

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## BLS Data: Wisconsin December Employment Numbers Released; Unemployment Holds Steady at 3.1%

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced the following information for Wisconsin's labor market, reflecting December 2025 preliminary estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- **Employment** – There were 3,021,200 people employed in Wisconsin, down 200 over the month and down 65,500 over the year.
- **Labor Force** – The state's labor force participation rate increased to 64.2%, which is 1.8 percentage points above the national rate of 62.4%
- **Nonfarm Jobs** – Total nonfarm jobs in the state were 3,054,300, an increase of 9,000 over last month and 6,700 over the year.
- **Unemployment** – The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate held steady at 3.1% which is 1.3 percentage points below the national unemployment rate of 4.4%

### This Month's Labor Market in Brief:

|                                | December Preliminary | November Revised | Net Change Over One Year |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| People employed                | 3,021,200 (-200)     | 3,021,400        | -65,500                  |
| Labor force participation rate | 64.2%                | 64.1%            | -1.7%                    |
| Nonfarm jobs                   | 3,054,300 (+9,000)   | 3,045,300        | 6,700                    |
| Unemployment rate              | 3.1% (=)             | 3.1%             | 0.0%                     |

### One-Year Overview

| Month          | Total employed       | Unemployment rate |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| December 2025  | 3,021,200 (-200)*    | 3.1%*             |
| November 2025  | 3,021,400            | 3.1%              |
| October 2025   | NA                   | NA                |
| September 2025 | 3,035,300* (-10,100) | 3.1%*             |
| August 2025    | 3,045,400 (-6,000)   | 3.1%              |
| July 2025      | 3,051,400 (-4,400)   | 3.1%              |
| June 2025      | 3,055,800 (-2,500)   | 3.2%              |

|               |                    |      |
|---------------|--------------------|------|
| May 2025      | 3,058,300 (-8,400) | 3.3% |
| April 2025    | 3,066,700 (-5,200) | 3.3% |
| March 2025    | 3,071,900 (-5,600) | 3.2% |
| February 2025 | 3,077,500 (-5,400) | 3.2% |
| January 2025  | 3,082,900 (-3,800) | 3.2% |
| December 2024 | 3,086,700 (12,700) | 3.1% |
| TOTAL         | -65,500            | 0.0% |

\*Based on preliminary estimate from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Additional information about the data included in the release is available at [WisConomy.com](https://www.wisconomy.com).

*See following pages for informational tables.*

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## ABOUT DWD

[Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development](#) efficiently delivers effective and inclusive services to meet Wisconsin's diverse workforce needs now and for the future. The department advocates for and invests in the protection and economic advancement of all Wisconsin workers, employers, and job seekers through six divisions – Employment and Training, Vocational Rehabilitation, Unemployment Insurance, Equal Rights, Worker's Compensation, and Administrative Services. To keep up with DWD announcements and information, [sign up for news releases](#) and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [YouTube](#).

# WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY

Seasonally Adjusted

|                         | PRELIM.<br>Dec-25 | REVISED<br>Nov-25 | YEAR AGO<br>Dec-24 | NET CHANGE OVER |        |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------|
| PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA |                   |                   |                    | 1-Month         | 1-Year |

|                                   |           |           |           |       |                |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Labor Force                       | 3,118,700 | 3,116,600 | 3,185,400 | 2,100 | <b>-66,700</b> |
| Employment                        | 3,021,200 | 3,021,400 | 3,086,700 | -200  | <b>-65,500</b> |
| Unemployment                      | 97,600    | 95,100    | 98,700    | 2,500 | -1,100         |
| Unemployment Rate                 | 3.1%      | 3.1%      | 3.1%      | 0.0%  | 0.0%           |
| US Unemployment Rate              | 4.4%      | 4.5%      | 4.1%      | -0.1% | 0.3%           |
| Labor Force Participation Rate    | 64.2%     | 64.1%     | 65.9%     | 0.1%  | <b>-1.7%</b>   |
| US Labor Force Participation Rate | 62.4%     | 62.5%     | 62.5%     | -0.1% | -0.1%          |

