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INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

LABOR MARKET REVIEW



February 2026 Labor Market Review

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Economic Growth Region 1

Statistical Data Report for February 2026, Released April 2026

State Employment and Unemployment

Unemployment rates were higher in February in 1 state and stable in 49 states and the District of Columbia, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Thirteen states and the District had jobless rate increases from a year earlier, 2 states had decreases, and 35 states had little change. The national unemployment rate, 4.4 percent, changed little over the month but was 0.2 percentage point higher than in February 2025. In February 2026, nonfarm payroll employment decreased in 2 states, increased in 1 state, and was essentially unchanged in 47 states and the District of Columbia. Over the year, nonfarm payroll employment decreased in 2 states and the District, increased in 2 states, and was essentially unchanged in 46 states.



Economic Growth Region (EGR) 1

Jasper, Lake, LaPorte, Newton, Porter, Pulaski and Starke Counties

February 2026 Labor Force Estimates (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Feb-26	Jan-26	Feb-25
U.S.	170,206,000	162,153,000	8,052,000	4.7%	4.7%	4.5%
IN	3,461,067	3,330,356	130,711	3.8%	3.3%	4.3%
Lake-Porter-Jasper Div	352,420	334,890	17,530	5.0%	4.4%	5.8%
MichCity-LaPorte MSA	51,614	49,288	2,326	4.5%	3.9%	5.1%
EGR 1	421,486	400,884	20,602	4.9%	4.3%	5.7%
Lake Co.	240,759	227,935	12,824	5.3%	4.7%	6.2%
Porter Co.	88,271	84,607	3,664	4.2%	3.6%	4.9%
LaPorte Co.	51,614	49,288	2,326	4.5%	3.9%	5.1%
Newton Co.	6,752	6,439	313	4.6%	4.2%	5.5%
Jasper Co.	16,638	15,909	729	4.4%	4.0%	5.2%
Starke Co.	9,428	8,934	494	5.2%	4.8%	6.2%
Pulaski Co.	8,024	7,772	252	3.1%	2.8%	4.1%
East Chicago	10,971	10,289	682	6.2%	5.7%	7.8%
Hammond	36,105	34,148	1,957	5.4%	4.9%	6.5%
Munster	11,847	11,392	455	3.8%	3.3%	4.7%
Dyer	8,413	8,048	365	4.3%	3.8%	4.4%
Schererville	15,769	15,124	645	4.1%	3.6%	5.0%
Crown Point	16,819	15,959	860	5.1%	4.3%	5.4%
Griffith	9,205	8,833	372	4.0%	4.1%	5.9%
Highland	12,240	11,640	600	4.9%	4.0%	5.3%
Gary	24,238	22,116	2,122	8.8%	7.8%	9.3%
Merrillville	18,270	17,235	1,035	5.7%	5.2%	6.7%
Hobart	15,280	14,467	813	5.3%	4.7%	6.3%
Lake Station	5,561	5,120	441	7.9%	6.9%	10.1%
Portage	18,915	17,997	918	4.9%	4.3%	5.8%
Chesterton	7,380	7,103	277	3.8%	3.7%	4.8%
Valparaiso	17,706	17,080	626	3.5%	2.9%	4.1%
Michigan City	13,488	12,860	628	4.7%	4.4%	5.5%
LaPorte	11,113	10,613	500	4.5%	3.6%	4.7%

Unemployment Rates by State (seasonally adjusted): February 2026

U.S. - 4.4%

Illinois - 5%

Indiana - 3.3%

Kentucky - 4.2%

Michigan - 5%

Ohio - 4.2%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment Rank by County (of 92 counties): February 2026

#2 - Lake (5.3%)

#4 - Starke (5.2%)

#7 - Newton (4.6%)

#8 - LaPorte (4.5%)

#12 - Jasper (4.4%)

#19 - Porter (4.2%)

#84 - Pulaski (3.1%)

