

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII

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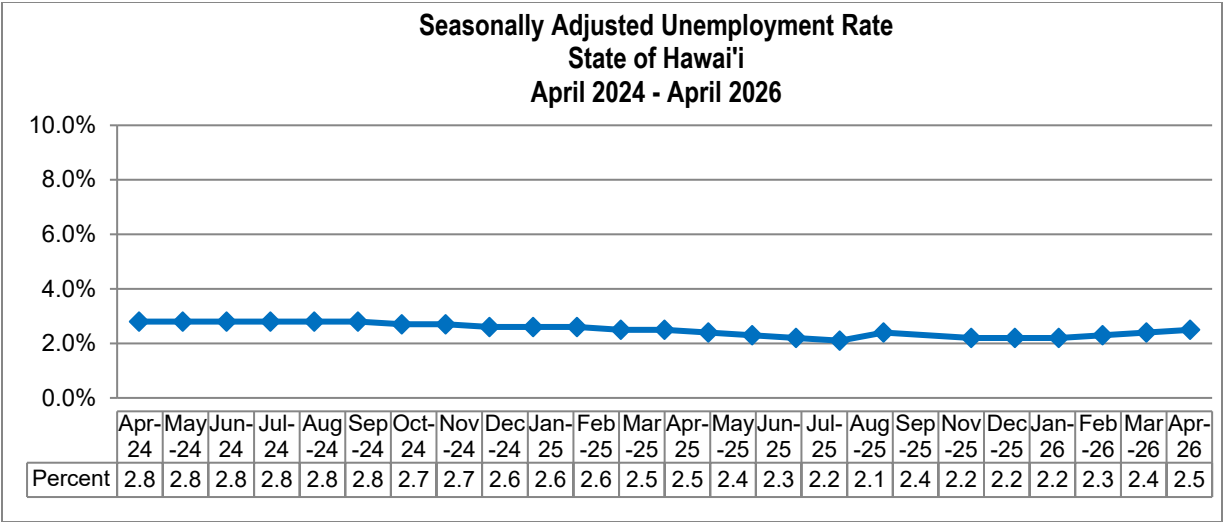
RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS DIVISION

HAWAII APRIL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AT 2.5 PERCENT
Jobs Increased by 2,300 Year Over Year

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 21, 2026

HONOLULU — The Hawai'i State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) today announced that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April was 2.5 percent, compared to 2.4 percent in March. In April, 671,050 persons were employed and 16,850 were unemployed, for a total seasonally adjusted labor force of 687,900 statewide. Nationally, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.3 percent in April, the same as in March.



The unemployment rate figures for the state of Hawai'i 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 2.5 percent in April, up from 2.3 percent in March.

State of Hawai'i Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Data**			
	<u>Apr 2026</u>	<u>Mar 2026</u>	<u>Apr 2025*</u>
Labor Force	687,900	687,350	687,800
Employment	671,050	671,150	670,850
Unemployment	16,850	16,200	16,950

* benchmarked data

**totals may not add due to rounding

Unemployment Rates			
	APR 2026	MAR 2026	APR* 2025
<u>Seasonally Adjusted</u>			
STATE	2.5	2.4	2.5
U. S.	4.3	4.3	4.2
<u>Not Seasonally Adjusted</u>			
STATE	2.5	2.3	2.2
HONOLULU	2.4	2.2	2.1
HAWAI'I COUNTY	3.0	2.7	2.5
KAUA'I	2.3	2.2	2.0
MAUI COUNTY	2.6	2.5	2.6
Maui Island	2.6	2.5	2.6
Moloka'i	2.4	1.9	2.0
Lāna'i	3.6	3.7	4.2
U. S.	4.0	4.3	3.9

