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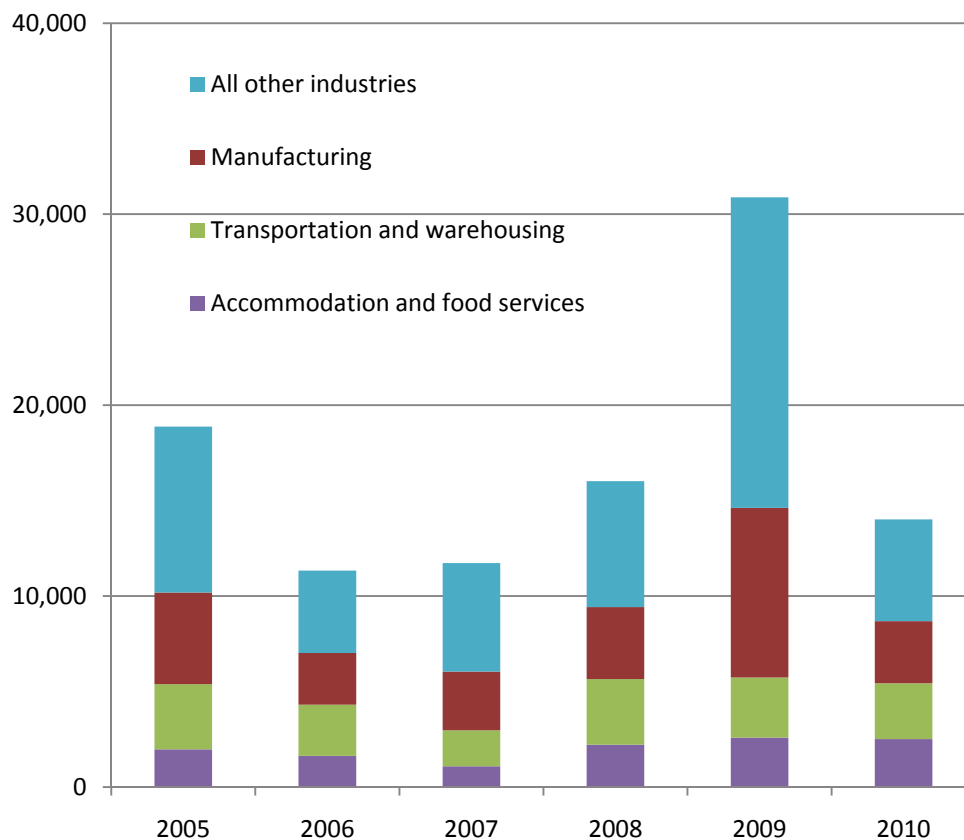
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MASS LAYOFFS IN MASSACHUSETTS – 2010 ANNUAL TOTALS

Employers in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts took 170 mass layoff actions in 2010 that resulted in the separation of 15,749 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 Denis M. McSweeney pointed out that the number of claims in the Commonwealth, which recorded a record high in 2009, dropped by 9,859, or 38.5 percent. This was the second largest decline in claims since 1996, when annual data first became available.

Chart 1. Mass layoff initial claims, Massachusetts, annual totals, 2005-10



Industry distribution

Of all the industry sectors in Massachusetts, manufacturing experienced the most mass layoff events (40) and initial claimants (3,247) in 2010. (See table 1.) The manufacturing sector accounted for one out of every five initial claimants in the Commonwealth. Transportation and warehousing had the second highest totals with 32 events and 2,924 associated initial claimants, followed by accommodation and food services with 18 events and 2,512 claims. Three other sectors—retail trade, administrative and waste services, and local government—had at least 1,000 initial claimants in 2010.

Manufacturing had the largest over-the-year decrease in mass layoff-related initial claims (-5,637) from 2009 to 2010. Two other industries reported at least 500 fewer claimants in 2010 than the previous year, retail trade (-980), and local government (-584). Of these three industries, only manufacturing experienced a reduction in initial claims which exceeded the increase in claims one year earlier. (See table A.) On a percentage basis, the largest over-the-year decline in 2010 occurred in manufacturing (-63.5 percent) while the largest increase was reported in health care and social assistance (48.3 percent). (See table 1.)

Table A. Industry sectors with at least 500 fewer mass layoff initial claims 2010, Massachusetts

Sector	Net change	
	2008-09	2009-10
Manufacturing	5,113	-5,637
Retail trade	1,475	-980
Local government	1,109	-584

Interestingly, while the number of government claims at the local (and state) level dropped from 2009 to 2010, there was a 20.8-percent rise in federal government claims. In fact, the 668 mass layoff-related claims in the federal sector in 2010 was due in part to the completion of work on the decennial census.