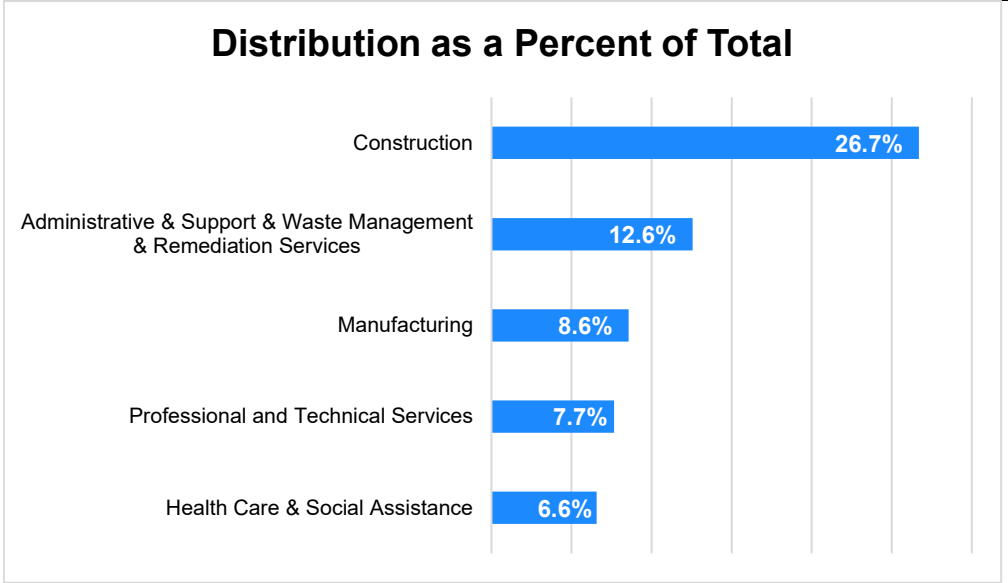
Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research and Development, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research & Analysis, Local Area Unemployment Statistics | Unemployment Statistics Released:04/26 | Notes: The data displayed are presented as estimates only. The most recent month's data are always preliminary and are revised when the next month's data are released. Gary Division has been renamed to Lake-Porter-Jasper Counties Division but still includes Newton County. Michigan City-LaPorte MSA: Laporte County

Statewide Average Weekly Hours & Earnings by Industry for February 2026			
Industry	Avg. Earnings per hr	Avg. # of hours worked per week	Avg. Earnings per week
Construction	\$39.37	38.9	\$1,531.49
Manufacturing	\$25.78	43.7	\$1,126.59
Durable Goods	\$26.31	45.0	\$1,183.95
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	\$25.41	39.5	\$1,003.70
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	\$27.95	38.4	\$1,073.28
Non-Durable Goods	\$24.44	40.6	\$992.26
Retail Trade	\$20.27	29.9	\$606.07
Financial Activities	\$28.82	38.3	\$1,103.81
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$30.81	32.8	\$1,010.57
Accommodation and Food Services	\$17.39	23.4	\$406.93

Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Current Employment Statistics

Percentage of Unemployment Claims for Top 5 Region 1 Industries February 2026



Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research and Analysis

WARN Notices

WARN Notices for Region 1 for February 2026				
Company	City	County	# affected	Notice Date

There are no WARN Notices for February 2026 for Region 1.

Significant WARN Notices for nearby locations				
Company	City	County	# Affected	Notice Date
Six (6) companies in Cook County, IL	Various Cities	Cook, IL	2,308	2/2/26-2/20/26

Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, WARN Notices | For information on WARN Act requirements, you may go to the U.S. Department of Labor Employment Training Administration Fact Sheet: <https://www.doleta.gov/programs/factsht/warn.htm>

Unemployment Claims: February 2026

Region 1

Initial Claims

- 02/07/26 - 608(D)
- 02/14/26 - 404(D)
- 02/21/26 - 337(D)
- 02/28/26 - 371(D)

