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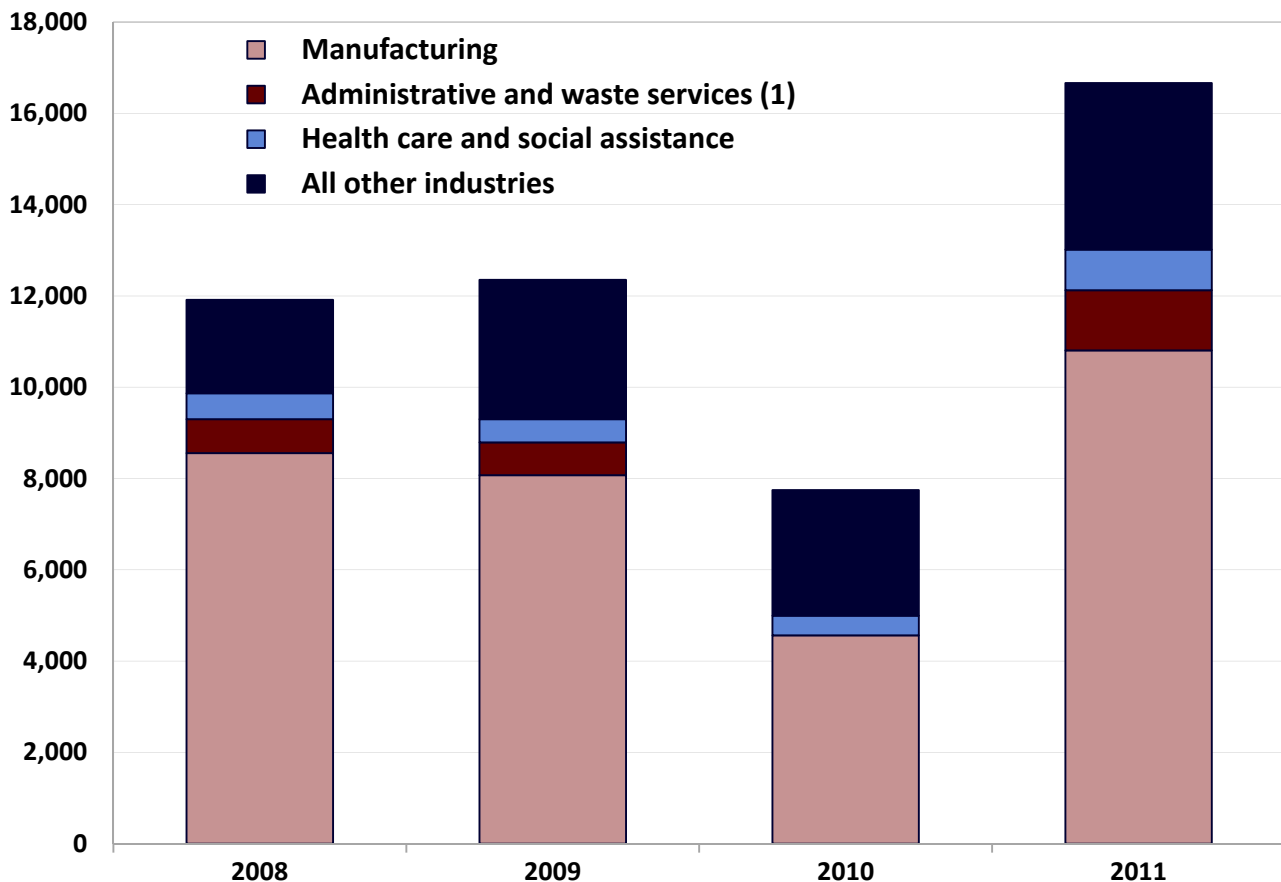
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MASS LAYOFFS IN ARKANSAS – 2011 ANNUAL TOTALS

Employers in Arkansas took 154 mass layoff actions in 2011 that resulted in the separation of 16,665 workers, as measured by new filings for unemployment insurance benefits during the year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See chart 1 and table 1.) Each action involved at least 50 persons from a single employer. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the number of claims reached a series high in 2011, more than doubling the 2010 level of 7,748. Annual mass layoff data for states has been available since 1996.

Chart 1. Mass layoff initial claims, Arkansas, annual totals, 2008-2011



(1) Claims data for *Administrative and waste services* were not available in 2010 and were included in *All other industries*.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Industry distribution

Of all the industry sectors in Arkansas, manufacturing experienced the most mass layoff events in 2011 with 94. Similarly, this sector had the largest number of initial claimants at 10,808, the fourth-highest level recorded in this industry. (See table 1.) Historically, manufacturing has accounted for the vast majority of total claims in the state, making up more than 80 percent in most years from 1996 to 2007. However, in recent years, the recession caused ever greater numbers of claims from service-providing industries in the state, while the share of jobs found in manufacturing continued to decline. As a result, despite the relatively high number of manufacturing initial claimants last year, manufacturing's 65-percent share of total claims in 2011 was the second-lowest in the history of the series.