Three sectors in the Commonwealth recorded an increase in the number of initial claims for unemployment insurance—health care and social assistance, construction, and information. Although the number of claims in the information sector was little changed over the year, it was the highest recorded since 2003.

Among the states, California recorded the greatest number of initial claims during 2010, 419,809. New York ranked second at 125,909, followed by Pennsylvania (112,568) and Illinois (91,277). Massachusetts was among 48 states and the District of Columbia that experienced over-the-year declines in total initial claims for the year. The largest declines in claims occurred in California (-112,219) and Illinois (-102,218). The two states posting increases in annual claims, Mississippi and Wyoming had 1,294 and 101 additional claims, respectively.

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.

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.

This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (617) 565-2072, Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on mass layoff data, as well as other Bureau products, contact the New England Information Office at (617) 565-2327 from 8:30a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET.

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

Industry	Mass layoff events				Initial claimants for unemployment insurance			
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total 1	128	162	275	170	10,785	14,911	25,608	15,749
Total private	120	151	252	152	9,931	14,073	23,153	13,920
Total, private nonfarm	120	151	251	151	9,931	14,073	23,091	13,849
Construction	12	9	9	10	882	622	551	632
Construction of buildings	2	3	2	2	2	207	2	2
Heavy and civil engineering construction	5	2	3	4	382	2	199	253
Specialty trade contractors	5	4	4	5	362	272	221	315
Manufacturing	32	48	98	40	3,074	3,771	8,884	3,247
Food	2	3	6	11	2	203	519	759
Textile mills	3	4	4	-	651	406	328	-
Apparel	2	2	6	2	2	2	386	2
Paper	4	4	5	4	232	266	608	284
Chemicals	2	-	3	2	2	-	163	2
Plastics and rubber products	2	5	5	2	2	385	433	2
Nonmetallic mineral products	-	-	6	2	-	-	412	2
Primary metals	-	3	5	-	-	195	367	-
Fabricated metal products	5	3	7	4	455	267	610	545
Machinery	-	4	10	2	-	300	1,053	2
Computer and electronic products	3	7	27	2	257	414	2,636	2
Electrical equipment and appliance mfg.	2	2	3	-	2	2	205	-
Transportation equipment	2	-	2	4	2	-	2	317
Miscellaneous manufacturing 3	6	4	7	4	597	380	582	364
Wholesale trade	5	2	7	4	349	2	554	387
Merchant wholesalers, durable goods	3	2	3	2	225	2	237	2
Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods	2	-	3	2	2	-	211	2
Retail trade	10	17	27	16	689	1,241	2,716	1,736
Building material and garden supply stores	2	2	3	3	2	2	305	186
Food and beverage stores	2	3	4	6	2	194	338	860
General merchandise stores	4	6	11	6	318	452	929	628
Nonstore retailers	2	3	-	-	2	198	-	-
Transportation and warehousing	22	33	30	32	1,890	3,438	3,144	2,924
Transit and ground passenger transportation	21	29	26	28	1,772	3,124	2,784	2,627
Warehousing and storage	-	2	2	3	-	2	2	243
Information	3	5	6	6	195	403	443	449
Publishing industries, except internet	-	3	2	3	-	206	2	166
Telecommunications 3	2	2	3	3	2	2	231	283
Finance and insurance	6	7	12	2	416	649	1,184	2
Credit intermediation and related activities	3	5	5	2	201	533	530	2
Securities, commodity contracts, investments	2	2	4	-	2	2	402	-
Insurance carriers and related activities	2	-	3	2	2	-	252	2
Professional and technical services	2	2	11	2	2	2	715	2
Administrative and waste services 3	11	12	16	14	793	1,054	1,377	1,091
Educational services	-	-	6	2	-	-	478	2
Health care and social assistance	2	3	3	5	2	207	207	307
Hospitals	-	-	2	3	-	-	2	172
Accommodation and food services	11	12	22	18	1,083	2,219	2,589	2,512
Accommodations	2	4	8	5	2	368	668	366
Food services and drinking places	9	8	14	13	846	1,851	1,921	2,146
Government	8	11	23	18	854	838	2,455	1,829
Federal	4	4	6	4	616	316	553	668
State	2	-	4	2	115	-	271	114
Local	2	7	13	12	123	522	1,631	1,047

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

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

3 Data beginning in 2008 are not strictly comparable to prior years due to change in NAICS versions.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.