, 2) all persons who did at least 15 hours of unpaid work in a family owned enterprise operated by someone in their household and 3) all persons who were temporarily absent from their regular jobs, whether they were paid or not. Persons considered unemployed are those who do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior four weeks and are available for work. Temporarily laid-off workers are counted as unemployed, whether or not they have engaged in a specific job-seeking activity. Persons not in the labor force are those who are not classified as employed or unemployed during the survey reference week.

### **Benchmark Changes to Local Area Unemployment Statistics Data**

Statewide and sub-state data for 2019 to 2024 have revised inputs and data for 1990 to 2024 have been re-estimated to reflect revised population controls and model re-estimation.

### **Change to Monthly Employment Estimates**

This release incorporates revised job count figures for the seasonally adjusted series. The revised data reflects historical corrections applied to unadjusted super sector or sector-level series dating back from 2018 through 2024. For years, analysts with the state of Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Research and Statistics Office have developed monthly employment estimates for Hawaii and its metropolitan areas. These estimates were based on a monthly survey of Hawaii businesses and analysts' knowledge about our local economies. Beginning with the production of preliminary estimates for March 2011, responsibility for the production of state and metropolitan area (MSA) estimates were transitioned from individual state agencies to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

For Hawaii, this means the transition of statewide, Honolulu and Kahului-Wailuku MSA estimates for both the seasonally adjusted and not-seasonally adjusted areas are produced by BLS. State agencies will continue to provide the BLS with information on local events that may affect the estimates, such as strikes or large layoffs/hiring at businesses not covered by the survey and to disseminate and analyze the Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates for local data users. BLS feels this change is designed to improve the cost efficiency of the CES program and to reduce the potential bias in state and area estimates. A portion of the cost savings generated by this change is slated to be directed toward raising survey response rates in future years, which will decrease the level of statistical error in the CES estimates. Until then, state analysts feel this change could result in increased month-to-month variability for the industry employment numbers, particularly for Hawaii's counties and islands. BLS can be reached at 202-691-6555 for any questions about these estimates.

The not-seasonally adjusted job estimates for Hawaii County, Kauai County, Maui, Molokai and Lanai are produced by the state of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

### **Labor Force Estimates for Small Areas**

Labor Force estimates for the islands within Maui County (Maui, Moloka'i and Lānai) are

produced by the state of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism.

### **Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force and Unemployment Estimates for Honolulu and Maui County**

BLS publishes smoothed, seasonally adjusted civilian labor force and unemployment estimates for all metropolitan areas, which includes the City and County of Honolulu and Maui County.

BLS releases this data each month in the *Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment* news release. The schedule is available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/metro.toc.htm>.

### **Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization**

*Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization for States, Fourth Quarter of 2024 through Third Quarter of 2025 Averages*

Area	Measure					
	U-1	U-2	U-3	U-4	U-5	U-6
United States	1.6	2.0	4.2	4.5	5.1	7.8
Hawaii	0.6	1.2	2.6	2.8	3.7	5.7

The six alternative labor underutilization state measures based on the Current Population Survey (CPS) and compiled on a four-quarter moving-average basis defined as:

U-1, persons unemployed 15 weeks or longer, as a percent of the civilian labor force;  
U-2, job losers and persons who completed temporary jobs, as a percent of the civilian labor force;

U-3, total unemployed, as a percent of the civilian labor force (this is the definition used for the official unemployment rate);

U-4, total unemployed plus discouraged workers, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus discouraged workers;

U-5, total unemployed, plus discouraged workers, plus all other marginally attached workers\*, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers; and

U-6, total unemployed, plus all marginally attached workers, plus total employed part-time for economic reasons, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers.

\*Individuals who want and are available for work, and who have looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months, (or since the end of their last job if they had one within the past 12 months), but were not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the four weeks preceding the survey, for such reasons as childcare or transportation problems, for example. Discouraged workers are a subset of the marginally attached.

Please note that the state unemployment rates (U-3) that are shown are derived directly from the CPS. As a result, these U-3 measures may differ from the official state unemployment rates for the latest four-quarter period. The latter are estimates developed from statistical models that incorporate CPS estimates, as well as input data from other sources, such as state unemployment claims data.

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