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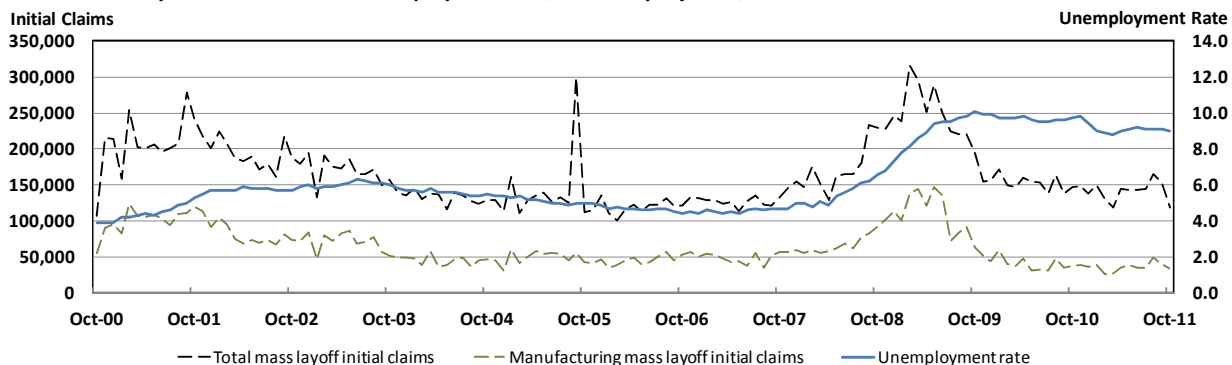
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MASS LAYOFFS — OCTOBER 2011

Employers took 1,353 mass layoff actions in October involving 118,689 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. The number of mass layoff events in October decreased by 142 from September, and the number of associated initial claims decreased by 34,540. In October, 345 mass layoff events were reported in the manufacturing sector, seasonally adjusted, resulting in 33,849 initial claims. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Mass layoff initial claims and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, October 2000-October 2011



The national unemployment rate was 9.0 percent in October, essentially unchanged from the prior month but down from 9.7 percent a year earlier. In October, total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 80,000 over the month and by 1,501,000 over the year.

Changes to Mass Layoffs News Release

Several changes to the Mass Layoffs news release are made effective with this release. See the box note on page 4 for a complete list of the changes.

Table A. Six-digit NAICS industries with the largest number of mass layoff initial claims in October 2011, private nonfarm, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Initial Claims	October peak	
		Year	Initial claims
Temporary help services ¹	9,393	1998	18,760
Professional employer organizations ¹	2,497	2008	7,242
Fruit and vegetable canning	2,393	2002	4,500
Food service contractors	1,944	2009	3,233
Discount department stores	1,859	2002	4,959
Motion picture and video production	1,742	1997	7,692
Supermarkets and other grocery stores	1,640	2003	13,682
AC, refrigeration, and forced air heating	1,450	2007	2,588
Hotels and motels, except casino hotels	1,279	2001	5,795
Household refrigerator and home freezer mfg.	1,200	2002	2,393

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

Industry Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

The number of mass layoff events in October was 1,101, not seasonally adjusted, resulting in 96,914 initial claims for unemployment insurance. (See table 2.) Over the year, the number of average weekly mass layoff events decreased by 53, and associated average weekly initial claims decreased by 5,499. Sixteen of the 19 major industry sectors in the private economy reported over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decreases occurring in construction and manufacturing. (See table 3.) The six-digit industry with the largest number of private nonfarm initial claims in October was temporary help services. (See table A.)

The manufacturing sector accounted for 24 percent of all mass layoff events and 29 percent of initial claims filed in October. A year earlier, manufacturing made up 21 percent of events and 27 percent of initial claims. Within this sector, the numbers of mass layoff claimants in October was greatest in the food, machinery, and transportation equipment subsectors. Twelve of the 21 manufacturing subsectors experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in transportation equipment. (See table 3.)

Geographic Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Among the census regions, the West registered the greatest numbers of initial claims in October. All four regions experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decline occurring in the West. (See table 4.)

Among the states, California recorded the highest number of mass layoff initial claims in October, followed by Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, and Illinois. Twenty-seven states experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly initial claims, led by California and Pennsylvania. (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 November is scheduled to be released on Thursday, December 22, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. (EST).