Administrative and waste services ranked second in both the number of mass layoff events and unemployment insurance claims in 2011, at 16 and 1,319, respectively. The health care and social assistance sector had 10 layoff events and 890 claimants over the 12-month period. Combined with manufacturing, these three industry sectors accounted for more than 78 percent of all initial claims in the state in 2011. (See chart 1.) Only one other industry sector had more than 500 claims, accommodation and food services (668). With the exception of manufacturing, the level of claims noted in the sectors mentioned above, all reached series highs in 2011.

On a percentage basis, local government experienced the largest increase in annual claims, up 290.0 percent, followed by state government (154.5 percent), and manufacturing (136.7 percent).

Among the states, California recorded the largest number of initial claims during 2011 at 377,413. Following California were Pennsylvania (124,838), New York (119,398), and Florida (79,766). Twenty-nine states experienced over-the-year declines in mass layoff-related initial claims, while 20 states and the District of Columbia registered increases; claims were unchanged in South Dakota. Among the states recording decreases in initial claims, the largest declines occurred in California (-42,396) and Illinois (-19,191), with the remaining states registering decreases of less than 10,000. North Carolina registered the largest increase (22,393) and three states – Arkansas, Nebraska, and North Carolina – reported record highs for the mass layoff initial claims series.

Technical Note

The Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program is a federal-state program that uses a standardized automated approach to identifying, describing, and tracking the effects of major job cutbacks, using data from each state's unemployment insurance database. Each month, states report on employers which have at least 50 initial claims filed against them during a consecutive 5-week period. These employers then are contacted by the state agency to determine whether these separations lasted 31 days or longer, and, if so, other information concerning the layoff is collected. States report on layoffs lasting more than 1 month on a quarterly basis.

A given month contains an aggregation of the weekly unemployment insurance claims filings for the Sunday through Saturday weeks in that month. All weeks are included for the particular month, except if the first day of the month falls on Saturday. In this case, the week is included in the prior month's tabulations. This means that some months will contain 4 weeks and others, 5 weeks. The number of weeks in a given month may be different from year to year, and the number of weeks in a year may vary. Therefore, analysis of over-the-month and over-the-year change in not seasonally adjusted series should take this calendar effect into consideration.

The MLS program resumed operations in April 1995 after it had been terminated in November 1992 due to lack of funding. Prior to April 1995, monthly layoff statistics were not available.

For personal assistance or further information on the Mass Layoff Statistics program, as well as other Bureau products, contact the Southwest Information Office at (972) 850-4800. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Definitions

Employer. Employers in the MLS program include those covered by state unemployment insurance laws. Information on employers is obtained from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, which is administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Industry. Employers are classified according to the 2007 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For temporary help and professional employer organization industries, monthly MLS-related statistics generally reflect layoffs related to underlying client companies in other industries. An individual layoff action at a client company can be small, but when initial claimants associated with many such layoffs are assigned to a temporary help or professional employer organization firm, a mass layoff event may trigger.

Initial claimant. A person who files any notice of unemployment to initiate a request either for a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation, or for a subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Mass layoff event. Fifty or more initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits filed against an employer during a 5-week period, regardless of duration.

Table 1. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, selected industries, Arkansas, annual totals

Industry	Mass layoff events				Initial claims for unemployment			
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total, all industries (1)	116	117	71	154	11,914	12,353	7,748	16,665
Total private	113	114	68	147	11,618	12,043	7,482	16,134
Total private nonfarm	113	114	68	147	11,618	12,043	7,482	16,134
Construction	(3)	5	3	3	(3)	458	187	280
Heavy and civil engineering construction	(3)	(3)	(3)	3	(3)	(3)	(3)	280
Manufacturing	78	74	38	94	8,557	8,073	4,566	10,808
Food	15	12	8	26	1,918	1,633	845	2,834
Wood products	7	8	(3)	7	668	875	(3)	908
Plastics and rubber products (2)	6	5	(3)	(3)	524	467	(3)	(3)
Primary metals	8	6	-	(3)	673	1,039	-	(3)
Fabricated metal products	8	5	(3)	(3)	650	271	(3)	(3)
Machinery (2)	10	9	10	10	871	772	950	1,310
Electrical equipment and appliances	5	5	5	5	941	459	876	823
Transportation equipment (2)	7	11	(3)	8	795	1,152	(3)	653
Furniture and related products (2)	(3)	4	(3)	4	(3)	762	(3)	728
Miscellaneous manufacturing (2)	(3)	(3)	(3)	6	(3)	(3)	(3)	443
Retail trade	(3)	7	6	(3)	(3)	943	1,133	(3)
Administrative and waste services (2)	10	8	(3)	16	742	718	(3)	1,319
Administrative and support services (2)	10	8	(3)	16	742	718	(3)	1,319
Health care and social assistance	8	6	5	10	570	508	428	890
Social assistance	5	5	4	8	385	427	365	780
Accommodation and food services	3	4	5	8	233	286	397	668
Food services and drinking places	3	4	5	8	233	286	397	668
Other services except public administration	-	-	(3)	3	-	-	(3)	233
Government	3	3	3	7	296	310	266	531
Federal	-	-	1	-	-	-	84	-
State	3	2	1	4	296	246	132	336
Local	-	1	1	3	-	64	50	195

Footnotes

(1) Total includes all industries including those not listed in the table.

(2) Data beginning in 2008 are not strictly comparable to prior years due to a change in NAICS versions.

(3) Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.