

# JANUARY 2026 LABOR MARKET REPORT

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## Summary

Colorado added 6,600 nonfarm jobs in January; government employment fell by 600 while private job growth was 7,200. While Colorado's most recent month showed strong job growth, the state has seen total employment decline by 11,000, or 0.4%, over the past year. Conversely, states on average grew their nonfarm employment by 0.2% during that same period. Job openings, hires, and separations are all below their 12-month averages, suggesting stable but low growth expectations.

## Key Findings

- Colorado's job growth rate ranks poorly over the last year.** Colorado's -0.4% nonfarm growth rate ranks 39th among all states over the last 12 months.
- Job growth was strong in January.** Colorado added 6,600 total nonfarm jobs, fueled by the education and health services and construction sector.
- Year-over-year, Colorado's job growth fell while the rest of the country's rose.** Over the last 12 months, Colorado's private and nonfarm growth rates were -0.3% and -0.4%, respectively, while the national average was +0.4% and +0.2%.
- Only 3 of Colorado's 11 jobs sectors grew over the last year.** Construction, education & health services, and other services grew while all other sectors saw employment declines.

## Sector Leaderboard

Sector	1M Change	12M Change	12M Rate (CO / US)
Construction	+2.4k	+0.7k	+0.4% / +1.6%
Financial Activities	-1.2k	-4k	-2.2% / -0.3%
Information	-1.3k	-2.8k	-3.9% / -1.8%
Leisure & hospitality	-3.3k	-4.4k	-1.2% / +0.3%
Manufacturing	-1.3k	-4.2k	-2.8% / -0.9%
Mining & logging	0	-1.6k	-7.3% / -1.2%
Other services	+1.1k	+1.9k	+1.4% / +0.3%
Private education & health services	+4.8k	+14.2k	+3.6% / +2.5%
Professional & business services	+3k	-2.3k	-0.5% / -0.1%
Trade, transportation & utilities	+3k	-4.5k	-0.9% / -0.4%
Government	-0.6k	-4k	-0.8% / -0.8%
Total private	+7.2k	-7k	-0.3% / +0.4%
Total nonfarm	+6.6k	-11k	-0.4% / +0.2%

## Job Growth Rate Rank 39th

over the last 12 months

## LFPR

**66.8%** (-0.1 pp)

#9

12M change: -0.8 pp

## Unemployment Rate

**3.9%** (+0.1 pp)

#T-28

12M change: -0.4 pp

## Private vs. Public Jobs

**+7.2k / -0.6k**

12M change: -7k / -4k

## Total Nonfarm Jobs

**2,966k** (+6.6k)

12M change: -11k

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## Private Employment Wages & Hours

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

**Average hourly earnings** **\$40.62** (+\$0.39)  
12M change: +\$0.83

**Average weekly earnings** **\$1,324** (+\$8.69)  
12M change: +\$23.08

**Average weekly hours** **32.6** (-0.1)  
12M change: -0.1

## Demand / Turnover (December)

Labor demand and turnover measures.

**Openings**  
**110k** (-6k)  
12M average: 133k

**Hires**  
**96k** (-7k)  
12M average: 112k

**Total Separations**  
**97k** (-22k)  
12M average: 105k

**Unemp. Per Opening**  
**1.1** (+0.0)  
12M change: -0.1

## 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.