Changes to Mass Layoffs News Release

The following changes are effective in the October 2011 Mass Layoffs news release issued on Tuesday, November 22, 2011.

- Charts 1 and 2 were replaced with a single chart showing 11 years of mass layoff initial claims data.
- Table A was modified to display only private nonfarm industries.
- Seasonally adjusted data were removed from Table 3 since these data are available in Table 1. Select three-digit industries were added to the new table 3. Public education industry detail also was added to the state government and local government sections. The previous 2 months' data were removed, keeping only the current month's and the previous year's data.
- Table 4 was removed from the monthly release; it will be issued on the BLS Web site as a supplemental table to the quarterly Extended Mass Layoffs news release. Tables 5 and 6 were combined to create a new Table 4. The geographic divisions previously shown in Table 5 were removed, and the states were grouped into their respective Census regions. The previous 2 months' data were removed, keeping only the current months' and the previous year's data.
- Average weekly mass layoff events and average weekly initial claims were added to the new Tables 3 and 4 to mitigate the calendar effect and to show the data previously reported only in the text.

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.

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.

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, November 2007 to October 2011, seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2007						
November	1,397	145,339	1,269	135,651	408	56,985
December	1,553	154,275	1,435	144,785	463	59,445
2008						
January	1,437	146,900	1,302	135,622	431	55,562
February	1,604	175,128	1,441	163,475	471	59,118
March	1,500	150,502	1,388	140,424	435	56,156
April	1,292	128,901	1,162	118,016	449	58,402
May	1,582	161,944	1,444	152,230	468	62,452
June	1,631	164,508	1,488	153,014	491	68,198
July	1,581	164,497	1,443	153,720	463	62,425
August	1,791	181,107	1,653	171,705	583	77,874
September	2,192	233,034	2,024	219,532	635	82,471
October	2,221	229,254	2,062	215,787	697	92,408
November	2,415	228,107	2,256	214,631	900	102,284
December	2,443	245,661	2,264	231,138	927	114,280
2009						
January	2,272	238,717	2,103	224,850	756	100,927
February	2,801	315,507	2,636	300,042	1,194	138,583
March	2,950	295,543	2,758	279,027	1,205	144,713
April	2,579	251,032	2,368	234,796	997	121,435
May	2,758	288,319	2,557	271,425	1,187	147,548
June	2,506	250,275	2,293	232,814	1,048	135,389
July	2,192	223,697	1,977	203,365	620	72,932
August	2,419	220,262	2,177	201,951	778	83,837
September	2,305	219,924	2,095	204,596	799	91,665
October	1,975	195,347	1,780	177,977	570	63,646
November	1,754	154,223	1,585	141,439	464	51,891
December	1,725	156,274	1,545	141,649	420	43,584
2010						
January	1,716	171,633	1,541	157,597	494	60,059
February	1,492	149,369	1,318	135,490	351	40,564
March	1,635	146,901	1,436	131,953	347	37,273
April	1,675	159,358	1,498	143,814	371	48,646
May	1,665	155,352	1,405	133,913	314	30,967
June	1,729	153,937	1,504	134,837	326	32,646
July	1,528	138,581	1,316	121,378	296	30,752
August	1,658	163,325	1,453	141,489	409	47,668
September	1,541	137,941	1,331	119,654	336	34,641
October	1,649	147,204	1,445	130,264	353	37,394
November	1,579	148,800	1,397	133,845	350	39,072
December	1,483	137,992	1,272	122,688	319	35,977
2011						
January	1,534	149,799	1,344	132,730	341	39,189
February	1,421	130,818	1,220	116,190	291	26,060
March	1,286	118,523	1,128	105,636	253	27,619
April	1,564	143,927	1,401	129,702	327	35,022
May	1,599	143,540	1,405	127,494	373	38,673
June	1,532	143,444	1,348	128,105	341	35,693
July	1,579	145,000	1,363	124,745	342	35,460
August	1,587	165,547	1,373	150,136	391	48,997
September	1,495	153,229	1,347	139,151	376	39,929
October	1,353	118,689	1,221	107,101	345	33,849

