

For release 10:00 a.m. (EDT) Thursday, August 23, 2012

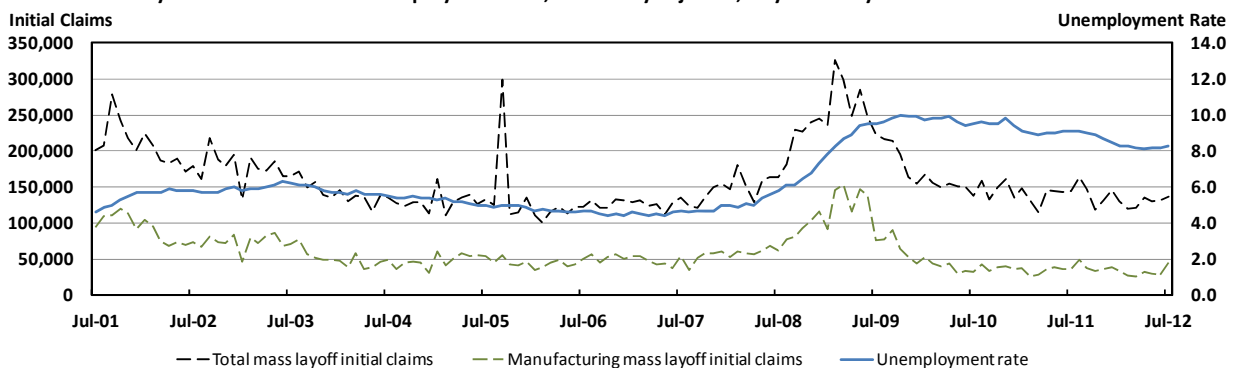
USDL-12-1718

Technical information: (202) 691-6392 • mlsinfo@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/mls
Media contact: (202) 691-5902 • PressOffice@bls.gov

MASS LAYOFFS — JULY 2012

Employers took 1,340 mass layoff actions in July involving 137,420 workers, seasonally adjusted, as measured by new filings for unemployment insurance benefits during the month, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Each mass layoff involved at least 50 workers from a single employer. Mass layoff events in July increased by 23 from June, and the number of associated initial claims increased by 6,014. Year-to-date mass layoff events (9,425) and initial claims (905,310) both recorded their lowest figures for a January-July period since 2007. In July, 364 mass layoff events were reported in the manufacturing sector, seasonally adjusted, resulting in 44,920 initial claims. Mass layoff data are identified using administrative data sources without regard to layoff duration. (See table 1 and the note at the end of this release.)

Chart 1. Mass layoff initial claims and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, July 2001-July 2012



The national unemployment rate was 8.3 percent in July, essentially unchanged from the prior month but down from 9.1 percent a year earlier. Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 163,000 over the month and by 1,838,000 over the year.

Industry Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

The number of mass layoff events in July was 1,515, not seasonally adjusted, resulting in 157,753 initial claims for unemployment insurance. (See table 2.) Over the year, the number of average weekly mass layoff events in July decreased by 56 to 379, and associated average weekly initial claims decreased by 3,917 to 39,438. Thirteen of the 19 major industry sectors in the private economy reported over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims for July, with the largest decrease occurring in administrative and waste services. (See table 3.) In July 2012, the six-digit industry with the largest number of private nonfarm initial claims was temporary help services. (See table A.)

Table A. Six-digit NAICS industries with the largest number of mass layoff initial claims in July 2012, private nonfarm, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Initial Claims	July peak	
		Year	Initial claims
Temporary help services ¹	11,750	1998	24,601
Automobile manufacturing	7,497	1996	22,644
Fossil fuel electric power generation	(²)	2012	(²)
Motor vehicle seating and interior trim mfg.	3,456	2005	9,238
Light truck and utility vehicle manufacturing	(²)	1997	14,618
Other motor vehicle parts manufacturing	3,108	2004	9,954
Motor vehicle metal stamping	2,952	2005	8,198
Discount department stores	2,810	2009	3,995
Heavy duty truck manufacturing	2,467	2008	6,790
Professional employer organizations ¹	2,273	2009	8,240

¹ See the Technical Note for more information on these industries.

² Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

In July, the manufacturing sector accounted for 40 percent of mass layoff events and 51 percent of associated initial claims in the private economy. Within manufacturing, the number of mass layoff claimants was highest in transportation equipment. Thirteen of the 21 manufacturing subsectors experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly initial claims. (See table 3.)