## PLACE OF WORK DATA

|                                       |           |           |           |              |        |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|--------|
| <i>NONFARM WAGE &amp; SALARY</i>      | 3,054,300 | 3,045,300 | 3,047,600 | 9,000        | 6,700  |
| TOTAL PRIVATE                         | 2,641,100 | 2,637,500 | 2,632,000 | 3,600        | 9,100  |
| GOODS PRODUCING                       | 612,300   | 610,300   | 610,900   | 2,000        | 1,400  |
| MINING & LOGGING                      | 4,200     | 4,200     | 4,100     | 0            | 100    |
| CONSTRUCTION                          | 147,800   | 144,700   | 142,700   | <b>3,100</b> | 5,100  |
| MANUFACTURING                         | 460,300   | 461,400   | 464,100   | -1,100       | -3,800 |
| Durable Goods                         | 264,200   | 265,000   | 267,800   | -800         | -3,600 |
| Nondurable Goods                      | 196,100   | 196,400   | 196,300   | -300         | -200   |
| SERVICE PROVIDING                     | 2,442,000 | 2,435,000 | 2,436,700 | 7,000        | 5,300  |
| PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING             | 2,028,800 | 2,027,200 | 2,021,100 | 1,600        | 7,700  |
| TRADE                                 | 423,500   | 425,500   | 432,200   | -2,000       | -8,700 |
| Wholesale Trade                       | 131,200   | 131,300   | 134,000   | -100         | -2,800 |
| Retail Trade                          | 292,300   | 294,200   | 298,200   | -1,900       | -5,900 |
| TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES      | 122,900   | 121,900   | 124,000   | 1,000        | -1,100 |
| INFORMATION                           | 47,700    | 47,900    | 48,500    | -200         | -800   |
| FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES                  | 158,700   | 159,400   | 157,700   | -700         | 1,000  |
| Real Estate, Rental, & Lease          | 28,900    | 29,100    | 29,200    | -200         | -300   |
| PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES      | 327,800   | 331,500   | 334,000   | -3,700       | -6,200 |
| Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services       | 130,900   | 132,200   | 131,300   | -1,300       | -400   |
| Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services | 133,100   | 135,200   | 138,200   | -2,100       | -5,100 |
| PRIVATE EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES   | 500,500   | 498,000   | 487,600   | 2,500        | 12,900 |
| Private Educational Services          | 63,500    | 62,700    | 61,500    | 800          | 2,000  |
| Health Care & Social Assistance       | 437,000   | 435,300   | 426,100   | 1,700        | 10,900 |
| LEISURE & HOSPITALITY                 | 299,500   | 294,800   | 288,600   | <b>4,700</b> | 10,900 |
| Arts, Entertain., & Recreation        | 46,400    | 43,700    | 40,100    | 2,700        | 6,300  |
| Accommodation & Food Services         | 253,100   | 251,100   | 248,500   | 2,000        | 4,600  |
| OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.  | 148,200   | 148,200   | 148,500   | 0            | -300   |
| GOVERNMENT                            | 413,200   | 407,800   | 415,600   | 5,400        | -2,400 |
| Federal Government                    | 29,000    | 29,000    | 31,300    | 0            | -2,300 |
| State Government                      | 98,900    | 97,900    | 99,300    | 1,000        | -400   |
| Local Government                      | 285,300   | 280,900   | 285,000   | 4,400        | 300    |

Note: Differences in totals may occur as a result of rounding.

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

Numbers in **blue** are statistically significant changes.

# WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY

Not Seasonally Adjusted

|                         | PRELIM. | REVISED | YEAR AGO | NET CHANGE OVER |        |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|----------|-----------------|--------|
| PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA | Dec-25  | Nov-25  | Dec-24   | 1-Month         | 1-Year |

|                                   |           |           |           |        |         |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|---------|
| Labor Force                       | 3,123,300 | 3,113,900 | 3,167,800 | 9,400  | -44,500 |
| Employment                        | 3,028,700 | 3,031,200 | 3,077,300 | -2,500 | -48,600 |
| Unemployment                      | 94,600    | 82,700    | 90,500    | 11,900 | 4,100   |
| Unemployment Rate                 | 3.0%      | 2.7%      | 2.9%      | 0.3%   | 0.1%    |
| US Unemployment Rate              | 4.1%      | 4.3%      | 3.8%      | -0.2%  | 0.3%    |
| Labor Force Participation Rate    | 64.2%     | 64.1%     | 65.6%     | 0.1%   | -1.4%   |
| US Labor Force Participation Rate | 62.1%     | 62.4%     | 62.2%     | -0.3%  | -0.1%   |

