

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 20, 2026

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Employment in Eastern Oregon: September 2026

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in all six Eastern Oregon counties were down over the year ending September 2026. Malheur County's rate continues to rank among the lowest of Oregon's 36 counties, with the September 2026 rate ranking fourth lowest in the state. Since August, all six counties ticked down slightly or were unchanged. Collectively, the Eastern Oregon counties' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.0% in September 2026, down from 5.6% in September 2025. The Oregon rate was 5.0%, and the national rate was 4.2%.

Baker County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.3% in September and 5.4% in August. This rate is down from 5.9% in September 2025. Over the month, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 10. Collectively, the private sector lost 70 jobs in the not seasonally adjusted industries. Total public-sector employment increased by 140, with a seasonal gain of 150 jobs in local government. Over the year ending September 2026, total nonfarm employment increased by 60. The largest losses were in trade, transportation, and utilities (-20), and construction (-20). The largest gains were in private education and health services (+60), and other services (+30). In the public sector, federal government dropped 10 jobs over the year.

Grant County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 6.7% in September and 6.8% in August. This rate is down from 7.9% in September 2025. Since August, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment decreased by 20. Overall, the private sector lost 10 jobs over the month in the not seasonally adjusted industries. Public-sector employment increased by 70, owing to a seasonal gain of 80 jobs in local government. Over the year ending September 2026, seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment decreased by 90. In the private sector, total employment decreased by 60. The largest losses were in mining, logging, and construction (-60). The largest gains were in private education and health services (+20). Total public-sector employment decreased by 40 over the 12-month period, with most of those losses occurring in federal government (-30).

Harney County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.9% in September and 5.0% in August. This rate is down slightly from 5.0% in September 2025. Since August, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 50. In the not seasonally adjusted industries, the private sector dropped 10 jobs. The public sector added 60 jobs, with a seasonal gain of 70 jobs in local government. Over the year ending September 2026, nonfarm payroll employment decreased by 100 jobs. The private sector collectively dropped 80 jobs. The largest loss was in private education and health services (-20). In the public sector, the largest loss was in federal government (-30).

Malheur County's seasonally adjusted unemployment was 4.3% in September and 4.4% in August. This rate is down from 4.9% in September 2025. Over the month, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment was unchanged. In the not seasonally adjusted industries, the private sector collectively added 20 jobs. The largest loss was in leisure and hospitality (-30), and the largest gain was in wholesale trade (+40). Total public-sector employment decreased by 10. Over the year ending September 2026, total nonfarm employment decreased by 130. In the private sector, the largest loss occurred in retail trade (-90), and mining, logging, and construction (-50). There were significant gains in private education and health services (+80). Total public-sector employment decreased by 20 over the year. The largest loss was in local government (-100), and the largest gain was in federal government (+100).

Union County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.8% in September and 4.9% in August. This rate is down from 5.7% in September 2025. Since August, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 40. In the not seasonally adjusted industries, the private sector collectively dropped 10 jobs, and government employment was flat. Over the year ending September 2026, seasonally adjusted employment decreased by 30. In the private sector, the largest loss was in retail trade (-40). There were significant gains in financial activities (+70). There were also gains in private education and health services (+30); transportation, warehousing, and utilities (+30); and manufacturing (+30). Over the year, total government employment decreased by 160, with the largest loss in local government (-130).

Wallowa County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate held steady at 6.0% in September. This rate is down slightly from 6.1% in September 2025. Over the month, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 70. In the not seasonally adjusted industries, the private sector dropped 70 jobs over the month. Government employment increased by 80, with a seasonal gain of 90 jobs in local government. Over the year ending September 2026, total nonfarm employment decreased by 140. The largest losses in the private sector were in trade, transportation, and utilities (-80). In the public sector, local government lost 30 jobs over the year.