Geographic Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Among the census regions, the South registered the largest number of initial claims in July. Two of the 4 regions experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in the West. (See table 4.)

Among the states, California recorded the highest number of mass layoff initial claims in July, followed by Michigan and New York. Thirty states experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, led by California, Minnesota, and Florida. (See table 4.)

Note

The monthly data series in this release cover mass layoffs of 50 or more workers beginning in a given month, regardless of the duration of the layoffs. For private nonfarm establishments, information on the length of the layoff is obtained later and issued in a quarterly release that reports on mass layoffs lasting more than 30 days (referred to as "extended mass layoffs"). The quarterly release provides more information on the industry classification and location of the establishment and on the demographics of the laid-off workers. The monthly data series in this release are subjected to average weekly analysis, which mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. See the Technical Note for more detailed definitions and for a description of average weekly analysis.

The Mass Layoffs news release for August is scheduled to be released on Friday, September 21, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. (EDT).

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.

The monthly data present preliminary mass layoff activity in the reference month and are not revised in subsequent months except in special circumstances (e.g., layoffs in states affected by Hurricane Katrina). Counts of initial claims associated with mass layoff events reflect activity through the end of the reference month. Additional mass layoff event and initial claims activity received after data for the reference month have been published by BLS are not updated in the monthly mass layoff series and, therefore, may not match revised mass layoff data issued in state publications. However, any additional mass layoff information meeting the extended mass layoff criteria will be reflected in BLS' quarterly publication of extended mass layoff data.

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, data users who intend to perform analysis of over-the-year change in the not seasonally adjusted series should use the average weekly mass layoff figures displayed in tables 3 and 4 of this release. The average weekly adjustment process produces a consistent series for each month across all years, permitting over-the-year analysis to be performed using strictly comparable data.

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.

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

Average weekly mass layoff events and initial claimants. The number of events and initial claimants in a given month divided by the number of weeks contained within that month.

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.

Seasonal adjustment

Effective with the release of data for January 2005, BLS began publishing six seasonally adjusted monthly MLS series. The six series are the numbers of mass layoff events and mass layoff initial claims for the total, private nonfarm, and manufacturing sectors.

Seasonal adjustment is the process of estimating and removing the effect on time series data of regularly recurring seasonal events such as changes in the weather, holidays, and the beginning and ending of the school year. The use of seasonal adjustment makes it easier to observe fundamental changes in time series, particularly those associated with general economic expansions and contractions.

The MLS data are seasonally adjusted using the X-12-ARIMA seasonal adjustment method on a concurrent basis.

Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available monthly estimates, including those for the current month, in developing seasonal adjustment factors. Revisions to the most recent 5 years of seasonally adjusted data will be made once a year with the issuance of December data. Before the data are seasonally adjusted, prior adjustments are made to the original data to adjust them for differences in the number of weeks used to calculate the monthly data. Because weekly

unemployment insurance claims are aggregated to form monthly data, a particular month's value could be calculated with 5 weeks of data in 1 year and 4 weeks in another. The effects of these differences could seriously distort the seasonal factors if they were ignored in the seasonal adjustment process. These effects are modeled in the X-12-ARIMA program and are permanently removed from the final seasonally adjusted series .

