

Wyoming Unemployment Unchanged at 3.7% in February 2020

Note: COVID-19 has undoubtedly affected Wyoming's economy with numerous layoffs around the state. However, it will likely be some time before its effect will be seen in the economic data. The state unemployment rate is based on responses to the Current Population Survey (CPS), not claims for unemployment insurance. Additionally, the reference period for the CPS is the week of the 12th, so it is unclear how much of the disruption to the economy will be captured in the forthcoming March unemployment rate estimates. Readers should be aware that this report reflects economic conditions in the state as of mid-February, which likely differ significantly from current economic conditions on the day of this release (March 31).

The Research & Planning section of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services reported today that the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.7% in February. Wyoming's unemployment rate has remained between 3.4% and 3.7% in each of the past 16 months. The state's labor force grew by an estimated 2,682 people (0.9%) from a year earlier.

From February 2019 to February 2020, unemployment rates rose in 18 counties, fell in four counties, and remained unchanged in Crook County. The largest increases occurred in Platte (up from 3.3% to 4.7%), Sweetwater (up from 4.2% to 5.4%), Hot Springs (up from 3.4% to 4.5%), Niobrara (up from 2.3% to 3.4%), and Sublette (up from 4.9% to 6.0%) counties. Unemployment rates decreased in Park (down from 5.3% to 5.0%) and Johnson (down from 4.4% to 4.2%) counties.

Most county unemployment rates changed very little from January to February. Unemployment increased modestly in Washakie (up from 4.6% to 5.0%), Carbon (up from 4.2% to 4.4%), Converse (up from 3.0% to 3.2%), and Hot Springs (up from 4.3% to 4.5%) counties. Unemployment rates fell in Johnson (down from 4.5% to 4.2%), Uinta (down from 4.7% to 4.5%), Park (down from 5.2% to 5.0%), Goshen (down from 3.7% to 3.5%), Fremont (down from 5.6% to 5.4%), and Albany (down from 3.3% to 3.1%) counties.

The lowest unemployment rates in February were found in Teton County at 2.6%, Albany County at 3.1%, and Weston, Crook, and Converse counties, each at 3.2%. Sublette County posted the highest unemployment rate at 6.0%. It was followed by Big Horn County at 5.5%, and Fremont and Sweetwater counties, each at 5.4%.

Total nonfarm employment in Wyoming (not seasonally adjusted and measured by place of work) decreased from 282,600 in February 2019 to 280,500 in February 2020, a decline of 2,100 jobs (-0.7%).

Research & Planning has scheduled the March unemployment news release for April 21, 2020.

Civilian Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment--by place of residence

County	Labor Force			Employment			Unemployed Number			Unemployment Rate		
	Feb 2020 (p)	Jan 2020 (r)	Feb 2019 (b)	Feb 2020 (p)	Jan 2020 (r)	Feb 2019 (b)	Feb 2020 (p)	Jan 2020 (r)	Feb 2019 (b)	Feb 2020 (p)	Jan 2020 (r)	Feb 2019 (b)
Albany	20,671	20,326	20,542	20,029	19,665	19,968	642	661	574	3.1	3.3	2.8
Big Horn	5,303	5,311	5,022	5,010	5,024	4,778	293	287	244	5.5	5.4	4.9
Campbell	23,786	23,757	22,870	22,873	22,841	22,056	913	916	814	3.8	3.9	3.6
Carbon	7,956	7,966	7,564	7,605	7,628	7,260	351	338	304	4.4	4.2	4.0
Converse	9,062	9,040	8,285	8,776	8,767	8,054	286	273	231	3.2	3.0	2.8
Crook	3,668	3,673	3,545	3,552	3,558	3,433	116	115	112	3.2	3.1	3.2
Fremont	18,960	18,848	18,590	17,927	17,800	17,624	1,033	1,048	966	5.4	5.6	5.2
Goshen	6,633	6,639	6,559	6,399	6,396	6,324	234	243	235	3.5	3.7	3.6
Hot Springs	2,161	2,145	2,166	2,064	2,053	2,093	97	92	73	4.5	4.3	3.4
Johnson	4,081	4,090	4,029	3,908	3,905	3,850	173	185	179	4.2	4.5	4.4
Laramie	49,166	48,858	48,335	47,167	46,912	46,685	1,999	1,946	1,650	4.1	4.0	3.4
Lincoln	8,857	8,872	8,753	8,485	8,501	8,449	372	371	304	4.2	4.2	3.5
Natrona	39,546	39,440	39,226	37,693	37,589	37,576	1,853	1,851	1,650	4.7	4.7	4.2
Niobrara	1,227	1,223	1,231	1,185	1,181	1,203	42	42	28	3.4	3.4	2.3
Park	14,801	14,780	14,395	14,068	14,008	13,630	733	772	765	5.0	5.2	5.3
Platte	4,554	4,533	4,715	4,342	4,325	4,559	212	208	156	4.7	4.6	3.3
Sheridan	15,733	15,647	15,483	15,053	14,976	14,840	680	671	643	4.3	4.3	4.2
Sublette	4,203	4,234	3,970	3,949	3,985	3,775	254	249	195	6.0	5.9	4.9
Sweetwater	21,479	21,362	21,256	20,316	20,198	20,357	1,163	1,164	899	5.4	5.4	4.2
Teton	15,358	15,473	14,989	14,954	15,056	14,664	404	417	325	2.6	2.7	2.2
Uinta	8,783	8,829	8,951	8,385	8,416	8,586	398	413	365	4.5	4.7	4.1
Washakie	3,917	3,943	3,924	3,720	3,761	3,749	197	182	175	5.0	4.6	4.5
Weston	3,829	3,832	3,820	3,706	3,712	3,694	123	120	126	3.2	3.1	3.3
Statewide	293,736	292,822	288,220	281,167	280,258	277,209	12,569	12,564	11,011	4.3	4.3	3.8
Statewide Seasonally Adjusted.....										3.7	3.7	3.5
U.S.....										3.8	4.0	4.1
U.S. Seasonally Adjusted.....										3.5	3.6	3.8

(p) Preliminary, (r) Revised, (b) Benchmarked.

Data are not seasonally adjusted except where otherwise specified.

Labor Force = Employment + Unemployment Number

Unemployment Rate = Unemployment Number/Labor Force

	Wyoming Seasonally Adjusted Statewide Labor Force Estimates			Change			
	February-20	January-20	February-19	Month		Year	
				absolute	percent	absolute	percent
Total Civilian Labor Force	294,173	293,281	291,491	892	0.3%	2,682	0.9%
Employed	283,295	282,542	281,400	753	0.3%	1,895	0.7%
Unemployed	10,878	10,739	10,091	139	1.3%	787	7.8%
Unemployment Rate	3.7	3.7	3.5				
Definitions:							
Employed	All persons who, during the reference week, did any work at all as paid employees, worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family business.						
Unemployed	All persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4-week period ending with the reference week.						
Labor Force	All persons who meet the criteria given above as either employed or unemployed.						
Unemployment Rate	The number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.						
Seasonal Adjustment	A statistical procedure to remove the impact of normal regularly recurring events (such as weather, major holidays, and the opening and closing of schools) from economic time series to better understand changes in economic conditions from month to month.						

**Wyoming Department of Workforce Services
Research & Planning**

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Internet Address: <https://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/news.htm>

Access R&P's monthly publication on Wyoming's labor market at <https://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/trends.htm>

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