Next News Releases

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the October statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data on Wednesday, Nov. 18, and October county and metropolitan area unemployment and jobs data on Tuesday, Nov. 24.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

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October 20, 2026

Baker County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	7,016	6,983	6,963	33	53
Unemployed	300	351	385	-51	-85
Unemployment rate	4.3%	5.0%	5.5%	-0.7	-1.2
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>5.4%</i>	<i>5.9%</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>-0.6</i>
Employed	6,716	6,632	6,578	84	138
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	5,680	5,610	5,620	70	60
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>5,580</i>	<i>5,570</i>	<i>5,520</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>60</i>
Total private	4,370	4,440	4,300	-70	70
Mining, logging, and construction	270	290	290	-20	-20
Mining and logging	20	20	20	0	0
Construction	250	270	270	-20	-20
Manufacturing	570	580	560	-10	10
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,090	1,100	1,110	-10	-20
Wholesale trade	60	60	60	0	0
Retail trade	800	810	810	-10	-10
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	230	230	240	0	-10
Information	50	50	50	0	0
Financial activities	170	170	170	0	0
Professional and business services	310	320	300	-10	10
Private education and health services	1,180	1,190	1,120	-10	60
Leisure and hospitality	520	530	520	-10	0
Other services	210	210	180	0	30
Government	1,310	1,170	1,320	140	-10
Federal government	210	220	220	-10	-10
State government	250	250	250	0	0
Local government	850	700	850	150	0

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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Grant County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	--Change From--	
				August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	3,004	2,970	3,128	34	-124
Unemployed	147	167	185	-20	-38
Unemployment rate	4.9%	5.6%	5.9%	-0.7	-1.0
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	6.7%	6.8%	7.9%	-0.1	-1.2
Employed	2,857	2,803	2,943	54	-86
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	2,280	2,220	2,380	60	-100
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	2,200	2,220	2,290	-20	-90
Total private	1,260	1,270	1,320	-10	-60
Mining, logging, and construction	200	200	260	0	-60
Mining and logging	100	100	120	0	-20
Construction	100	100	140	0	-40
Manufacturing	10	10	20	0	-10
Trade, transportation, and utilities	320	320	320	0	0
Wholesale trade	40	40	30	0	10
Retail trade	220	220	230	0	-10
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	60	60	60	0	0
Information	40	40	40	0	0
Financial activities	70	70	80	0	-10
Professional and business services	120	120	110	0	10
Private education and health services	230	230	210	0	20
Leisure and hospitality	200	210	210	-10	-10
Other services	70	70	70	0	0
Government	1,020	950	1,060	70	-40
Federal government	240	250	270	-10	-30
State government	170	170	180	0	-10
Local government	610	530	610	80	0

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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Harney County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	3,632	3,626	3,711	6	-79
Unemployed	140	154	157	-14	-17
Unemployment rate	3.9%	4.2%	4.2%	-0.3	-0.3
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>4.9%</i>	<i>5.0%</i>	<i>5.0%</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>0.0</i>
Employed	3,492	3,472	3,554	20	-62
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	2,450	2,400	2,550	50	-100
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>2,390</i>	<i>2,340</i>	<i>2,490</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>-100</i>
Total private	1,290	1,300	1,370	-10	-80
Trade, transportation, and utilities	410	410	410	0	0
Wholesale trade	50	50	50	0	0
Retail trade	320	320	320	0	0
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	40	40	40	0	0
Information	10	10	10	0	0
Financial activities	60	60	60	0	0
Professional and business services	100	100	90	0	10
Private education and health services	260	260	280	0	-20
Leisure and hospitality	310	320	320	-10	-10
Other services	50	50	60	0	-10
Government	1,160	1,100	1,180	60	-20
Federal government	210	220	240	-10	-30
State government	150	150	150	0	0
Local government	800	730	790	70	10

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Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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Malheur County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	13,668	13,763	13,379	-95	289
Unemployed	489	540	593	-51	-104
Unemployment rate	3.6%	3.9%	4.4%	-0.3	-0.8
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>4.3%</i>	<i>4.4%</i>	<i>4.9%</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>-0.6</i>
Employed	13,179	13,223	12,786	-44	393
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	12,490	12,480	12,620	10	-130
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>12,450</i>	<i>12,450</i>	<i>12,580</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>-130</i>
Total private	8,780	8,760	8,890	20	-110
Mining, logging, and construction	370	360	420	10	-50
Manufacturing	1,090	1,090	1,100	0	-10
Trade, transportation, and utilities	3,060	3,020	3,130	40	-70
Wholesale trade	550	510	520	40	30
Retail trade	2,130	2,130	2,220	0	-90
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	380	380	390	0	-10
Information	70	70	70	0	0
Financial activities	260	260	270	0	-10
Professional and business services	380	390	380	-10	0
Private education and health services	2,030	2,020	1,950	10	80
Leisure and hospitality	1,270	1,300	1,300	-30	-30
Other services	250	250	270	0	-20
Government	3,710	3,720	3,730	-10	-20
Federal government	330	330	230	0	100
State government	1,410	1,410	1,430	0	-20
Local government	1,970	1,980	2,070	-10	-100

