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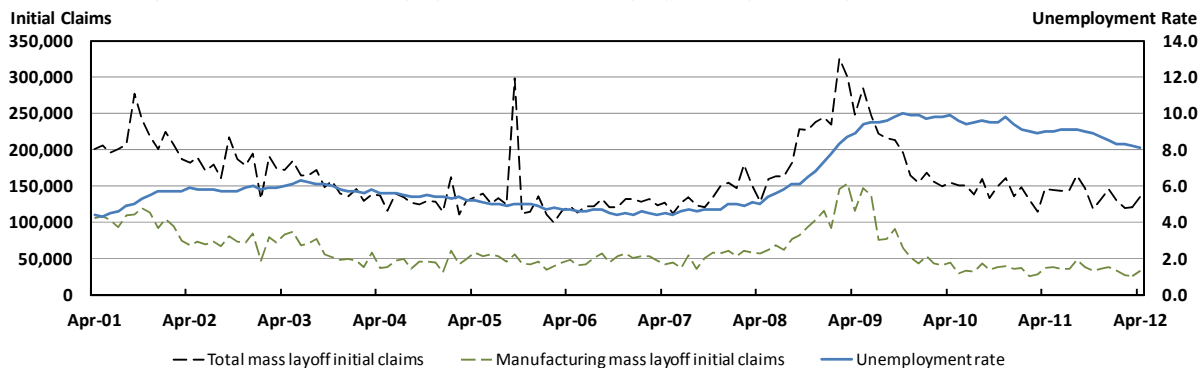
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MASS LAYOFFS — APRIL 2012

Employers took 1,388 mass layoff actions in April involving 135,600 workers, seasonally adjusted, as measured by new filings for unemployment insurance benefits during the month, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Each mass layoff involved at least 50 workers from a single employer. Mass layoff events in April increased by 115 from March, and the number of associated initial claims increased by 14,290. In April, 287 mass layoff events were reported in the manufacturing sector, seasonally adjusted, resulting in 33,243 initial claims. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Mass layoff initial claims and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, April 2001-April 2012



The national unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in April, little changed from the prior month but down from 9.0 percent a year earlier. Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 115,000 over the month and by 1,816,000 over the year.

Industry Distributions (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

The number of mass layoff events in April was 1,421, not seasonally adjusted, resulting in 146,358 initial claims for unemployment insurance. (See table 2.) Over the year, the number of average weekly mass layoff events increased by 5 to 355, while associated average weekly initial claims decreased by 1,394 to 36,590. Ten of the 19 major industry sectors in the private economy reported over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in manufacturing. (See table 3.) In April, the six-digit industry with the largest number of private nonfarm initial claims was school and employee bus transportation. (See table A.)

Table A. Six-digit NAICS industries with the largest number of mass layoff initial claims in April 2012, private nonfarm, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Initial Claims	April peak	
		Year	Initial claims
School and employee bus transportation	20,482	2011	23,573
Temporary help services ¹	10,285	2001	17,507
Food service contractors	8,561	2011	10,948
Tax preparation services	4,528	2010	6,514
Motor vehicle metal stamping	(²)	2012	(²)
Hotels and motels, except casino hotels	2,388	2010	4,130
Educational support services	2,381	2012	2,381
Discount department stores	2,301	2009	4,462
Motion picture and video production	2,201	1997	15,908
Tire manufacturing, except retreading	(²)	2009	2,376

¹ See the Technical Note for more information on these industries.

² Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

In April, the manufacturing sector accounted for 19 percent of mass layoff events and 23 percent of associated initial claims in the private economy. Within manufacturing, the numbers of mass layoff claimants were highest in food and in transportation equipment. Thirteen of the 21 manufacturing subsectors experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in transportation equipment. (See table 3.)

Geographic Distribution (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Among the census regions, the Northeast registered the largest number of initial claims in April. Two of the 4 regions experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, with the largest decrease occurring in the Midwest. (See table 4.)

Among the states, California recorded the highest number of mass layoff initial claims in April, followed by New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly initial claims, led by Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, and Wisconsin. (See table 4.)