Continued Claims

- 02/07/26 - 3,696
- 02/14/26 - 3,448
- 02/21/26 - 3,410
- 02/28/26 - 3,274

Total Claims

- 02/07/26 - 4,304
- 02/14/26 - 3,852
- 02/21/26 - 3,747
- 02/28/26 - 3,645

State of Indiana

Initial Claims

- 02/07/26 - 4,025
- 02/14/26 - 2,941
- 02/21/26 - 2,469
- 02/28/26 - 2,514

Continued Claims

- 02/07/26 - 26,734
- 02/14/26 - 25,628
- 02/21/26 - 25,117
- 02/28/26 - 24,518

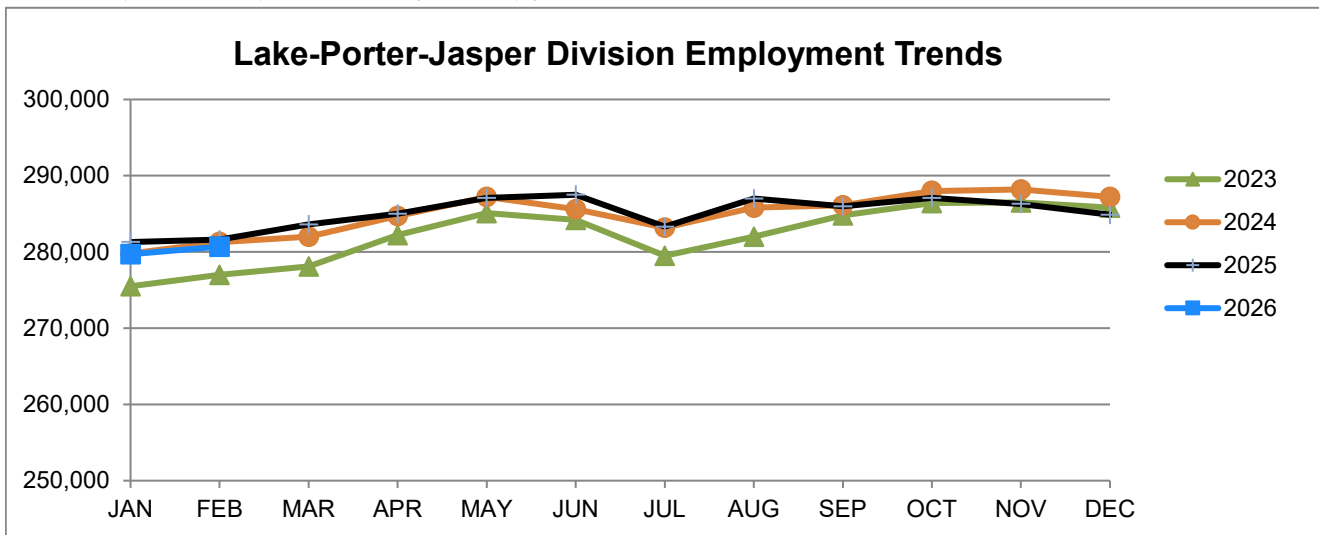
Total Claims

- 02/07/26 - 30,759
- 02/14/26 - 28,569
- 02/21/26 - 27,586
- 02/28/26 - 27,032

Notes: (D) Indicates one or more counties are excluded due to non-disclosure issues | Numbers subject to weekly revision | Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research and Analysis