Table 1. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, August 2008 to July 2012, seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2008						
August	1,763	181,853	1,632	172,147	578	77,464
September	2,159	229,180	1,990	215,749	629	82,011
October	2,201	226,853	2,043	213,454	698	93,252
November	2,406	239,239	2,247	225,404	907	103,836
December	2,437	244,889	2,261	230,621	935	116,181
2009						
January	2,254	235,371	2,083	221,653	726	92,293
February	3,059	326,392	2,901	310,378	1,251	145,839
March	2,999	299,322	2,800	282,414	1,230	154,168
April	2,566	249,129	2,349	232,632	1,007	116,051
May	2,710	284,468	2,516	267,869	1,181	147,184
June	2,466	247,597	2,257	230,502	1,048	137,649
July	2,186	222,941	1,979	203,911	636	75,728
August	2,340	216,047	2,115	197,172	751	77,894
September	2,261	214,018	2,048	198,761	786	91,125
October	1,969	195,752	1,772	178,172	571	65,217
November	1,757	164,454	1,588	151,172	472	52,855
December	1,719	155,056	1,543	140,835	424	44,096
2010						
January	1,707	168,044	1,529	154,187	471	53,817
February	1,631	156,292	1,465	141,831	374	43,620
March	1,676	149,816	1,469	134,518	356	40,705
April	1,637	154,558	1,452	138,503	368	44,506
May	1,608	150,996	1,357	130,273	302	29,932
June	1,695	151,435	1,475	132,742	325	33,298
July	1,519	138,091	1,316	122,162	304	32,253
August	1,588	159,329	1,399	136,697	390	43,154
September	1,510	133,576	1,295	115,349	328	34,333
October	1,654	149,589	1,446	132,146	354	38,937
November	1,592	161,145	1,410	145,494	360	39,977
December	1,477	135,849	1,271	121,171	322	36,267
2011						
January	1,536	148,952	1,348	131,869	337	37,477
February	1,434	131,569	1,242	116,745	297	26,696
March	1,275	115,391	1,118	102,722	251	28,988
April	1,548	145,836	1,383	131,317	341	37,053
May	1,600	144,412	1,404	127,793	374	39,180
June	1,513	143,384	1,334	128,410	344	36,265
July	1,562	145,078	1,348	125,285	346	36,312
August	1,551	164,275	1,347	149,874	382	49,194
September	1,447	147,353	1,306	134,038	364	38,026
October	1,335	118,924	1,205	107,330	341	33,926
November	1,332	131,627	1,192	120,760	324	36,563
December	1,384	145,648	1,238	130,583	351	39,081
2012						
January	1,434	129,920	1,298	119,102	341	33,597
February	1,293	119,463	1,153	108,577	282	27,388
March	1,273	121,310	1,125	109,421	261	26,348
April	1,388	135,600	1,222	120,213	287	33,243
May	1,380	130,191	1,222	117,654	264	29,675
June	1,317	131,406	1,171	118,451	267	29,093
July	1,340	137,420	1,208	127,092	364	44,920

Table 2. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, August 2008 to July 2012, not seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2008						
August	1,427	139,999	1,343	133,146	414	51,912
September	1,292	129,586	1,202	122,505	361	46,391
October	2,125	221,784	1,917	205,553	689	100,457
November	2,574	241,589	2,389	226,657	997	107,620
December	3,377	351,305	3,232	340,220	1,378	172,529
2009						
January	3,806	388,813	3,633	375,293	1,461	172,757
February	2,262	218,438	2,173	210,755	945	103,588
March	2,191	228,387	2,107	221,397	940	114,747
April	2,547	256,930	2,385	243,321	887	100,872
May	2,738	289,628	2,572	274,047	1,005	123,683
June	2,519	256,357	2,051	216,063	674	85,726
July	3,054	336,654	2,659	296,589	1,133	154,208
August	1,428	125,024	1,334	117,193	436	41,151
September	1,371	123,177	1,258	115,141	448	51,126
October	1,934	193,904	1,678	172,883	566	69,655
November	1,870	164,496	1,679	150,751	517	55,053
December	2,310	214,648	2,166	203,655	615	64,540
2010						
January	2,860	278,679	2,682	265,074	962	104,846
February	1,183	102,818	1,091	96,022	282	30,728
March	1,197	111,727	1,111	105,514	273	29,745
April	1,840	199,690	1,697	184,654	424	55,178
May	1,354	123,333	1,170	109,203	216	19,334
June	1,861	171,190	1,355	125,872	212	21,083
July	2,124	206,254	1,732	172,248	532	64,200
August	976	92,435	897	83,021	230	23,088
September	920	77,654	806	67,987	187	19,403
October	1,642	148,638	1,373	127,865	351	40,861
November	1,676	158,048	1,477	142,591	389	41,383
December	1,931	184,130	1,763	172,881	465	52,816
2011						
January	2,558	246,463	2,372	229,765	693	75,006
February	1,024	85,585	919	78,718	222	18,471
March	908	85,095	844	80,014	191	20,869
April	1,750	189,919	1,625	176,478	397	47,104
May	1,367	119,911	1,221	108,531	270	25,199
June	1,661	159,930	1,238	122,821	226	22,986
July	2,176	216,774	1,759	174,078	602	71,814
August	961	99,213	875	93,159	228	26,916
September	1,189	117,232	1,095	107,300	296	32,058
October	1,101	96,914	950	83,748	265	28,447
November	1,393	127,750	1,245	117,474	349	37,799
December	2,433	263,665	2,258	247,916	658	75,033
2012						
January	1,705	141,703	1,587	132,754	415	38,021
February	895	73,974	820	69,076	196	16,555
March	1,125	117,817	1,040	110,954	242	24,241
April	1,421	146,358	1,293	132,697	256	32,518
May	1,201	109,259	1,081	100,434	186	18,800
June	1,890	198,537	1,485	158,334	255	28,570
July	1,515	157,753	1,321	144,340	559	74,963