## PLACE OF WORK DATA

|                                       |           |           |           |        |        |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| <i>NONFARM WAGE &amp; SALARY</i>      | 3,054,100 | 3,063,100 | 3,048,400 | -9,000 | 5,700  |
| TOTAL PRIVATE                         | 2,635,400 | 2,642,700 | 2,626,300 | -7,300 | 9,100  |
| <i>GOODS PRODUCING</i>                | 607,500   | 612,600   | 606,000   | -5,100 | 1,500  |
| MINING & LOGGING                      | 4,100     | 4,200     | 4,000     | -100   | 100    |
| CONSTRUCTION                          | 143,300   | 147,600   | 137,700   | -4,300 | 5,600  |
| MANUFACTURING                         | 460,100   | 460,800   | 464,300   | -700   | -4,200 |
| Durable Goods                         | 263,700   | 265,100   | 267,600   | -1,400 | -3,900 |
| Nondurable Goods                      | 196,400   | 195,700   | 196,700   | 700    | -300   |
| <i>SERVICE PROVIDING</i>              | 2,446,600 | 2,450,500 | 2,442,400 | -3,900 | 4,200  |
| <i>PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING</i>      | 2,027,900 | 2,030,100 | 2,020,300 | -2,200 | 7,600  |
| TRADE                                 | 430,600   | 430,600   | 439,600   | 0      | -9,000 |
| Wholesale Trade                       | 131,000   | 130,600   | 133,800   | 400    | -2,800 |
| Retail Trade                          | 299,600   | 300,000   | 305,800   | -400   | -6,200 |
| TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES      | 126,300   | 125,700   | 127,500   | 600    | -1,200 |
| Utilities                             | 8,400     | 8,400     | 8,400     | 0      | 0      |
| INFORMATION                           | 48,300    | 48,100    | 49,100    | 200    | -800   |
| FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES                  | 158,200   | 158,600   | 157,800   | -400   | 400    |
| Finance and Insurance                 | 129,500   | 129,700   | 128,700   | -200   | 800    |
| Real Estate, Rental, & Lease          | 28,700    | 28,900    | 29,100    | -200   | -400   |
| PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES      | 326,000   | 334,400   | 333,100   | -8,400 | -7,100 |
| Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services       | 130,700   | 131,500   | 130,800   | -800   | -100   |
| Mgmt. Of Companies and Enterprises    | 63,900    | 64,000    | 64,800    | -100   | -900   |
| Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services | 131,400   | 138,900   | 137,500   | -7,500 | -6,100 |
| PRIVATE EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES   | 501,900   | 498,800   | 488,500   | 3,100  | 13,400 |
| Private Educational Services          | 65,500    | 65,100    | 62,700    | 400    | 2,800  |
| Health Care & Social Assistance       | 436,400   | 433,700   | 425,800   | 2,700  | 10,600 |
| LEISURE & HOSPITALITY                 | 288,900   | 286,000   | 276,800   | 2,900  | 12,100 |
| Arts, Entertain., & Recreation        | 40,300    | 39,300    | 34,300    | 1,000  | 6,000  |
| Accommodation & Food Services         | 248,600   | 246,700   | 242,500   | 1,900  | 6,100  |
| OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.  | 147,700   | 147,900   | 147,900   | -200   | -200   |
| GOVERNMENT                            | 418,700   | 420,400   | 422,100   | -1,700 | -3,400 |
| Federal Government                    | 29,100    | 28,900    | 31,400    | 200    | -2,300 |
| State Government                      | 103,400   | 104,000   | 103,300   | -600   | 100    |
| Local Government                      | 286,200   | 287,500   | 287,400   | -1,300 | -1,200 |

Note: Differences in totals may occur as a result of rounding.

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

Numbers in **blue** are statistically significant changes.

## **Glossary of terms**

**Employed:** Definition differs by BLS program:

- **(Place of residence/LAUS)** Individuals 16 years of age or older who worked at least one hour for pay or who worked unpaid for at least 15 hours in a family business during the reference week which includes the 12th of the month. Individuals are also counted if they had a job but were temporarily absent from their jobs due to illness, bad weather, vacation, a labor dispute, or for personal reasons.
- **(Place of work/CES)** Includes all paid employees, regardless of age, who worked during or received pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th day of the month.

**Labor force:** The sum of all employed and unemployed people excluding people less than 16 years of age, institutional population, and those in the military.

**Labor force participation rate:** The proportion of the civilian non-institutional population aged 16 years or older that is in the labor force.

**Nonfarm jobs:** Includes all full-time and part-time employees of all classes (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work in or receive compensation from nonagricultural establishments for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work.

It does not include pensioners, members of the armed forces, self-employed or unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, or people who are laid off, on leave of absence without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period. These statistics are collected in coordination with the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program.

**Unemployed:** Individuals 16 years of age or older who do not have a job but are available for work, are actively seeking work, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4-week period ending with the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month). People who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off within the past 6 months, or those waiting to report to a new job within 30 days are also counted as unemployed.

**Unemployment rate:** The number of people unemployed, expressed as a percentage of the labor force.