



December 2023

Colorado Jobs and Labor Force – November 2023 Update

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Recently, growth in Colorado’s government sector has sustained a tepid level of statewide employment growth despite slight declines in the private sector. In November, however, private-sector job losses overwhelmed public-sector growth to the tune of a net loss of 700 jobs across the state. November was the third consecutive month of private-sector decline; what appeared over the previous two to be only an anomaly is now revealing itself as an alarming trend. The private sector has now lost 4,900 jobs since August and 2,100 in the last month alone.

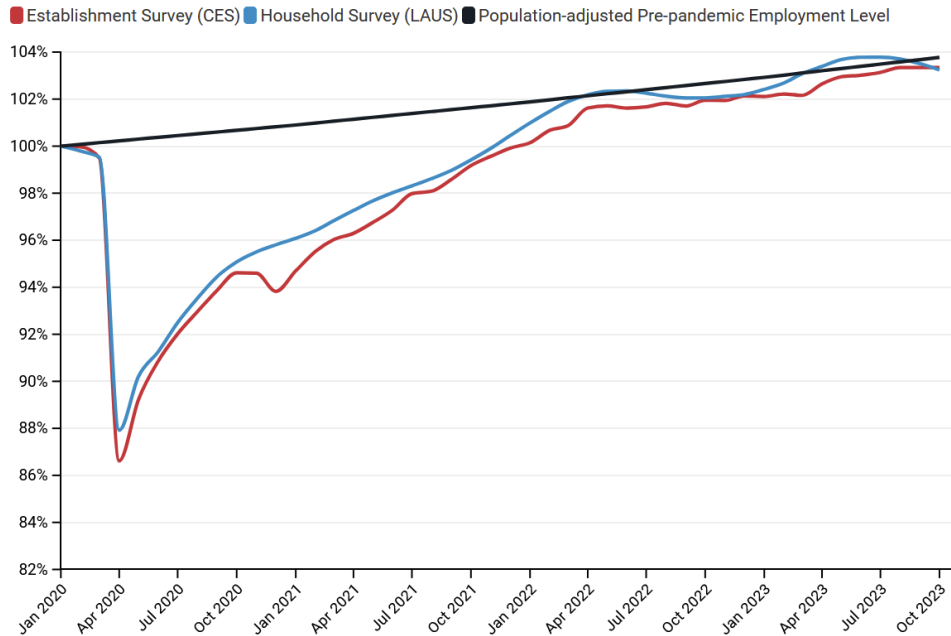
Once again, data revisions by the BLS have proven its initial figures of Colorado’s private-sector job losses to be underestimates. Last month, the BLS reported that Colorado lost only 200 private jobs; this month’s revisions place the true loss at 900. Likewise, the initial estimate of government job growth in October (1,700) was revised down to 900. As a result, rather than adding 1,500 jobs in October, as was reported last month, the state actually gained a net of 0.

Manual labor and resource extraction industries continue to underperform. Colorado’s construction sector lost 200 jobs in November and is now 2,200 jobs below its employment level of January 2020. The manufacturing sector lost 1,600 jobs and the state’s mining and logging sector was stagnant, which makes November the 5th-straight month with no job growth in those industries.

Key Findings—Colorado November 2023 Employment Data

- **Colorado's private-sector employment declined for the 3rd-straight month in November by 2,100 jobs.** The last time Colorado experienced consecutive months of private-sector job loss was during the early months of 2020.
- **Colorado’s government employment grew by a total of 4,100 since August, whereas Colorado’s private sector lost 4,900 jobs over the same period.**
- **Colorado’s unemployment rate remained at 3.3% in November after four months of increases.**
- **Colorado’s LFPR (labor force participation rate) remained at 68.4% in November after two months of decline.**
- **Colorado’s construction sector continued to shrink in November and has not added more than 100 jobs in a single month since April 2023.**