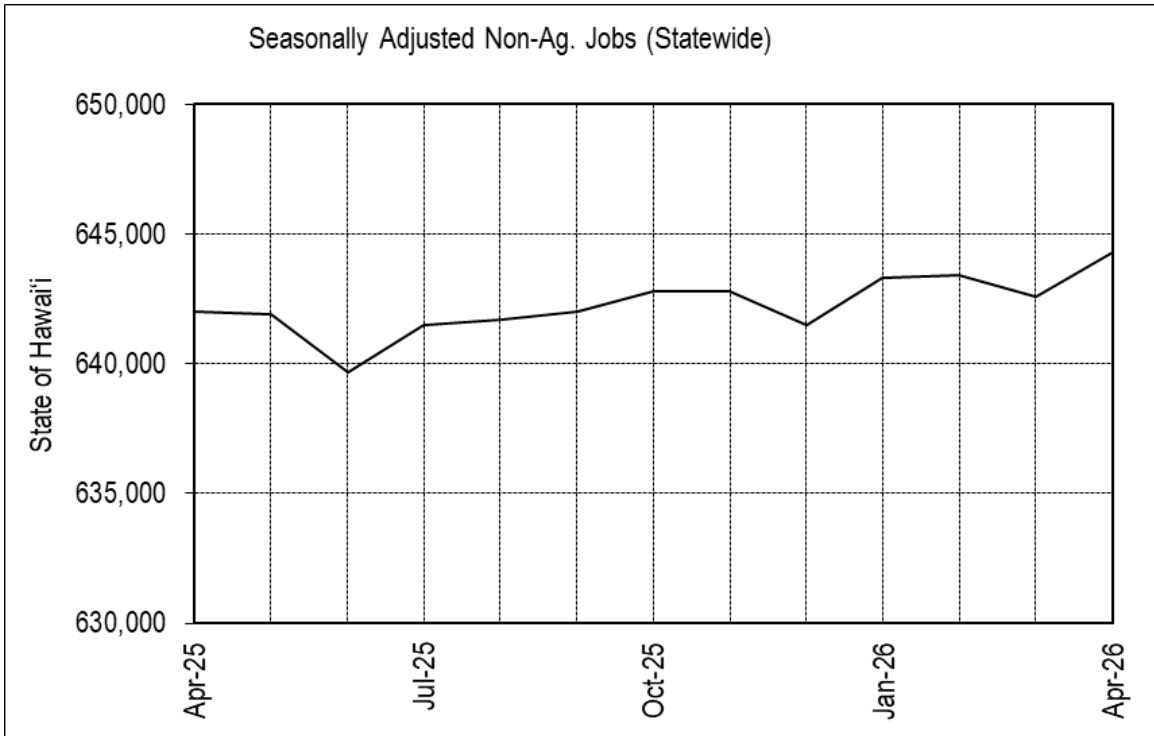
County and island rates are not seasonally adjusted

* benchmarked data

Industry Payroll Employment (Establishment Survey)

In a separate measure of employment, total nonagricultural jobs increased by 1,700 month over month, from March 2026 to April 2026. Job gains were experienced in Private Education & Health Services (+700); Construction (+600); Other Services (+300); and Professional & Business Services (+200). Within Private Education & Health Services, all subsectors of Health Services added jobs. Construction employment rebounded following the Kona Low storms in the prior month. Employment remained unchanged in Information. Job losses occurred in Manufacturing (-100); Financial Activities (-100); Leisure & Hospitality (-100); and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-200). Government employment went up by 400 jobs. Year over year, nonfarm jobs have gone up by 2,300, or 0.4 percent.

Seasonally Adjusted Non-Ag. Jobs (Statewide)			
	Apr-26	Mar-26	Apr-25
MINING, LOGGING & CONSTRUCTION	41,400	40,800	40,000
MANUFACTURING	13,000	13,100	13,000
Durable Goods	3,500	3,500	3,500
Non-Durable Goods	9,500	9,600	9,500
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES	116,400	116,600	117,000
Wholesale Trade	17,500	17,600	17,200
Retail Trade	64,300	64,500	64,300
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	34,600	34,500	35,500
INFORMATION	7,000	7,000	6,800
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	26,500	26,600	27,000
Finance & Insurance	15,000	15,100	15,100
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	11,500	11,500	11,900
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	72,800	72,600	72,700
Professional, Scientific, Tech Svcs	27,400	27,300	27,000
Management of Companies & Enterprises	8,500	8,500	8,600
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt	36,900	36,800	37,100
PRIVATE EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES	93,600	92,900	91,200
Private Educational Services	14,900	14,800	14,800
Health Care & Social Assistance	78,700	78,100	76,400
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	121,500	121,600	120,700
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	13,300	13,400	13,200
Accommodation & Food Services	108,200	108,200	107,500
OTHER SERVICES	26,900	26,600	27,100
GOVERNMENT	125,200	124,800	126,500
Federal Government	32,400	32,500	35,300
State Government	73,000	72,500	72,000
Local Government	19,800	19,800	19,200
TOTAL: STATEWIDE	644,300	642,600	642,000
TOTAL: HONOLULU MSA	463,800	462,300	462,100
TOTAL: KAHULUI-WAILUKU MSA	75,200	74,800	73,900



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 Hawai'i 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 2024 to 2025 have revised inputs and 2016-2025 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 2021 through 2025. For years, analysts with the state of Hawai'i Department of Labor and Industrial Relations Research and Statistics Office have developed monthly employment estimates for Hawai'i and its metropolitan areas. These estimates were based on a monthly survey of Hawai'i 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 Hawai'i, 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 Hawai'i'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 Hawai'i County, Kaua'i County, Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i are produced by the state of Hawai'i 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 Hawai'i DBEDT.

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, April 2025 through March 2026 11-month* Averages (percent)						
Area	Measure					
	U-1	U-2	U-3	U-4	U-5	U-6
United States	1.7	2.0	4.3	4.6	5.3	8.1
Hawai'i	0.7	1.2	2.5	2.7	3.7	6.2

*Annual estimates for 2025 are 11-month averages that exclude October. Data for October 2025 were not collected due to the federal government shutdown. As a result, these estimates are not strictly comparable with averages for other time periods.

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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