Table 3. Industry distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Mass layoff totals				Average weekly mass layoffs ¹			
	Events		Initial claimants		Events		Initial claimants	
	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012
Total ²	2,176	1,515	216,774	157,753	435	379	43,355	39,438
Total, private	1,867	1,385	182,960	148,561	373	346	36,592	37,140
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	108	64	8,882	4,221	22	16	1,776	1,055
Total, private nonfarm	1,759	1,321	174,078	144,340	352	330	34,816	36,085
Mining	-	6	-	401	-	2	-	100
Utilities	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Construction	118	86	8,990	6,583	24	22	1,798	1,646
Construction of buildings	24	16	2,050	1,129	5	4	410	282
Heavy and civil engineering construction	32	34	2,823	2,678	6	9	565	670
Specialty trade contractors	62	36	4,117	2,776	12	9	823	694
Manufacturing	602	559	71,814	74,963	120	140	14,363	18,741
Food	84	77	9,998	8,647	17	19	2,000	2,162
Beverage and tobacco products	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Textile mills	29	27	3,341	2,821	6	7	668	705
Textile product mills	9	9	1,107	813	2	2	221	203
Apparel	14	23	1,526	2,375	3	6	305	594
Leather and allied products	3	4	869	506	1	1	174	127
Wood products	28	24	2,826	3,047	6	6	565	762
Paper	4	10	298	700	1	3	60	175
Printing and related support activities	9	6	930	571	2	2	186	143
Petroleum and coal products	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Chemicals	12	6	935	402	2	2	187	101
Plastics and rubber products	36	38	3,359	3,999	7	10	672	1,000
Nonmetallic mineral products	13	11	1,612	1,183	3	3	322	296
Primary metals	24	24	2,450	2,802	5	6	490	701
Fabricated metal products	27	33	2,980	2,991	5	8	596	748
Machinery	34	38	4,799	4,891	7	10	960	1,223
Computer and electronic products	19	16	1,735	1,210	4	4	347	303
Electrical equipment and appliances	19	15	2,628	2,185	4	4	526	546
Transportation equipment	193	158	26,488	31,786	39	40	5,298	7,947
Furniture and related products	31	24	2,770	2,567	6	6	554	642
Miscellaneous manufacturing	9	13	726	1,287	2	3	145	322
Wholesale trade	21	20	1,594	1,316	4	5	319	329
Retail trade ⁴	165	92	17,189	8,589	33	23	3,438	2,147
Building material and garden supply stores	16	7	1,358	606	3	2	272	152
Food and beverage stores	32	15	3,343	1,021	6	4	669	255
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	19	9	1,149	634	4	2	230	159
General merchandise stores	59	33	8,412	4,487	12	8	1,682	1,122
Transportation and warehousing ⁴	114	65	9,326	5,924	23	16	1,865	1,481
Truck transportation	10	11	657	761	2	3	131	190
Transit and ground passenger transportation	80	32	6,566	2,750	16	8	1,313	688
Support activities for transportation	6	8	518	849	1	2	104	212
Information	52	32	5,289	4,303	10	8	1,058	1,076
Finance and insurance	43	24	2,769	1,656	9	6	554	414
Real estate and rental and leasing	10	4	856	255	2	1	171	64
Professional and technical services	51	41	4,372	3,438	10	10	874	860
Management of companies and enterprises	5	(³)	654	(³)	1	(³)	131	(³)
Administrative and waste services	320	213	31,193	17,369	64	53	6,239	4,342
Educational services	29	25	1,993	1,710	6	6	399	428
Health care and social assistance	104	56	7,079	4,113	21	14	1,416	1,028
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	30	14	2,867	774	6	4	573	194
Accommodation and food services	74	66	6,445	4,431	15	17	1,289	1,108
Accommodation	12	20	839	1,403	2	5	168	351
Food services and drinking places	62	46	5,606	3,028	12	12	1,121	757
Other services, except public administration	17	13	1,336	850	3	3	267	213
Unclassified	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-
Government	309	130	33,814	9,192	62	33	6,763	2,298
Federal	10	8	784	672	2	2	157	168
State	78	25	12,220	2,106	16	6	2,444	527
State government education	7	13	644	935	1	3	129	234
Local	221	97	20,810	6,414	44	24	4,162	1,604
Local government education	173	71	14,505	4,469	35	18	2,901	1,117

¹ Average weekly analysis mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. There were 5 weeks in July 2011 and 4 weeks in July 2012. Average weekly events and initial claimants may not sum to subtotals and totals due to rounding.

