



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Zoe Dell, zoe.dell@arkansas.gov

Arkansas' unemployment drops to 4.0% in July while record employment continues

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Aug. 21, 2026) Today, the Arkansas Department of Commerce, in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, announced Arkansas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate declined one-tenth of a percentage point, from 4.1% in June to 4.0% in July. At 4.1%, the United States' jobless rate also declined one-tenth of percentage point over the month.

Arkansas Civilian Labor Force Summary:

- The civilian labor force in Arkansas increased by 163 in July, with 1,135 more employed in the State. Both series remain at record high levels. The number of unemployed Arkansans actively seeking work declined by 972, pushing the unemployment rate down for a third consecutive month.
- Compared to July 2025, there are 22,895 additional employed Arkansans. Unemployment is stable over the year (+131) while the size of the labor force is up 23,026, resulting in a labor force participation rate increase of six-tenths of a percentage point.

Arkansas Nonfarm Payroll Job Summary:

- Nonfarm payroll jobs fell by 16,500 in July, an expected seasonal decrease. The summer break at schools and universities impacted jobs in Government (-11,300) and Private Education and Health Services (-1,700). Some declines in Leisure and Hospitality (-1,800) and in Professional and Business Services (-1,400) are also a result of seasonal school closures.
- Compared to July 2025, Arkansas' nonfarm payroll jobs are up 9,300. Professional and Business Services added 4,200 jobs, split between Administrative and Support Services (+2,300) and Professional-Scientific-Technical Services (+1,900). Other notable expansions occurred in Leisure and Hospitality (+3,700), Trade-Transportation-Utilities (+3,300), and Construction (+1,000). Financial Activities (-1,400) and Government (-1,000) posted the largest declines over the year.

Arkansas Civilian Labor Force (Seasonally Adjusted)

	July 2026	June 2026	July 2025	Change from June 2026	Change from July 2025
Civilian Labor Force	1,457,841	1,457,678	1,434,815	163	23,026
Employment	1,399,144	1,398,009	1,376,249	1,135	22,895
Unemployment	58,697	59,669	58,566	-972	131
Unemployment Rate	4.0%	4.1%	4.1%	-0.1%	-0.1%
Labor Force Participation Rate	59.2%	59.2%	58.6%	0.0%	0.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey. More information about the data is available at <https://www.bls.gov/cps/definitions.htm>

Arkansas Nonfarm Payroll Jobs (Not Seasonally Adjusted, In Thousands)

