

# **State Unemployment Rate Stays Steady in March, However, More Than 750,000 Claims Filed Since March**

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SPRINGFIELD - The unemployment rate in March, compared to one year ago, is down, but payroll jobs are also down slightly in the Metro-East area, according to statistics released by the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The April unemployment should skyrocket to very high numbers because of COVID-19.

Unemployment in March was at 3.0 percent, sharply down from 4.6 percent in March, 2019, according to the statistics, but payroll jobs were also down compared to last year. There were 237,900 jobs in Metro-East last March, down from 238,600 jobs a year ago. The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) released new statewide data Friday showing the department processed 102,937 new initial unemployment claims for the week ending April 18 and has now processed more than 755,000 initial unemployment claims from March 1 through April 18. This is 12 times the number of claims the department processed over the same period last year, when IDES processed just 61,000 initial unemployment claims.

The 3.0 unemployment rate marks the lowest in the month of March on record for the area. However, the labor force decreased from 344,743 in 2019 to 322,014 in 2020. The total number of those employed was down from 328,936 in March, 2019 to 312,440 in March, 2020, with a total of 9,574 unemployed persons, down from 15,807 last year.

Employment increases were seen in Government (up 525), professional and business services (up by 450), construction (up 225) and natural resources and mining (up 25). Decreases were seen in educational and health services (down 750), manufacturing (down 350), leisure and hospitality (down 275), financial activities (down 250), information (down 200), trade, transportation and utilities (down by 150 and other services (down 100).

In the local area, Jersey County had the greatest drop in unemployment by 1.9 percent, from 5.1 percent to 3.2 percent, St. Clair County was second with a 1.8 percent drop, from five percent to 3.2 percent, and both Bond and Macoupin Counties had drops of 1.6 percent, with Bond falling from 4.5 percent to 2.9 percent and Macoupin County falling from five percent to 3.4 percent. Madison County saw a fall of 1.5 percent, from 4.4 percent to 2.9 percent, and both Clinton and Monroe Counties fell 1.3 percent, Clinton going from 3.7 percent to 2.4 percent, and Monroe falling from 3.5 percent to 2.2 percent. In addition, Greene County had a drop of 1.7 percent, going from 4.9 percent to 3.2 percent, Randolph County experienced a drop of 1.5 percent, going from 4.1 percent to 2.6 percent, and Washington County dropped a full percentage point, from 2.8 percent to 1.8 percent.

Among the area's cities and metropolitan areas, East St. Louis had the biggest drop, of 3.2 percent, with the rate falling from 7.7 percent to 4.5 percent, the Alton rate fell by 2.4 percent, from 5.8 percent to 3.4 percent, Collinsville's rate dropped 1.8 percent, from 4.8 percent to three percent, Granite City experienced a 1.7 percent drop, from 4.9 percent to 3.2 percent, Belleville fell by 1.5 percent, going from 4.8 percent to 3.3 percent, Edwardsville rate fell by 1.3 percent, from 3.4 percent to 2.1 percent, and O'Fallon's rate fell by a full point, going from four percent to three percent.

Statewide, the unemployment rate was unchanged from last year, staying at 4.4. percent, but payroll jobs fell by 39,800, going from 6,048,700 jobs to 6,008,900 jobs.

# IDES Processes Over 750,000 Unemployment Claims Since March, Pays Out More Than \$700 Million in Benefits

**SPRINGFIELD** – From March 1 through April 16, the department paid out more than \$700 million in benefits. In the first two weeks of April alone, IDES paid more than \$500 million in unemployment benefits to claimants. Statewide unemployment claims data, which reflects activity for the week prior, will be available on the [IDES website](#) every Thursday afternoon.

This week, IDES rolled out the Federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (FPEUC) program, which provides up to 13 weeks’ worth of federally funded benefits to individuals who have exhausted their regular state unemployment benefits.

To date, IDES has overhauled its website infrastructure, expanded web and call center capacity, and secured third party vendor partnerships to further implement and streamline new programs that enhance filing capabilities. The department is also standing up a virtual call center, that will nearly double current call center capacity with Illinois-based call center representatives.

IDES waived the waiting week for claimants and implemented the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), which provides an additional \$600 each week in federally funded benefits to eligible Illinoisans. The CARES Act also created Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (FPUA), a new program for people who are not typically covered by the state’s unemployment system and the department is contracting with Deloitte to launch this system in May.

Those with questions or in need of assistance with unemployment benefits at this time are encouraged to visit [IDES.Illinois.gov](#).