Note

The monthly data series in this release cover mass layoffs of 50 or more workers beginning in a given month, regardless of the duration of the layoffs. For private nonfarm establishments, information on the length of the layoff is obtained later and issued in a quarterly release that reports on mass layoffs lasting more than 30 days (referred to as “extended mass layoffs”). The quarterly release provides more information on the industry classification and location of the establishment and on the demographics of the laid-off workers. The monthly data series in this release are subjected to average weekly analysis,

which mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. See the Technical Note for more detailed definitions and for a description of average weekly analysis.

The Mass Layoffs news release for May is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 20, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

The Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program is a federal-state program that uses a standardized automated approach to identifying, describing, and tracking the effects of major job cutbacks, using data from each state's unemployment insurance database. Each month, states report on employers which have at least 50 initial claims filed against them during a consecutive 5-week period. These employers then are contacted by the state agency to determine whether these separations lasted 31 days or longer, and, if so, other information concerning the layoff is collected. States report on layoffs lasting more than 1 month on a quarterly basis.

A given month contains an aggregation of the weekly unemployment insurance claims filings for the Sunday through Saturday weeks in that month. All weeks are included for the particular month, except if the first day of the month falls on Saturday. In this case, the week is included in the prior month's tabulations. This means that some months will contain 4 weeks and others, 5 weeks. The number of weeks in a given month may be different from year to year, and the number of weeks in a year may vary. Therefore, data users who intend to perform analysis of over-the-year change in the not seasonally adjusted series should use the average weekly mass layoff figures displayed in tables 3 and 4 of this release. The average weekly adjustment process produces a consistent series for each month across all years, permitting over-the-year analysis to be performed using strictly comparable data.

The MLS program resumed operations in April 1995 after it had been terminated in November 1992 due to lack of funding. Prior to April 1995, monthly layoff statistics were not available.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339

Definitions

Average weekly mass layoff events and initial claimants. The number of events and initial claimants in a given month divided by the number of weeks contained within that month.

Employer. Employers in the MLS program include those covered by state unemployment insurance laws. Information on employers is obtained from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, which is administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Industry. Employers are classified according to the 2007 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For temporary help and professional employer

organization industries, monthly MLS-related statistics generally reflect layoffs related to underlying client companies in other industries. An individual layoff action at a client company can be small, but when initial claimants associated with many such layoffs are assigned to a temporary help or professional employer organization firm, a mass layoff event may trigger.

Initial claimant. A person who files any notice of unemployment to initiate a request either for a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation, or for a temporary period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Mass layoff event. Fifty or more initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits filed against an employer during a 5-week period, regardless of duration.

Seasonal adjustment

Effective with the release of data for January 2005, BLS began publishing six seasonally adjusted monthly MLS series. The six series are the numbers of mass layoff events and mass layoff initial claims for the total, private nonfarm, and manufacturing sectors.

Seasonal adjustment is the process of estimating and removing the effect on time series data of regularly recurring seasonal events such as changes in the weather, holidays, and the beginning and ending of the school year. The use of seasonal adjustment makes it easier to observe fundamental changes in time series, particularly those associated with general economic expansions and contractions.

The MLS data are seasonally adjusted using the X-12-ARIMA seasonal adjustment method on a concurrent basis. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available monthly estimates, including those for the current month, in developing seasonal adjustment factors. Revisions to the most recent 5 years of seasonally adjusted data will be made once a year with the issuance of December data. Before the data are seasonally adjusted, prior adjustments are made to the original data to adjust them for differences in the number of weeks used to calculate the monthly data. Because weekly unemployment insurance claims are aggregated to form monthly data, a particular month's value could be calculated with 5 weeks of data in 1 year and 4 weeks in another. The effects of these differences could seriously distort the seasonal factors if they were ignored in the seasonal adjustment process. These effects are modeled in the X-12-ARIMA program and are permanently removed from the final seasonally adjusted series.

