July 2026

Iowa Labor Force Update - June 2026

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Summary

Iowa gained 600 nonfarm jobs in June, with government employment falling by 500 and private-sector employment growing by 1,100. The BLS also revised May 2026 nonfarm employment downward by 1,000 jobs. Taken together, Iowa's cumulative job growth so far in 2026 stands at 6,100 jobs since December 2025—well ahead of the 1,100-job loss recorded at this point last year. Nonetheless, Iowa has shed 9,500 jobs (-0.6%) over the last twelve months—well below the national average of +0.3%—ranking 46th nationally in job growth rate. Despite weak annual growth, Iowa has the 8th-lowest unemployment rate in the nation at 3.2% and the 3rd-highest labor force participation rate at 67.3%. At the metro level, Des Moines–West Des Moines led the state in nominal job growth, adding 1,200 jobs from June 2025 to June 2026, while Iowa City grew fastest in percentage terms at an annual rate of 0.9%.

Key Findings

- **Iowa's job growth rate ranks poorly over the last year.** Iowa's -0.6% nonfarm growth rate ranks 46th among all states over the last 12 months. The national average was 0.3%.
- **Iowa gained 1,100 jobs in June.** Iowa added 1,100 total nonfarm jobs, led by trade, transportation & utilities, financial activities, and education & health services.
- **Iowa has gained 6,100 jobs in the first half of 2026.** That is well ahead of the 1,100 jobs lost by this point last year.
- **Only 3 of Iowa's 11 job sectors grew over the last year.** Education & health services, construction, and financial activities grew, while the remaining eight sectors were flat or declined.

Sector Leaderboard

Sector	1M Change	12M Change	12M Rate (IA/ US)
Trade, transportation & utilities	+1,500	-3,500	-1.1%/ -0.0%
Financial Activities	+700	+700	+0.7%/ -1.1%
Education and Health Services	+400	+4,500	+1.8%/ +2.4%
Construction	+200	+1,700	+2.0%/ +0.8%
Leisure and hospitality	+200	-2,700	-1.9%/ +0.7%
Information	+0	+0	+0.0%/ -3.1%
Mining and Logging	-100	-100	-4.3%/ -1.5%
Other Services	-100	-400	-0.7%/ +0.9%
Government	-500	-2,400	-0.9%/ -0.9%
Professional and Business Services	-700	-3,000	-2.1%/ +0.4%
Manufacturing	-1,000	-4,300	-2.0%/ -0.3%
Total private	+1,100	-7,100	-0.5%/ +0.5%
Total nonfarm	+600	-9,500	-0.6%/ +0.3%

Job Growth Rate Rank

46th

over the last 12 months

LFPR

#3

67.3% (-0.1 pp)

12M change: -0.4 pp

Unemployment Rate

#8

3.2% +0.0 pp)

12M change: -0.3 pp

Private vs. Public Jobs

+1.1k/ -500

12M change: -7.1k / -2.4k

Total Nonfarm Jobs

1,584.1k (+0.6k)

12M change: -9.5k

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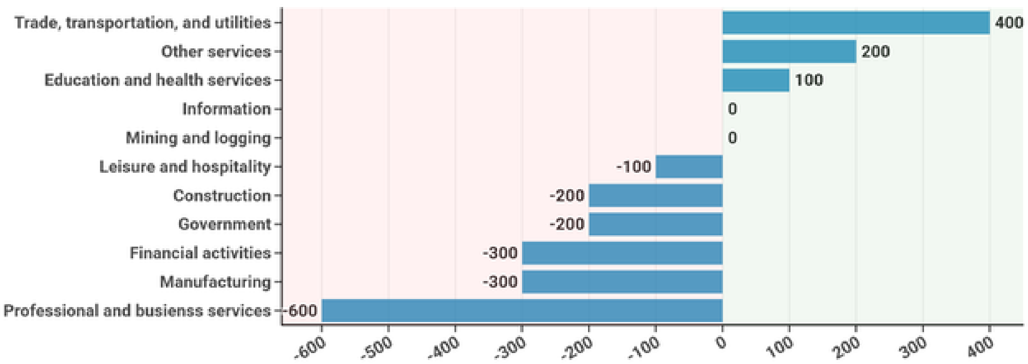
Sector Employment Revisions - May 2026



Iowa Nonfarm Revisions

-1,000 (-0.06%)

