

## Benchmark Revisions -2009

Total nonfarm establishment employment estimates are based on a monthly survey of 1,500 employers and calculated through methodology prescribed by the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Once a year, the sample-based employment estimates are revised based on employment counts reported on the quarterly Unemployment Insurance tax records filed by all employers. Labor force statistics are also benchmarked each year to reflect the revised job counts, as well as new population estimates and updated claims data. These processes are referred to as "Benchmarking."

As a result of the annual benchmark process, the seasonally adjusted December 2009 employment estimate (latest month for which both a pre and post benchmark estimate is available) is being revised down from 453,800 to 451,900 (-1,900). When compared to the December 2008 employment count of 472,500 (revised up 1,300 from 471,200), December jobs were down 20,600, earlier estimates showed an annual (December 2008 to December 2009) decline of 17,400. From the January 2007 employment peak (496,500) to December 2009, the state has lost 44,600 (-9.0%) jobs, just 400 less than the 45,000 (-9.7%) job-loss experienced during the 1990-1991 recession.

The sectors which experienced the largest downward revisions in December 2009 as a result of the benchmarking process include Financial Activities (-1,900), Manufacturing (-1,600), Construction (-700), and Professional & Management Services (-600). Smaller downward revisions were made to employment estimates in Accommodation & Food Services (-400), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-300), Transportation & Utilities (-200) and Wholesale Trade (-200). Each of these sectors had fewer workers in December than originally estimated.

Offsetting the downward revisions were positive revisions in Educational Services (+1,100), Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,100), Administrative & Waste Services (+700), Government (+400), Retail Trade (+400) and Other Services (+300). These sectors ended the year with more workers than the original estimates indicated.

The largest revisions were made to the July and August employment estimates as the effects of the state's weak economic conditions hampered seasonal hiring more than anticipated. Estimates for the two months were revised down by 6,900 (-1.5%) and 5,300 (-1.1%) jobs, respectively. All other monthly revisions were within one percent of the original employment estimate.

Benchmarked unemployment rates show that the highest unemployment rate in 2009 was 12.7 percent in December, never reaching the 13.0 percent originally estimated for September 2009. Unemployment rates are seasonally adjusted to smooth out the monthly volatility, thereby better reflecting the overall trend in the state.

All benchmark data are available on the LMI web site and include:

- [Unadjusted establishment employment data for 2008 and 2009](#)
- [Seasonally adjusted establishment employment data for 1990 to 2009](#)
- [Unadjusted labor force statistics for 2005 to 2009](#)
- [Seasonally adjusted labor force statistics for 1976 to 2009](#)