Table 1. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, May 2008 to April 2012, seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2008						
May	1,567	160,475	1,432	150,893	470	62,776
June	1,612	163,425	1,471	152,133	491	68,862
July	1,589	163,572	1,452	153,060	465	62,210
August	1,763	181,853	1,632	172,147	578	77,464
September	2,159	229,180	1,990	215,749	629	82,011
October	2,201	226,853	2,043	213,454	698	93,252
November	2,406	239,239	2,247	225,404	907	103,836
December	2,437	244,889	2,261	230,621	935	116,181
2009						
January	2,254	235,371	2,083	221,653	726	92,293
February	3,059	326,392	2,901	310,378	1,251	145,839
March	2,999	299,322	2,800	282,414	1,230	154,168
April	2,566	249,129	2,349	232,632	1,007	116,051
May	2,710	284,468	2,516	267,869	1,181	147,184
June	2,466	247,597	2,257	230,502	1,048	137,649
July	2,186	222,941	1,979	203,911	636	75,728
August	2,340	216,047	2,115	197,172	751	77,894
September	2,261	214,018	2,048	198,761	786	91,125
October	1,969	195,752	1,772	178,172	571	65,217
November	1,757	164,454	1,588	151,172	472	52,855
December	1,719	155,056	1,543	140,835	424	44,096
2010						
January	1,707	168,044	1,529	154,187	471	53,817
February	1,631	156,292	1,465	141,831	374	43,620
March	1,676	149,816	1,469	134,518	356	40,705
April	1,637	154,558	1,452	138,503	368	44,506
May	1,608	150,996	1,357	130,273	302	29,932
June	1,695	151,435	1,475	132,742	325	33,298
July	1,519	138,091	1,316	122,162	304	32,253
August	1,588	159,329	1,399	136,697	390	43,154
September	1,510	133,576	1,295	115,349	328	34,333
October	1,654	149,589	1,446	132,146	354	38,937
November	1,592	161,145	1,410	145,494	360	39,977
December	1,477	135,849	1,271	121,171	322	36,267
2011						
January	1,536	148,952	1,348	131,869	337	37,477
February	1,434	131,569	1,242	116,745	297	26,696
March	1,275	115,391	1,118	102,722	251	28,988
April	1,548	145,836	1,383	131,317	341	37,053
May	1,600	144,412	1,404	127,793	374	39,180
June	1,513	143,384	1,334	128,410	344	36,265
July	1,562	145,078	1,348	125,285	346	36,312
August	1,551	164,275	1,347	149,874	382	49,194
September	1,447	147,353	1,306	134,038	364	38,026
October	1,335	118,924	1,205	107,330	341	33,926
November	1,332	131,627	1,192	120,760	324	36,563
December	1,384	145,648	1,238	130,583	351	39,081
2012						
January	1,434	129,920	1,298	119,102	341	33,597
February	1,293	119,463	1,153	108,577	282	27,388
March	1,273	121,310	1,125	109,421	261	26,348
April	1,388	135,600	1,222	120,213	287	33,243

Table 2. Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, May 2008 to April 2012, not seasonally adjusted