² Data were reported by all states and the District of Columbia.

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

⁴ Includes other industries not shown.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.

Table 4. Region and state distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, not seasonally adjusted

Census region and state	Mass layoff totals				Average weekly mass layoffs ¹			
	Events		Initial Claimants		Events		Initial Claimants	
	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012
Total ²	2,176	1,515	216,774	157,753	435	379	43,355	39,438
Northeast	363	268	34,691	30,266	73	67	6,938	7,567
Connecticut	8	15	713	1,137	2	4	143	284
Maine	9	10	667	1,263	2	3	133	316
Massachusetts	16	13	1,632	1,026	3	3	326	257
New Hampshire	5	(³)	363	(³)	1	(³)	73	(³)
New Jersey	81	35	7,381	2,667	16	9	1,476	667
New York	142	101	14,892	16,306	28	25	2,978	4,077
Pennsylvania	96	86	8,610	7,154	19	22	1,722	1,789
Rhode Island	(³)	4	(³)	251	(³)	1	(³)	63
Vermont	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
South	624	494	62,261	52,296	125	124	12,452	13,074
Alabama	60	55	6,904	6,119	12	14	1,381	1,530
Arkansas	17	15	1,607	1,416	3	4	321	354
Delaware	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
District of Columbia	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Florida	147	78	12,098	5,203	29	20	2,420	1,301
Georgia	45	32	5,152	2,844	9	8	1,030	711
Kentucky	54	51	6,294	10,614	11	13	1,259	2,654
Louisiana	21	16	1,936	1,189	4	4	387	297
Maryland ⁴	13	11	1,486	886	3	3	297	222
Mississippi	25	9	1,853	887	5	2	371	222
North Carolina	80	98	8,083	10,695	16	25	1,617	2,674
Oklahoma	6	(³)	1,206	(³)	1	(³)	241	(³)
South Carolina	28	35	2,724	4,144	6	9	545	1,036
Tennessee	25	16	2,314	1,590	5	4	463	398
Texas	58	40	6,259	3,333	12	10	1,252	833
Virginia	41	30	4,028	2,719	8	8	806	680
West Virginia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Midwest	505	373	62,114	46,431	101	93	12,423	11,608
Illinois	48	39	5,599	4,036	10	10	1,120	1,009
Indiana	31	23	5,700	2,307	6	6	1,140	577
Iowa	19	16	2,397	2,210	4	4	479	553
Kansas	12	14	1,372	1,596	2	4	274	399
Michigan	130	123	14,164	17,118	26	31	2,833	4,280
Minnesota	68	15	11,406	1,678	14	4	2,281	420
Missouri	36	27	4,068	2,433	7	7	814	608
Nebraska	8	(³)	1,026	(³)	2	(³)	205	(³)
North Dakota	3	(³)	583	(³)	1	(³)	117	(³)
Ohio	67	65	7,739	9,720	13	16	1,548	2,430
South Dakota	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wisconsin	83	44	8,060	4,488	17	11	1,612	1,122
West	684	380	57,708	28,760	137	95	11,542	7,190
Alaska	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Arizona	23	19	2,137	1,594	5	5	427	399
California	571	297	46,009	21,608	114	74	9,202	5,402
Colorado	8	10	704	765	2	3	141	191
Hawaii	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Idaho	9	(³)	1,220	(³)	2	(³)	244	(³)
Montana	4	-	306	-	1	-	61	-
Nevada	10	8	875	758	2	2	175	190
New Mexico	9	7	568	492	2	2	114	123
Oregon	27	21	3,435	2,118	5	5	687	530
Utah	4	4	529	332	1	1	106	83
Washington	15	8	1,537	711	3	2	307	178
Wyoming	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)
Puerto Rico	19	7	2,333	588	4	2	467	147

¹ See footnote 1, table 3.

² See footnote 2, table 3.

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

⁴ Data starting in June 2012 may not be comparable to prior data due to a change in MLS unemployment insurance procedures.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.