Table 2. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, November 2007 to October 2011, not seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2007						
November	1,799	198,220	1,593	181,184	514	75,413
December	2,167	224,214	2,071	216,898	699	91,754
2008						
January	1,647	154,503	1,520	144,191	488	54,418
February	1,269	119,508	1,178	113,587	361	42,527
March	1,089	114,541	1,039	110,147	333	43,740
April	1,272	130,810	1,172	121,625	394	48,188
May	1,552	159,471	1,438	150,462	388	51,698
June	1,622	166,742	1,315	140,916	309	42,097
July	1,891	200,382	1,687	186,018	760	108,733
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

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	
	October 2010	October 2011	October 2010	October 2011	October 2010	October 2011	October 2010	October 2011
Total ²	1,642	1,101	148,638	96,914	328	275	29,728	24,229
Total, private	1,493	1,015	136,178	88,044	299	254	27,236	22,011
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	120	65	8,313	4,296	24	16	1,663	1,074
Total, private nonfarm	1,373	950	127,865	83,748	275	238	25,573	20,937
Mining	6	(³)	390	(³)	1	(³)	78	(³)
Utilities	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Construction	175	89	13,500	6,391	35	22	2,700	1,598
Construction of buildings	39	18	3,103	1,352	8	5	621	338
Heavy and civil engineering construction	60	29	5,276	2,204	12	7	1,055	551
Specialty trade contractors	76	42	5,121	2,835	15	11	1,024	709
Manufacturing	351	265	40,861	28,447	70	66	8,172	7,112
Food	80	58	8,639	6,596	16	15	1,728	1,649
Beverage and tobacco products	15	5	1,166	445	3	1	233	111
Textile mills	7	15	1,019	1,242	1	4	204	311
Textile product mills	4	(³)	271	(³)	1	(³)	54	(³)
Apparel	10	6	1,399	513	2	2	280	128
Leather and allied products	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Wood products	26	15	2,570	1,276	5	4	514	319
Paper	4	3	334	278	1	1	67	70
Printing and related support activities	6	11	435	1,055	1	3	87	264
Petroleum and coal products	(³)	5	(³)	360	(³)	1	(³)	90
Chemicals	8	5	723	274	2	1	145	69
Plastics and rubber products	9	9	656	771	2	2	131	193
Nonmetallic mineral products	15	9	1,460	791	3	2	292	198
Primary metals	16	11	1,358	1,021	3	3	272	255
Fabricated metal products	20	17	1,667	2,066	4	4	333	517
Machinery	26	22	4,968	3,617	5	6	994	904
Computer and electronic products	13	15	851	1,422	3	4	170	356
Electrical equipment and appliances	15	6	1,935	1,377	3	2	387	344
Transportation equipment	50	28	8,581	3,478	10	7	1,716	870
Furniture and related products	17	11	1,929	825	3	3	386	206
Miscellaneous manufacturing	6	10	596	700	1	3	119	175
Wholesale trade	30	21	2,079	1,489	6	5	416	372
Retail trade ⁴	126	99	13,260	9,240	25	25	2,652	2,310
Building material and garden supply stores	13	11	1,300	1,008	3	3	260	252
Food and beverage stores	23	19	2,039	1,705	5	5	408	426
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	13	7	803	378	3	2	161	95
General merchandise stores	38	36	6,189	4,380	8	9	1,238	1,095
Transportation and warehousing ⁴	45	29	3,948	2,345	9	7	790	586
Truck transportation	7	(³)	462	(³)	1	(³)	92	(³)
Transit and ground passenger transportation	14	12	1,203	1,185	3	3	241	296
Support activities for transportation	8	(³)	635	(³)	2	(³)	127	(³)
Information	52	23	5,640	2,452	10	6	1,128	613
Finance and insurance	31	25	2,342	1,973	6	6	468	493
Real estate and rental and leasing	9	7	455	544	2	2	91	136
Professional and technical services	43	34	3,447	2,469	9	9	689	617
Management of companies and enterprises	3	(³)	265	(³)	1	(³)	53	(³)
Administrative and waste services	275	199	23,531	16,173	55	50	4,706	4,043
Educational services	11	8	657	518	2	2	131	130
Health care and social assistance	54	41	4,056	2,728	11	10	811	682
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	31	28	2,674	2,053	6	7	535	513
Accommodation and food services	118	72	10,024	5,986	24	18	2,005	1,497
Accommodation	42	21	3,658	1,624	8	5	732	406
Food services and drinking places	76	51	6,366	4,362	15	13	1,273	1,091
Other services, except public administration	10	5	506	492	2	1	101	123
Unclassified	(³)	1	(³)	113	(³)	-	(³)	28
Government	149	86	12,460	8,870	30	22	2,492	2,218
Federal	41	23	4,336	2,198	8	6	867	550
State	32	23	2,967	2,566	6	6	593	642
State government education	8	5	492	361	2	1	98	90
Local	76	40	5,157	4,106	15	10	1,031	1,027
Local government education	34	13	1,932	974	7	3	386	244