Date	Total		Private nonfarm		Manufacturing	
	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants	Events	Initial claimants
2008						
May	1,552	159,471	1,438	150,462	388	51,698
June	1,622	166,742	1,315	140,916	309	42,097
July	1,891	200,382	1,687	186,018	760	108,733
August	1,427	139,999	1,343	133,146	414	51,912
September	1,292	129,586	1,202	122,505	361	46,391
October	2,125	221,784	1,917	205,553	689	100,457
November	2,574	241,589	2,389	226,657	997	107,620
December	3,377	351,305	3,232	340,220	1,378	172,529
2009						
January	3,806	388,813	3,633	375,293	1,461	172,757
February	2,262	218,438	2,173	210,755	945	103,588
March	2,191	228,387	2,107	221,397	940	114,747
April	2,547	256,930	2,385	243,321	887	100,872
May	2,738	289,628	2,572	274,047	1,005	123,683
June	2,519	256,357	2,051	216,063	674	85,726
July	3,054	336,654	2,659	296,589	1,133	154,208
August	1,428	125,024	1,334	117,193	436	41,151
September	1,371	123,177	1,258	115,141	448	51,126
October	1,934	193,904	1,678	172,883	566	69,655
November	1,870	164,496	1,679	150,751	517	55,053
December	2,310	214,648	2,166	203,655	615	64,540
2010						
January	2,860	278,679	2,682	265,074	962	104,846
February	1,183	102,818	1,091	96,022	282	30,728
March	1,197	111,727	1,111	105,514	273	29,745
April	1,840	199,690	1,697	184,654	424	55,178
May	1,354	123,333	1,170	109,203	216	19,334
June	1,861	171,190	1,355	125,872	212	21,083
July	2,124	206,254	1,732	172,248	532	64,200
August	976	92,435	897	83,021	230	23,088
September	920	77,654	806	67,987	187	19,403
October	1,642	148,638	1,373	127,865	351	40,861
November	1,676	158,048	1,477	142,591	389	41,383
December	1,931	184,130	1,763	172,881	465	52,816
2011						
January	2,558	246,463	2,372	229,765	693	75,006
February	1,024	85,585	919	78,718	222	18,471
March	908	85,095	844	80,014	191	20,869
April	1,750	189,919	1,625	176,478	397	47,104
May	1,367	119,911	1,221	108,531	270	25,199
June	1,661	159,930	1,238	122,821	226	22,986
July	2,176	216,774	1,759	174,078	602	71,814
August	961	99,213	875	93,159	228	26,916
September	1,189	117,232	1,095	107,300	296	32,058
October	1,101	96,914	950	83,748	265	28,447
November	1,393	127,750	1,245	117,474	349	37,799
December	2,433	263,665	2,258	247,916	658	75,033
2012						
January	1,705	141,703	1,587	132,754	415	38,021
February	895	73,974	820	69,076	196	16,555
March	1,125	117,817	1,040	110,954	242	24,241
April	1,421	146,358	1,293	132,697	256	32,518

Table 3. Industry distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, not seasonally adjusted

Industry	Mass layoff totals				Average weekly mass layoffs ¹			
	Events		Initial claimants		Events		Initial claimants	
	April 2011	April 2012	April 2011	April 2012	April 2011	April 2012	April 2011	April 2012
Total ²	1,750	1,421	189,919	146,358	350	355	37,984	36,590
Total, private	1,685	1,378	183,436	140,376	337	345	36,687	35,094
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	60	85	6,958	7,679	12	21	1,392	1,920
Total, private nonfarm	1,625	1,293	176,478	132,697	325	323	35,296	33,174
Mining	4	7	270	774	1	2	54	194
Utilities	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Construction	161	138	12,121	9,720	32	35	2,424	2,430
Construction of buildings	25	28	1,917	1,845	5	7	383	461
Heavy and civil engineering construction	52	45	4,469	3,066	10	11	894	767
Specialty trade contractors	84	65	5,735	4,809	17	16	1,147	1,202
Manufacturing	397	256	47,104	32,518	79	64	9,421	8,130
Food	84	86	9,064	8,735	17	22	1,813	2,184
Beverage and tobacco products	6	5	438	293	1	1	88	73
Textile mills	5	24	792	3,246	1	6	158	812
Textile product mills	6	3	536	260	1	1	107	65
Apparel	10	12	964	1,329	2	3	193	332
Leather and allied products	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)
Wood products	19	10	1,681	780	4	3	336	195
Paper	6	3	590	335	1	1	118	84
Printing and related support activities	8	7	858	436	2	2	172	109
Petroleum and coal products	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chemicals	5	3	453	343	1	1	91	86
Plastics and rubber products	21	9	2,113	2,645	4	2	423	661
Nonmetallic mineral products	9	7	926	546	2	2	185	137
Primary metals	12	8	944	839	2	2	189	210
Fabricated metal products	21	7	1,758	788	4	2	352	197
Machinery	16	17	2,552	1,649	3	4	510	412
Computer and electronic products	18	14	1,675	1,366	4	4	335	342
Electrical equipment and appliances	16	5	1,736	722	3	1	347	181
Transportation equipment	117	26	18,328	7,093	23	7	3,666	1,773
Furniture and related products	9	6	831	634	2	2	166	159
Miscellaneous manufacturing	9	(³)	865	(³)	2	(³)	173	(³)
Wholesale trade	27	29	2,005	2,498	5	7	401	625
Retail trade ⁴	147	105	16,501	9,491	29	26	3,300	2,373
Building material and garden supply stores	7	9	597	640	1	2	119	160
Food and beverage stores	33	14	3,273	1,259	7	4	655	315
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	9	9	531	625	2	2	106	156
General merchandise stores	57	45	8,317	5,018	11	11	1,663	1,255
Transportation and warehousing ⁴	194	171	26,537	23,008	39	43	5,307	5,752
Truck transportation	11	4	697	243	2	1	139	61
Transit and ground passenger transportation	165	151	24,454	21,409	33	38	4,891	5,352
Support activities for transportation	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Information	42	35	5,689	4,024	8	9	1,138	1,006
Finance and insurance	42	33	3,482	2,095	8	8	696	524
Real estate and rental and leasing	15	8	1,389	601	3	2	278	150
Professional and technical services	80	55	8,572	6,288	16	14	1,714	1,572
Management of companies and enterprises	7	(³)	550	(³)	1	(³)	110	(³)
Administrative and waste services	262	220	23,380	17,166	52	55	4,676	4,292
Educational services	17	18	2,522	2,778	3	5	504	695
Health care and social assistance	46	41	3,397	3,133	9	10	679	783
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	45	40	4,650	3,344	9	10	930	836
Accommodation and food services	127	110	17,269	13,707	25	28	3,454	3,427
Accommodation	49	39	4,302	3,332	10	10	860	833
Food services and drinking places	78	71	12,967	10,375	16	18	2,593	2,594
Other services, except public administration	9	9	845	521	2	2	169	130
Unclassified	(³)	10	(³)	452	(³)	3	(³)	113
Government	65	43	6,483	5,982	13	11	1,297	1,496
Federal	6	5	582	395	1	1	116	99
State	18	13	1,714	3,164	4	3	343	791
State government education	6	5	464	406	1	1	93	102
Local	41	25	4,187	2,423	8	6	837	606
Local government education	14	7	1,455	1,032	3	2	291	258