Lake-Porter-Jasper Division							
Wage and Salaried Employment	February 2026			# Change	% Change	# Change	% Change
Industry	Feb-26	Jan-26	Feb-25	Jan-26 to Feb-26	Feb-25 to Feb-26		
Total Nonfarm	280,700	279,700	281,600	1,000	0.4%	-900	-0.3%
Total Private	247,900	247,500	248,900	400	0.2%	-1,000	-0.4%
Goods Producing	51,200	51,500	51,600	-300	-0.6%	-400	-0.8%
Service Providing	229,500	228,200	230,000	1,300	0.6%	-500	-0.2%
Private Service Providing	196,700	196,000	197,300	700	0.4%	-600	-0.3%
Mining and Logging	100	100	100	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mining, Logging and Construction	17,300	17,700	17,300	-400	-2.3%	0	0.0%
Construction	17,200	17,600	17,200	-400	-2.3%	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	33,900	33,800	34,300	100	0.3%	-400	-1.2%
Durable Goods	24,900	24,800	24,800	100	0.4%	100	0.4%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	59,400	60,000	60,100	-600	-1.0%	-700	-1.2%
Wholesale Trade	10,700	10,700	10,700	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	31,000	31,200	31,500	-200	-0.6%	-500	-1.6%
General Merchandise Stores	7,100	7,200	7,100	-100	-1.4%	0	0.0%
Other Gen Merch Stores	5,200	5,200	5,200	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	17,700	18,100	17,900	-400	-2.2%	-200	-1.1%
Information	1,700	1,700	1,900	0	0.0%	-200	-10.5%
Financial Activities	9,500	9,500	9,500	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	28,300	28,100	28,200	200	0.7%	100	0.4%
Employment Services	3,000	3,000	3,100	0	0.0%	-100	-3.2%
Education and Health Services	52,400	52,000	52,200	400	0.8%	200	0.4%
Educational Services	6,200	5,900	6,100	300	5.1%	100	1.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	46,200	46,100	46,100	100	0.2%	100	0.2%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	13,500	13,500	13,400	0	0.0%	100	0.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	30,900	30,400	31,400	500	1.6%	-500	-1.6%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3,400	3,300	3,500	100	3.0%	-100	-2.9%
Food Services and Drinking Places	27,500	27,100	27,900	400	1.5%	-400	-1.4%
Other Services	14,500	14,300	14,000	200	1.4%	500	3.6%
Total Government	32,800	32,200	32,700	600	1.9%	100	0.3%
Federal Government	1,900	1,900	2,000	0	0.0%	-100	-5.0%
State Government	4,100	3,900	4,200	200	5.1%	-100	-2.4%
Local Government	26,800	26,400	26,500	400	1.5%	300	1.1%
Local Government Educational Services	15,700	15,300	15,400	400	2.6%	300	2.0%