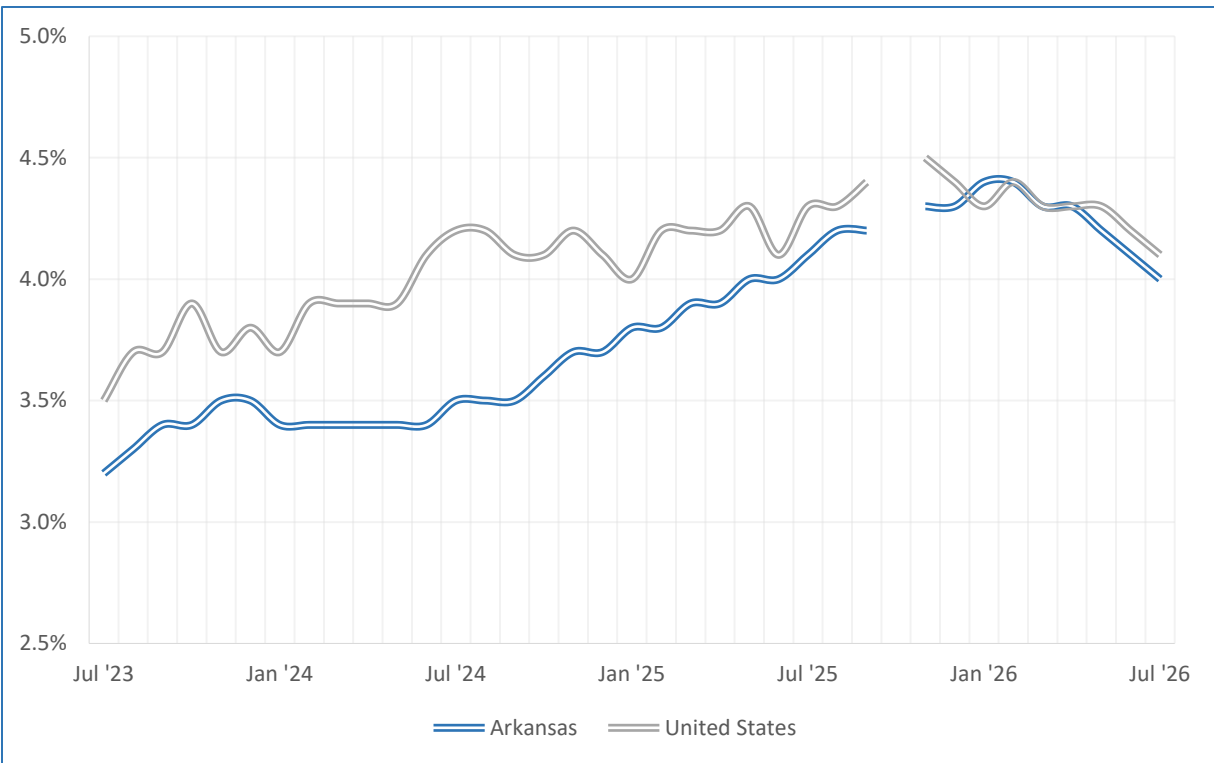
Industry Sector based on 2022 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)	July 2026	June 2026	July 2025	Change from June 2026	Change from July 2025
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	1329.9	1346.4	1320.6	-16.5	9.3
Goods Producing	231.7	232.4	230.8	-0.7	0.9
Mining, Logging, & Construction	72.7	72.9	71.7	-0.2	1.0
Mining & Logging	4.8	4.8	4.8	0.0	0.0
Construction	67.9	68.1	66.9	-0.2	1.0
Specialty Trade Contractors	42.3	42.4	41.9	-0.1	0.4
Manufacturing	159.0	159.5	159.1	-0.5	-0.1
Durable Goods	75.4	75.5	75.1	-0.1	0.3
Nondurable Goods	83.6	84.0	84.0	-0.4	-0.4
Service Providing	1098.2	1114.0	1089.8	-15.8	8.4
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	273.7	273.5	270.4	0.2	3.3
Wholesale Trade	54.8	54.9	54.1	-0.1	0.7
Retail Trade	144.0	144.5	142.5	-0.5	1.5
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	74.9	74.1	73.8	0.8	1.1
Information	12.1	12.1	12.1	0.0	0.0
Financial Activities	59.0	58.6	60.4	0.4	-1.4
Finance & Insurance	43.6	43.4	44.6	0.2	-1.0
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	15.4	15.2	15.8	0.2	-0.4
Professional & Business Services	165.5	166.9	161.3	-1.4	4.2
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	54.7	54.1	52.8	0.6	1.9
Management of Companies	43.0	43.3	43.0	-0.3	0.0
Administrative & Support Services	67.8	69.5	65.5	-1.7	2.3
Private Education & Health Services	206.9	208.6	206.8	-1.7	0.1
Educational Services	15.8	16.7	15.9	-0.9	-0.1
Health Care & Social Assistance	191.1	191.9	190.9	-0.8	0.2
Ambulatory Health Care	69.9	70.2	69.4	-0.3	0.5
Social Assistance	39.9	40.7	40.3	-0.8	-0.4
Leisure & Hospitality	137.6	139.4	133.9	-1.8	3.7
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	17.3	17.7	16.2	-0.4	1.1
Accommodation & Food Services	120.3	121.7	117.7	-1.4	2.6
Accommodation Services	11.3	11.4	11.4	-0.1	-0.1
Food Services	109.0	110.3	106.3	-1.3	2.7
Other Services	52.6	52.8	53.1	-0.2	-0.5
Government	190.8	202.1	191.8	-11.3	-1.0
Federal Government	20.3	20.2	21.3	0.1	-1.0
State Government	65.2	67.2	65.9	-2.0	-0.7
State Government, Educational Services	21.0	22.6	21.5	-1.6	-0.5
State Government, Excluding Education	44.2	44.6	44.4	-0.4	-0.2
Local Government	105.3	114.7	104.6	-9.4	0.7
Local Government, Educational Services	57.4	66.9	57.4	-9.5	0.0
Local Government, Excluding Education	47.9	47.8	47.2	0.1	0.7

Source: Monthly Survey of Employers, based on 1st Quarter 2025 benchmark.

