SEPTEMBER 2026

AUGUST 2026 LABOR MARKET REPORT

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Summary

Colorado lost 1,400 nonfarm jobs in August, reversing the moderate growth seen in July. Private-sector employment declined by 900 jobs, while government employment fell by 500. The state's unemployment rate also rose to 4.0% after remaining unchanged at 3.9% for seven consecutive months.

Key Findings

- **Over the past year, Colorado's job growth remained average.** The state ranks 29th among states in nonfarm employment growth over this time.
- **In August, Colorado's total employment fell by 1,400 jobs.** The private sector lost 900 jobs, while government employment declined by 500.
- **Colorado's LFPR dropped for the seventh consecutive month.** It fell by 0.2 percentage points in August for a total of 1.7 ppt over the last year.
- **Colorado's unemployment rate rose to 4.0% after remaining unchanged at 3.9% seven consecutive months.** The state ranks 24th nationally.

Sector Leaderboard

Sector	1M Change	12M Change	12M Rate (CO / US)
Construction	-2.2k	+2.2k	+1.2% / +1.7%
Financial Activities	+0.9k	-4.3k	-2.4% / -1.0%
Information	-0.2k	-5.6k	-8.0% / -3.0%
Leisure & hospitality	+1.7k	+9k	+2.6% / +0.9%
Manufacturing	+0.5k	-1.0k	-0.7% / -0.1%
Mining & logging	-0.1K	-0.5k	-2.4% / +1.0%
Other services	+0.2k	-1.1k	-0.8% / +0.5%
Private education & health services	-0.2k	+12.4k	+3.1% / +1.9%
Professional & business services	-0.8k	+1.9K	+0.4% / +0.6%
Trade, transportation & utilities	-0.7k	-1.1k	-0.2% / 0%
Government	-0.5k	-5.3k	-1.1% / -0.3%
Total private	-0.9k	+11.9k	+0.5% / +0.6%
Total nonfarm	-1.4k	+6.6k	+0.2% / +0.5%

Job Growth Rate Rank

29th

over the last 12 months

LFPR

#10

65.3% (-0.2 pp)

12M change: -1.7 pp

Unemployment Rate

4.0% (+0.1 pp)

#24

12M change: -0.1 pp

Private vs. Public Jobs

-0.9k / -0.5k

12M change: +11.9k / -5.3k

Total Nonfarm Jobs

2,970.3k (-1.4k)

12M change: +6.6k

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Private Employment Wages & Hours

Non-seasonally adjusted earnings and hours measures for the private payroll side of the labor market.

Average hourly earnings **$40.31** (+$0.62)
12M change: +$1.17

Average weekly earnings **$1,382** (+$56.98)
12M change: +$71.44

Average weekly hours **34.3** (+0.9)
12M change: +0.8

Demand / Turnover (December)

Labor demand and turnover measures.

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

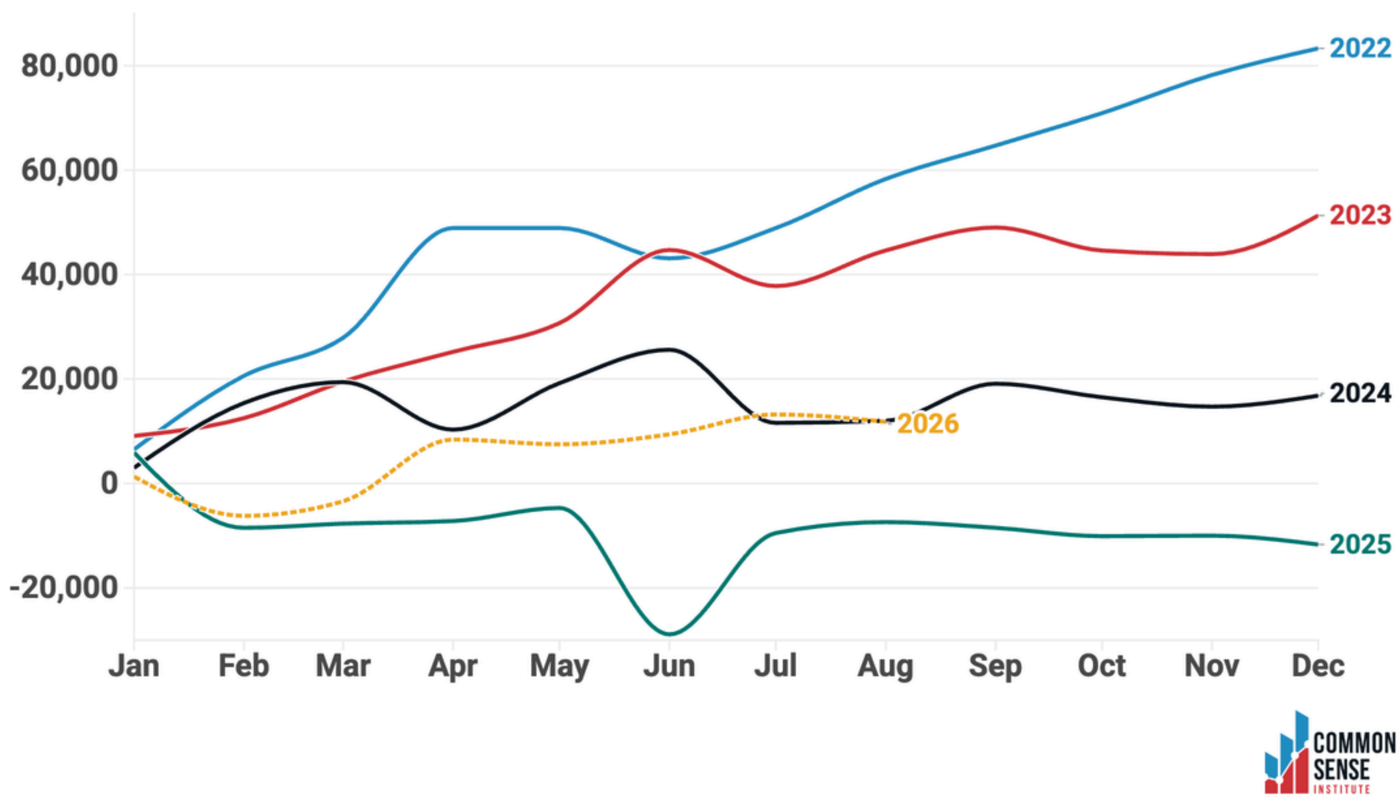
Hires
96k (-7k)
12M average: 112k

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

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

Cumulative Jobs Added by Year in Colorado

From December 2025 to August 2026, total employment increased by 11,800 jobs compared to a decrease of 7,400 jobs this time last year.



APPENDIX A

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.