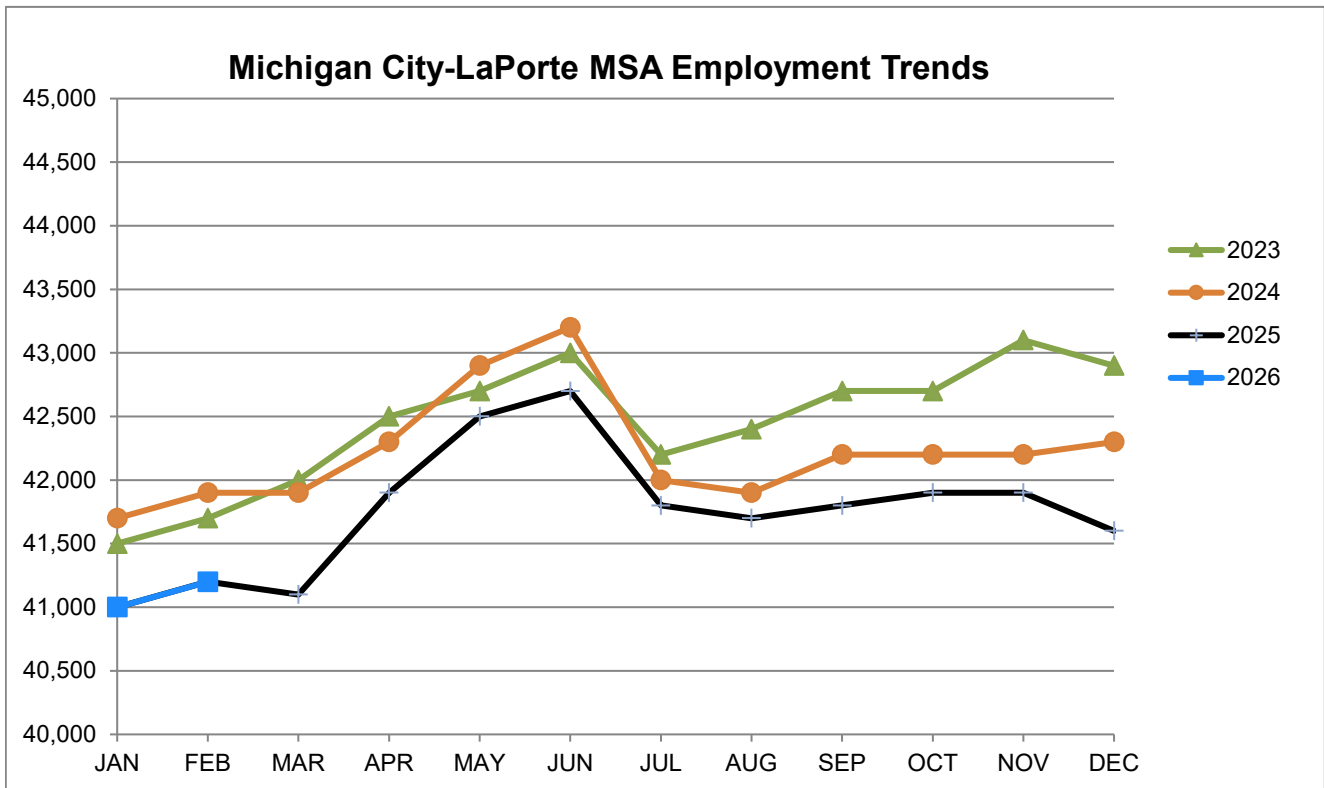
Source: Indiana Dept of Workforce Development, Research and Analysis, Current Employment Statistics



Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research & Analysis, Current Employment Statistics | Note: Historical data for the most recent 4 years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates for statewide data.

Michigan City-LaPorte MSA							
Wage and Salaried Employment	February 2026			# Change	% Change	# Change	% Change
Industry	Feb-26	Jan-26	Feb-25	Jan-26 to Feb-26	Feb-25 to Feb-26	Jan-26 to Feb-26	Feb-25 to Feb-26
Total Nonfarm	41,200	41,000	41,200	200	0.5%	0	0.0%
Total Private	35,100	34,900	34,800	200	0.6%	300	0.9%
Goods Producing	10,400	10,300	10,300	100	1.0%	100	1.0%
Service Providing	30,800	30,700	30,900	100	0.3%	-100	-0.3%
Private Service Providing	24,700	24,600	24,500	100	0.4%	200	0.8%
Mining, Logging and Construction	2,200	2,200	2,000	0	0.0%	200	10.0%
Manufacturing	8,200	8,100	8,300	100	1.2%	-100	-1.2%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	8,400	8,400	8,400	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wholesale Trade	1,600	1,600	1,700	0	0.0%	-100	-5.9%
Retail Trade	5,000	5,000	4,900	0	0.0%	100	2.0%
Information	200	200	200	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Financial Activities	1,300	1,300	1,300	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	2,500	2,500	2,600	0	0.0%	-100	-3.9%
Education and Health Services	5,900	5,800	5,900	100	1.7%	0	0.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	4,800	4,800	4,600	0	0.0%	200	4.4%
Other Services	1,600	1,600	1,500	0	0.0%	100	6.7%
Total Government	6,100	6,100	6,400	0	0.0%	-300	-4.7%
Federal Government	200	200	200	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
State Government	1,800	1,800	2,000	0	0.0%	-200	-10.0%
Local Government	4,100	4,100	4,200	0	0.0%	-100	-2.4%
Local Government Educational Services	2,200	2,200	2,400	0	0.0%	-200	-8.3%

Source: Indiana Dept of Workforce Development, Research and Analysis, Current Employment Statistics



Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research & Analysis, Current Employment Statistics | Note: Historical data for the most recent 4 years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates for statewide data.