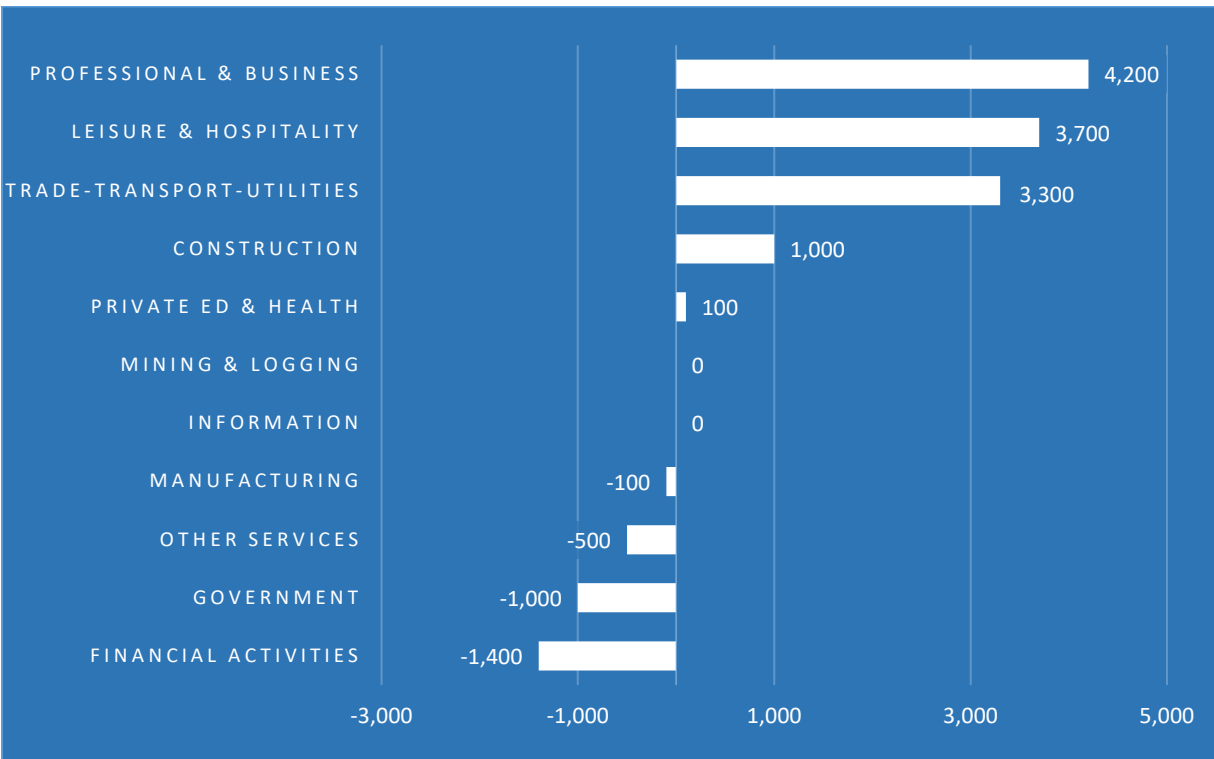
Notes: Current month's data are preliminary; previous month's data are revised.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates Arkansas vs. United States (3-Year Comparison)

Data for October 2025 is not available due to a lapse in Federal appropriations



Job Gains/Losses by Major Industry Sectors July 2025 to July 2026 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



For more Labor Market Data, visit our website at www.discover.arkansas.gov



About the Arkansas Department of Commerce

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Commerce is to champion the economic health of every Arkansas citizen and business. Its divisions and regulatory boards include the Waterways Commission, Economic Development Commission, Division of Aeronautics, Workforce Connections, Division of Reemployment, State Bank Department, Insurance Department, Securities Department, and Development Finance Authority.



U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

About Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics measures labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and productivity in the U.S. economy to support public and private decision making.

About Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

The LAUS program produces monthly and annual employment, unemployment, and labor force data for Census regions and divisions, States, counties, metropolitan areas, and many cities, by place of residence.

About Current Employment Statistics (CES)

The CES program produces detailed industry estimates of employment, hours, and earnings of workers on nonfarm payrolls. CES State and Metro Area produces data for all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and about 450 metropolitan areas and divisions.