



# THE LATEST ECON 411

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August 16, 2019, Labor Market Report for July 2019

The California Labor Market Information Division released its July 2019 report earlier today, showing an anticipated increase to our unemployment rate—from 3.6% in June to 3.9% in July—based just about wholly on the slowdown in local education jobs during the summer recess. While that movement isn't unusual, what is concerning is our extremely slow job growth over the last 12 months, with only 1,000 new jobs and an annualized rate of only three-tenths of one percent. For the current data, go to [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/vent\\$pds.pdf](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/vent$pds.pdf).

**Civilian Employment, Unemployment and Labor Force:** For a bit of encouraging news, we at least did not have another decline in our labor force, which remained unchanged in the month, at 419,000. Our labor force is still down, however, by 6,200 workers since July 2018.

Where that lack of growth is evidenced in real impact, is in the total number of employed workers in Ventura County, which at 402,500 is down by 5,900 from one year ago. Granted the County is growing very slowly, but a negative movement in total workers is deeply concerning. Fewer working residents translates to lower earnings and lower overall productivity.

**Industry Employment:** The industry employment data for the month sends something of a mixed message. To be clear, on net the numbers are alarming.

- Month-over-month we're down by a total of 6,800 jobs, 3,500 in Farm and 3,300 Nonfarm.
- As noted above, year-over-year we're up by only 1,000 jobs, comprised of 100 in Farm and 900 in the Nonfarm sectors.
- Most disconcerting, our Private Sector job growth over the last year is just under 0.2% in the private sector.

On the upside, our July losses were largely anticipated and concentrated in Local Government Education, down 3,400 jobs with the summer recess. We also had some moderate gains worth noting:

- Construction was up by 200 jobs, up 700 year-over-year.
- Manufacturing was up by 400 jobs, up by 800 year-over-year

**Unemployment Rate in the Statewide Context:** Our position among California's 58 counties fell three places in July, with our unemployment rate of 3.9% putting us in the 18<sup>th</sup> slot. While falling back from the prior months, we're still within our range of movement for about the last year.

Looking at our surrounding counties, all of them had a similar increase to the unadjusted unemployment rate. Santa Barbara stayed just ahead of us at 3.7% and 16<sup>th</sup>. San Luis Obispo and Orange Counties remained tied in 7<sup>th</sup> place, at 3.2%. Kern County remained in 54<sup>th</sup>, at 8.4%. Los Angeles fell back three slots to 34<sup>th</sup>, with 5.0% unemployment.

The statewide story remained the same as well, with the Bay Area dominating the top slots, with eight of California's top ten counties, led by San Mateo at 2.3%, San Francisco at 2.4%, Marin at 2.5%, Santa Clara at 2.8% and Napa and Sonoma both at 3.0%. Orange and San Luis Obispo are tied for 7<sup>th</sup> at 3.2%. Completing the top ten are Alameda in 9<sup>th</sup> at 3.3% and Contra Costa, at 3.4%.

This month's detail on unemployment rates statewide can be viewed at [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/1907pcou.pdf](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/1907pcou.pdf) or go to [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/lf\\_geomaps\\_color.pdf](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/lf_geomaps_color.pdf) for the mapping tool.

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