Frequently Listed Jobs	
Top 20 job listings by number of openings in Region 1 in the past month	
Rank	Occupations
1	Registered Nurses
2	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
3	Retail Salespersons
4	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
5	Home Health and Personal Care Aides
6	Physicians, All Other
7	Food Service Managers
8	Customer Service Representatives
9	Fast Food and Counter Workers
10	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General
11	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
12	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other
13	Food Preparation Workers
14	Physical Therapists
15	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
16	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
17	Cashiers
18	Family Medicine Physicians
19	Nursing Assistants
20	Medical and Health Services Managers

Source: Lightcast

Applicant Pool	
Top 20 occupations desired by applicants on their resumes in the past 12 months	
Occupations	# of applicants
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	483
Production Workers, All Other	399
Helpers--Production Workers	389
Customer Service Representatives	330
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	293
Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other	251
Cashiers	240
Construction Laborers	198
Office Clerks, General	195
Medical Assistants	163
Retail Salespersons	138
Receptionists and Information Clerks	131
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	130
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	128
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	127
Carpenters	121
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	116
Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other	114
Managers, All Other	108
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	104

Source: Indiana Workforce Development, Indiana Career Connect

Consumer Price Index (CPI-U Change), Unadjusted Percent Change to February 2026 from						
CPI Item	Feb-25	Jan-26	Feb-25	Jan-26	Feb-25	Jan-26
	Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IN-IL-WI		U.S. City		Midwest Region*	
All Items	2.0%	0.7%	2.4%	0.5%	2.8%	0.6%
Food & Beverages	3.0%	1.0%	3.0%	0.4%	3.0%	0.9%
Housing	4.1%	0.8%	3.3%	0.3%	4.6%	0.7%
Apparel	4.9%	3.3%	2.5%	4.2%	3.0%	4.2%
Transportation	-3.3%	0.8%	-0.5%	0.8%	-1.6%	0.5%
Medical Care	0.7%	-0.5%	3.4%	0.4%	3.7%	0.5%
Recreation	3.3%	1.5%	2.3%	0.2%	4.1%	0.4%
Education & Communication	-4.4%	-0.5%	0.1%	-0.2%	0.0%	-0.8%
Other Goods & Services	3.7%	0.7%	5.1%	0.1%	2.4%	0.1%

*Midwest region = Midwest Urban Average. Midwest Region includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin | Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