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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Union County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	12,082	12,215	12,127	-133	-45
Unemployed	477	555	629	-78	-152
Unemployment rate	3.9%	4.5%	5.2%	-0.6	-1.3
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>4.8%</i>	<i>4.9%</i>	<i>5.7%</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>-0.9</i>
Employed	11,605	11,660	11,498	-55	107
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	10,540	10,550	10,570	-10	-30
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>10,600</i>	<i>10,560</i>	<i>10,630</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>-30</i>
Total private	8,280	8,290	8,150	-10	130
Mining, logging, and construction	630	650	640	-20	-10
Mining and logging	20	20	30	0	-10
Construction	610	630	610	-20	0
Manufacturing	1,230	1,220	1,200	10	30
Trade, transportation, and utilities	2,000	1,990	2,010	10	-10
Wholesale trade	210	200	210	10	0
Retail trade	1,380	1,390	1,420	-10	-40
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	410	400	380	10	30
Information	70	70	70	0	0
Financial activities	590	590	520	0	70
Professional and business services	600	600	590	0	10
Private education and health services	1,830	1,820	1,800	10	30
Leisure and hospitality	1,010	1,030	1,000	-20	10
Other services	320	320	320	0	0
Government	2,260	2,260	2,420	0	-160
Federal government	260	260	270	0	-10
State government	440	440	460	0	-20
Local government	1,560	1,560	1,690	0	-130

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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October 20, 2026

Wallowa County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	3,682	3,701	3,846	-19	-164
Unemployed	153	167	188	-14	-35
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.5%	4.9%	-0.3	-0.7
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>6.0%</i>	<i>6.0%</i>	<i>6.1%</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>-0.1</i>
Employed	3,529	3,534	3,658	-5	-129
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	2,780	2,770	2,930	10	-150
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>2,650</i>	<i>2,580</i>	<i>2,790</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>-140</i>
Total private	1,990	2,060	2,110	-70	-120
Mining, logging, and construction	240	250	270	-10	-30
Mining and logging	50	50	50	0	0
Construction	190	200	220	-10	-30
Manufacturing	150	160	150	-10	0
Trade, transportation, and utilities	420	430	500	-10	-80
Wholesale and retail trade	320	330	370	-10	-50
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	100	100	130	0	-30
Information	30	30	30	0	0
Financial activities	160	160	160	0	0
Professional and business services	140	140	150	0	-10
Private education and health services	370	370	370	0	0
Leisure and hospitality	370	410	360	-40	10
Other services	110	110	120	0	-10
Government	790	710	820	80	-30
Federal government	100	110	100	-10	0
State government	120	120	120	0	0
Local government	570	480	600	90	-30

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

The Oregon Employment Department and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) work cooperatively to develop and publish monthly payroll employment and labor force data for Oregon's metropolitan areas and counties. The estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. The estimates of unemployment are based on a survey of households and other sources.

The Oregon Employment Department payroll employment estimates are revised quarterly using information from unemployment insurance tax records. All department publications use data from this *official Oregon series* unless noted.

The department also makes the BLS-produced nonfarm payroll employment series for metropolitan areas available. These are revised annually by BLS.

The pdf version of the news release, including tables and graphs, can be found at www.qualityinfo.org/press-release/. To obtain the data in other formats such as in Excel, visit QualityInfo.org, select Tools, and choose LAUS or CES from the dropdown menu. To request the press release as a Word document, contact the person shown at the top of this press release.

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To file an Unemployment Insurance claim, visit our online claims system or call our contact centers, where Employment Department staff are ready to help by phone, at 1-877-FILE-4-UI (1-877-345-3484). For help finding jobs and training resources, go to: www.WorkSourceOregon.org.

The Oregon Employment Department (OED) is an equal opportunity agency. Everyone has a right to use OED programs and services. OED provides free help. Some examples are: Sign language and spoken language interpreters, written materials in other languages, braille, large print, audio and other formats. If you need help, please call 971-673-6400. TTY users call 711. You can also ask for help at OED_Communications@employ.oregon.gov.

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