¹ Average weekly analysis mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. There were 5 weeks in October 2010 and 4 weeks in October 2011. 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	
	October 2010	October 2011	October 2010	October 2011	October 2010	October 2011	October 2010	October 2011
Total ²	1,642	1,101	148,638	96,914	328	275	29,728	24,229
Northeast	246	164	20,922	14,814	49	41	4,184	3,704
Connecticut	7	8	523	640	1	2	105	160
Maine	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)
Massachusetts	11	9	858	987	2	2	172	247
New Hampshire	3	(³)	302	(³)	1	(³)	60	(³)
New Jersey	31	23	2,517	1,744	6	6	503	436
New York	61	49	5,443	5,484	12	12	1,089	1,371
Pennsylvania	129	70	11,022	5,637	26	18	2,204	1,409
Rhode Island	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Vermont	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
South	368	284	35,853	25,223	74	71	7,171	6,306
Alabama	20	7	2,244	967	4	2	449	242
Arkansas	7	18	790	2,520	1	5	158	630
Delaware	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
District of Columbia	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Florida	105	91	9,277	6,576	21	23	1,855	1,644
Georgia	32	24	2,969	1,886	6	6	594	472
Kentucky	20	20	2,828	1,841	4	5	566	460
Louisiana	19	8	1,554	525	4	2	311	131
Maryland	9	3	796	163	2	1	159	41
Mississippi	15	9	1,017	668	3	2	203	167
North Carolina ⁴	21	27	1,697	2,195	4	7	339	549
Oklahoma	7	7	484	574	1	2	97	144
South Carolina	21	10	3,479	1,329	4	3	696	332
Tennessee	15	4	1,006	292	3	1	201	73
Texas	52	39	4,739	3,454	10	10	948	864
Virginia	19	13	2,444	1,830	4	3	489	458
West Virginia	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)
Midwest	316	215	34,290	22,090	63	54	6,858	5,523
Illinois	60	48	7,281	4,971	12	12	1,456	1,243
Indiana	26	13	4,349	1,843	5	3	870	461
Iowa	14	10	1,397	1,115	3	3	279	279
Kansas	6	(³)	737	(³)	1	(³)	147	(³)
Michigan	34	32	3,010	3,151	7	8	602	788
Minnesota	26	12	3,056	1,132	5	3	611	283
Missouri	37	22	2,866	2,503	7	6	573	626
Nebraska	6	8	560	811	1	2	112	203
North Dakota	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)
Ohio	45	29	4,734	2,616	9	7	947	654
South Dakota	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wisconsin	62	38	6,300	3,577	12	10	1,260	894
West	712	438	57,573	34,787	142	110	11,515	8,697
Alaska	5	8	430	970	1	2	86	243
Arizona	24	17	2,392	1,527	5	4	478	382
California	559	322	42,458	24,007	112	81	8,492	6,002
Colorado	17	10	1,675	873	3	3	335	218
Hawaii	5	5	401	340	1	1	80	85
Idaho	5	9	362	613	1	2	72	153
Montana	9	7	831	730	2	2	166	183
Nevada	26	4	2,396	279	5	1	479	70
New Mexico	7	11	545	705	1	3	109	176
Oregon	22	21	2,540	2,354	4	5	508	589
Utah	7	(³)	758	(³)	1	(³)	152	(³)
Washington	22	20	2,181	1,774	4	5	436	444
Wyoming	4	(³)	604	(³)	1	(³)	121	(³)
Puerto Rico	22	9	2,191	1,058	4	2	438	265

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 November 2010 may not be comparable to prior

data due to a change in MLS unemployment insurance input procedures.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.