SNAPSHOT

February Indiana Employment

Released April 22, 2026



Unemployment Rate

*seasonally adjusted

Unemployment Rate

3.3%

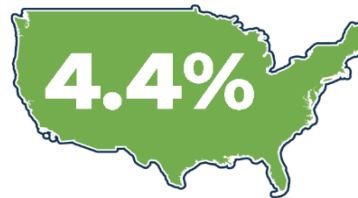


January 2026 Indiana

3.4%



National Unemployment Rate



LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE*

16+: 63.4%

25-44: 84.3%

25-54: 83.9%



National Labor Force



Open Job Postings

85,672

Jobs

As of February 28, 2026



Weekly UI Continued Claims

24,518

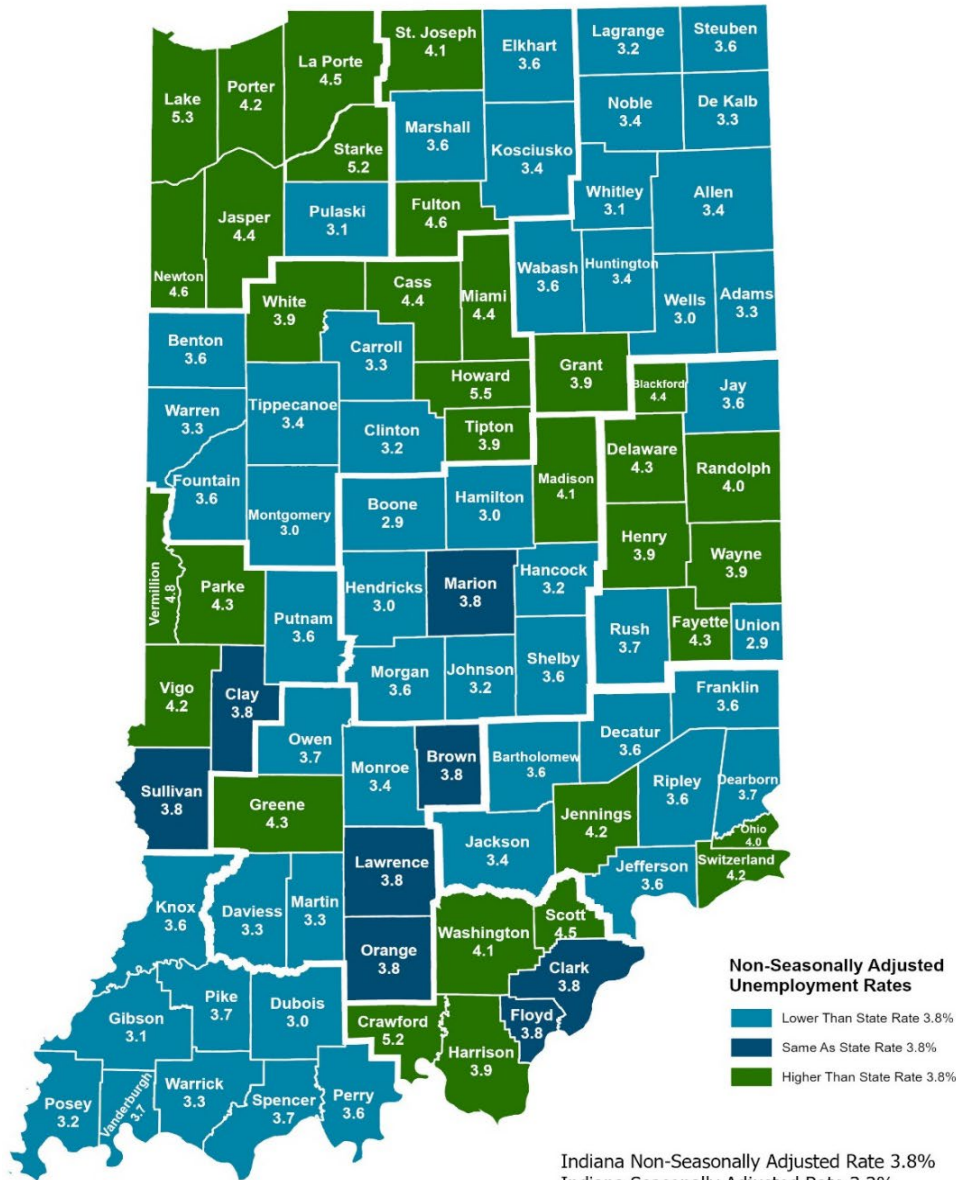


Filed Week Ending March 7, 2026

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Indiana Career Connect

*The percentage of Hoosiers 16 and older who are either working or actively looking for work. Those not in the labor force include primarily students, retirees and other non-working populations, such as individuals unable to work due to a disability or illness, or adults responsible for their family's childcare needs.

County Unemployment Rates February 2026



Non-Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

- Lower Than State Rate 3.8%
- Same As State Rate 3.8%
- Higher Than State Rate 3.8%

Indiana Non-Seasonally Adjusted Rate 3.8%
 Indiana Seasonally Adjusted Rate 3.3%
 Source: DWD, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Questions?

Please contact the DWD Regional Labor Analyst listed below:

Kathy Jaworski

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