

State Unemployment Rates
Prepared by the Joint Economic Committee, December 2008
Next Update: March 11, 2009 (January Employment Report)

Recent employment reports have underscored how seriously the U.S. economy has been affected by the now year-old recession. Since December of last year, the economy has shed 2.8 million private sector jobs and the national unemployment rate spiked to 7.2 percent. Many states have particularly distressed levels of unemployment: the unemployment rate is at or above 10.0 percent in Rhode Island and Michigan, and greater than or equal to 8.0 percent in South Carolina, California, Nevada, Oregon, North Carolina, Indiana, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, and the District of Columbia. Since December 2007, the unemployment rate has risen in every state and the District of Columbia and by as much as 4.8 points, in the case of Rhode Island.

State	Unemployment Rate			
	December 2008	State Rank	December 2007	12-Month Change
Alabama	6.7	24	3.7	3.0
Alaska	7.5	35	6.3	1.2
Arizona	6.9	26	4.2	2.7
Arkansas	6.2	19	5.5	0.7
California	9.3	48	5.9	3.4
Colorado	6.1	18	4.0	2.1
Connecticut	7.1	31	4.8	2.3
Delaware	6.2	19	3.5	2.7
District of Columbia	8.8	45	5.7	3.1
Florida	8.1	41	4.5	3.6
Georgia	8.1	41	4.5	3.6
Hawaii	5.5	14	3.1	2.4
Idaho	6.4	22	2.7	3.7
Illinois	7.6	36	5.3	2.3
Indiana	8.2	43	4.5	3.7
Iowa	4.6	6	3.8	0.8
Kansas	5.2	11	4.2	1.0
Kentucky	7.8	37	5.3	2.5
Louisiana	5.9	16	4.0	1.9
Maine	7.0	29	4.9	2.1
Maryland	5.8	15	3.6	2.2
Massachusetts	6.9	26	4.3	2.6
Michigan	10.6	51	7.4	3.2
Minnesota	6.9	26	4.7	2.2

State	Unemployment Rate			
	December 2008	State Rank	December 2007	12-Month Change
Mississippi	8.0	40	6.3	1.7
Missouri	7.3	34	5.3	2.0
Montana	5.4	12	3.2	2.2
Nebraska	4.0	4	2.8	1.2
Nevada	9.1	47	5.2	3.9
New Hampshire	4.6	6	3.4	1.2
New Jersey	7.1	31	4.2	2.9
New Mexico	4.9	8	3.2	1.7
New York	7.0	29	4.6	2.4
North Carolina	8.7	44	4.7	4.0
North Dakota	3.5	2	3.2	0.3
Ohio	7.8	37	5.8	2.0
Oklahoma	4.9	8	4.1	0.8
Oregon	9.0	46	5.4	3.6
Pennsylvania	6.7	24	4.4	2.3
Rhode Island	10.0	50	5.2	4.8
South Carolina	9.5	49	6.2	3.3
South Dakota	3.9	3	2.9	1.0
Tennessee	7.9	39	5.0	2.9
Texas	6.0	17	4.2	1.8
Utah	4.3	5	2.9	1.4
Vermont	6.4	22	3.9	2.5
Virginia	5.4	12	3.2	2.2
Washington	7.1	31	4.6	2.5
West Virginia	4.9	8	4.6	0.3
Wisconsin	6.2	19	4.8	1.4
Wyoming	3.4	1	3.1	0.3
United States	7.2		4.9	2.3

Source: Joint Economic Committee analysis of the Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program data.