## Not Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

Metropolitan Area	March 2020*	March 2019**	Over-the-Year Change
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Bloomington	2.8%	4.4%	-1.6
Carbondale-Marion	3.2%	4.6%	-1.4
Champaign-Urbana	2.6%	4.3%	-1.7
Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights	5.0%	3.9%	1.1
Danville	3.8%	5.7%	-1.9
Davenport-Moline-Rock Island, IA-IL	4.2%	4.8%	-0.6
Decatur	4.4%	5.8%	-1.4
Elgin	3.8%	5.5%	-1.7
Kankakee	4.2%	6.0%	-1.8
Lake-Kenosha, IL-WI	3.7%	5.2%	-1.5
Peoria	3.9%	5.5%	-1.6
Rockford	4.6%	6.0%	-1.4
Springfield	3.1%	4.7%	-1.6
St. Louis (IL-Section)	3.0%	4.6%	-1.6

Illinois Statewide	4.4%	4.4%	0.0
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***\* Preliminary I \*\* Revised***

**Total Nonfarm Jobs (Not Seasonally Adjusted) – March 2020**

<b>Metropolitan Area</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>Over-the-Year</b>
	<b>2020*</b>	<b>2019**</b>	<b>Change</b>
Bloomington MSA	91,700	92,200	-500
Carbondale-Marion MSA	57,700	58,600	-900
Champaign-Urbana MSA	116,600	115,100	1,500
Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights Metro Division	3,733,500	3,742,300	-8,800
Danville MSA	26,800	27,200	-400
Davenport-Moline-Rock Island MSA	184,200	185,000	-800
Decatur MSA	49,400	50,200	-800
Elgin Metro Division	256,800	258,400	-1,600

Kankakee MSA	46,100	45,200	900
Lake-County-Kenosha County Metro Division	406,500	413,700	-7,200
Peoria MSA	165,000	169,300	-4,300
Rockford MSA	144,200	150,200	-6,000
Springfield MSA	108,100	109,400	-1,300
Illinois Section of St. Louis MSA	237,900	238,600	-700
Illinois Statewide	6,008,900	6,048,700	-39,800

*\*Preliminary / \*\*Revised*

**Not Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates  
(percent) for Local Counties and Areas**

**Labor Market Area   Mar 2020   Mar 2019   Over the Year Change**

**St. Louis (IL-Section)   3.0 %   4.6 %   -1.6**

Bond County   2.9 %   4.5 %   -1.6

Calhoun County   3.6 %   5.3 %   -1.7

Clinton County   2.4 %   3.7 %   -1.3

Jersey County	3.2 %	5.1 %	-1.9
Macoupin County	3.4 %	5.0 %	-1.6
Madison County	2.9 %	4.4 %	-1.5
Monroe County	2.2 %	3.5 %	-1.3
St. Clair County	3.2 %	5.0 %	-1.8

**Cities**

Alton City	3.4 %	5.8 %	-2.4
Belleville City	3.3 %	4.8 %	-1.5
Collinsville City	3.0 %	4.8 %	-1.8
East St. Louis City	4.5 %	7.7 %	-3.2
Edwardsville City	2.1 %	3.4 %	-1.3
Granite City	3.2 %	4.9 %	-1.7
O'Fallon City	3.0 %	4.0 %	-1.0

**Counties**

Greene County	3.2 %	4.9 %	-1.7
Randolph County	2.6 %	4.1 %	-1.5
Washington County	1.8 %	2.8 %	-1.0

### **Other Areas**

LWIA 21	3.5 %	5.1 %	-1.6
LWIA 22	2.9 %	4.5 %	-1.6
LWIA 24	2.9 %	4.5 %	-1.6
Southwestern EDR	2.9 %	4.5 %	-1.6

### **Metro East Highlights**

The March 2020 unemployment rate for the Illinois Section of the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area was 3.0 percent, a decrease of (-1.6%) from the March 2019 rate of 4.6 percent. This is the lowest March unemployment rate on record for the Illinois section of the St. Louis MSA. The data is not seasonally adjusted.

The labor force decreased by -22,729 to 322,014 in March 2020 from 344,743 in March 2019. The number of employed individuals decreased by -16,496 to 312,440 in March 2020 from 328,936 in March 2019. In March 2020, there were 9,574 unemployed people in the labor force. This is a decrease of -6,233 compared to the March 2019 total unemployed, 15,807.

Over the year, nonfarm payrolls decreased by (-850).

Employment increased in Government (+525), and Professional and Business Services (+450), Construction (+225), and Natural Resources and Mining (+25).



Decreases in employment over the year included Educational and Health Services (-750), Manufacturing (-350), Leisure and Hospitality (-275), Financial Activities (-250), Information (-200), Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-150), and Other Services (-100).

**Note:** Monthly 2019 unemployment rates and total nonfarm jobs for Illinois metro areas were revised in February and March 2020, as required by the U.S. BLS. Comments and tables distributed for prior metro area news releases should be discarded as any records or historical analysis previously cited may no longer be valid.

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