Employment Levels in Colorado since January 2020



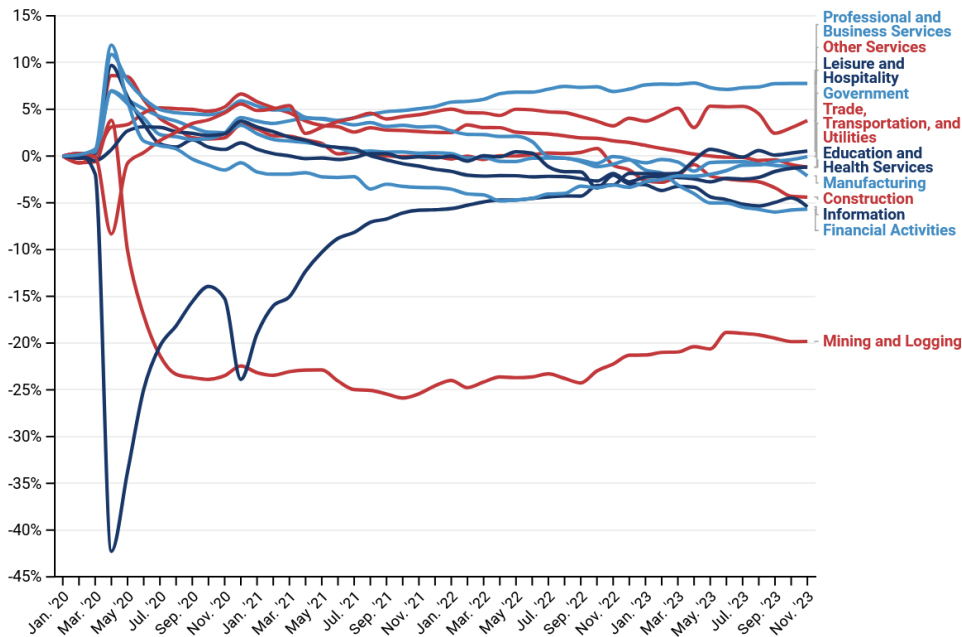
- According to the BLS survey of establishments (CES), Colorado has never recovered to a pre-pandemic employment-to-population ratio.
- According to the BLS survey of households (LAUS), which captures both traditional jobs and self-employment, Colorado is currently exhibiting an employment-to-population ratio lower than its pre-pandemic level.

A Deeper Dive into Colorado Industries (BLS CES Survey)

- After disparate growth throughout the summer and consistent decline through the fall, Colorado’s private sector lost 2,100 jobs in November.
 - The professional and business services sector lost 100 jobs and the manufacturing sector lost 1,600.
 - Local government employment increased by 200 while the state and federal governments added 400 and 800 jobs, respectively.
- The leisure and hospitality sector added 94,700 jobs between January ‘21 and November ‘23 and has grown by 3.87% since Jan. 2020.
 - Colorado’s information-sector employment fell by 800 in November. This sector has grown by only 1,800 jobs since January ‘21.
 - The state’s trade, transportation, and utilities sector lost 1,500 jobs.
- The pandemic caused a major shock to the composition of Colorado’s job market in early 2020 and may have induced some structural change in the long run.
 - As a share of Colorado’s total employment, the professional and business services sector has grown by over 7.7% since the start of 2020 (see the graph below).

- Since January 2020, employment in the mining and logging sector has decreased by 17%, reducing its share of state employment by 19.8%. This is likely the result of a combination of global trends and state policy.

Changing Industry Shares of Total Colorado Employment since January 2020



Colorado Labor Force Update

Colorado’s LFPR (labor force participation rate) remained at 68.4% in November after declining during the two previous months.

Key Findings—Colorado November ‘23 Labor Force Data (FRED)

- The current LFPR of 68.4% is .5 of a percentage point below January ‘20’s LFPR of 68.9%.
- The unemployment rate remained at 3.3% in November—substantially higher than its November ‘22 value (2.8%).
- The national LFPR of women decreased by 0.1% to 57.5%, which is .3 of a percentage point below its pre-pandemic level.

Labor Force Participation Rate in Colorado Since 2000