for May 2026

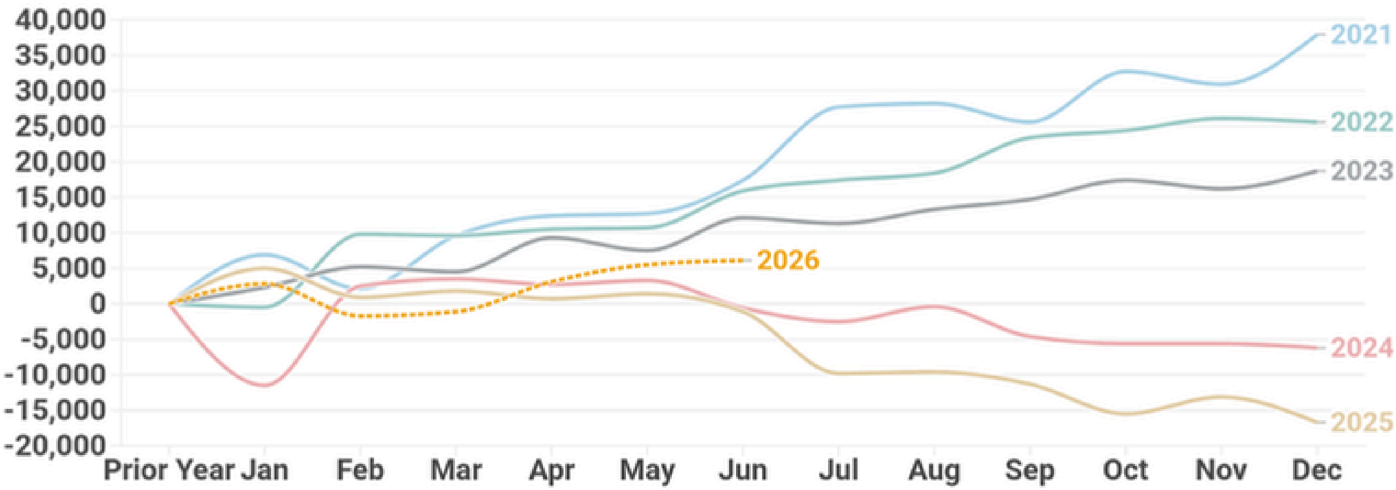
U.S. Nonfarm Revisions

-32.0k (-0.02%)

for May 2026

Cumulative Jobs Added by Year - Iowa

From December 2025 to June 2026, employment has grown by 6,100 jobs, versus a loss of 1,100 this time last year.



Note: The dotted yellow line indicates 2026 YTD.

Private Employment Wages & Hours - Iowa

Not–seasonally adjusted earnings and hours measures for the private payroll side of the labor market.

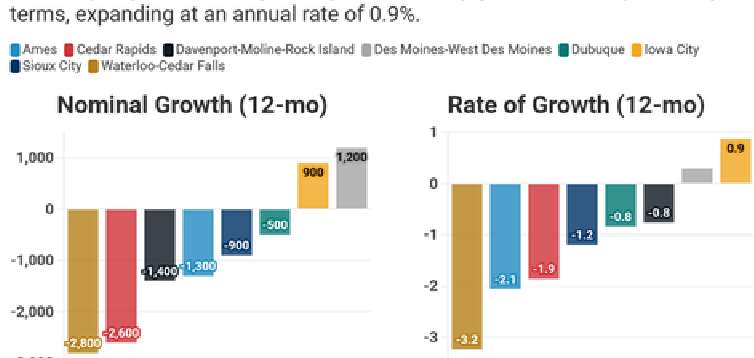
Average hourly earnings — **$30.36** (-$0.26)
12M change: +$0.04

Average weekly earnings — **$1,038** (-$8.89)
12M change: -$4.70

Average weekly hours — **34.2** +0.00
12M change: -0.20

Annual Jobs Added by Iowa Metro, June 2026

From June 2025 to June 2026, Des Moines–West Des Moines led the state in nominal job growth, adding 1,200 jobs. Iowa City grew fastest in percentage terms, expanding at an annual rate of 0.9%.



APPENDIX A

Definitions and methodology notes

Definitions of the report's labor-market terms

Payroll employment terms

BLS CES

Total nonfarm jobs

Employment reported by the Current Employment Statistics program for workers on non-farm payrolls. It reflects payroll jobs, not unique people, so a person with more than one job can be counted more than once.

Private jobs

The private-sector portion of nonfarm payroll employment. It excludes government payroll employment.

Government jobs

The government portion of nonfarm payroll employment, including federal, state, and local government payrolls.

Average hourly earnings

Gross payrolls divided by total hours worked during the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. This is an earnings measure, not a posted wage-rate measure.

Average weekly hours

Average paid hours during the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Paid time can include holidays, sick leave, and other paid leave.

Average weekly earnings

A weekly earnings measure derived from average hourly earnings and average weekly hours.

Labor force terms

BLS CPS/LAUS

Labor force

All people age 16 and older who are classified as either employed or unemployed. In plain terms, it is the number of people working or actively looking for work.

Employed

People are classified as employed if, during the reference week, they did any paid work, worked in their own business or farm, worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business, or were temporarily absent from a job.

Unemployed

People are classified as unemployed if they were not employed, were available for work, and had actively looked for work in the last 4 weeks, or were on temporary layoff.

Labor force participation rate

The labor force as a percentage of the civilian noninstitutional population.

Unemployment rate

The number of unemployed people as a percentage of the labor force.

Labor demand and turnover terms

BLS JOLTS

Job openings

Open positions employers are actively recruiting to fill.

Hires

All additions to payroll during the month, whether they are new hires, recalls, or other additions.

Quits

Voluntary separations initiated by employees, except retirements and transfers to other locations.

Layoffs and discharges

Involuntary separations initiated by the employer, including layoffs with no intent to rehire, discharges, and certain terminations of temporary or seasonal workers.

Total separations

The sum of quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations.

Report notes

Seasonally adjusted

A BLS statistical adjustment that removes recurring seasonal influences so underlying month-to-month changes are isolated.

1-month change

Report convention: current month minus prior month.

12-month change

Report convention: current month minus the same month one year earlier.