¹ Average weekly analysis mitigates the effect of differing lengths of months. There were 5 weeks in April 2011 and 4 weeks in April 2012. Average weekly events and initial claimants may not sum to subtotals and totals due to rounding.

² Data were reported by all states and the District of Columbia.

³ Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

⁴ Includes other industries not shown.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.

Table 4. Region and state distribution: Mass layoff events and initial claimants for unemployment insurance, not seasonally adjusted

Census region and state	Mass layoff totals				Average weekly mass layoffs ¹			
	Events		Initial Claimants		Events		Initial Claimants	
	April 2011	April 2012	April 2011	April 2012	April 2011	April 2012	April 2011	April 2012
Total ²	1,750	1,421	189,919	146,358	350	355	37,984	36,590
Northeast	402	363	54,129	48,882	80	91	10,826	12,221
Connecticut	10	6	1,056	530	2	2	211	133
Maine	7	7	818	696	1	2	164	174
Massachusetts	17	17	2,040	3,291	3	4	408	823
New Hampshire	7	6	1,107	928	1	2	221	232
New Jersey	70	65	11,776	10,222	14	16	2,355	2,556
New York	153	152	22,636	22,367	31	38	4,527	5,592
Pennsylvania	112	91	10,791	7,943	22	23	2,158	1,986
Rhode Island	9	9	2,105	2,081	2	2	421	520
Vermont	17	10	1,800	824	3	3	360	206
South	431	318	42,685	30,733	86	80	8,537	7,683
Alabama	28	17	3,080	2,706	6	4	616	677
Arkansas	(³)	6	(³)	851	(³)	2	(³)	213
Delaware	8	7	551	542	2	2	110	136
District of Columbia	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-
Florida	98	70	7,600	4,913	20	18	1,520	1,228
Georgia	40	24	3,380	2,879	8	6	676	720
Kentucky	56	25	9,722	2,946	11	6	1,944	737
Louisiana	22	13	1,669	1,067	4	3	334	267
Maryland	5	3	365	256	1	1	73	64
Mississippi	27	13	1,987	835	5	3	397	209
North Carolina	14	51	1,240	4,782	3	13	248	1,196
Oklahoma	6	4	392	621	1	1	78	155
South Carolina	19	12	1,913	1,321	4	3	383	330
Tennessee	14	9	1,259	752	3	2	252	188
Texas	67	45	7,118	4,621	13	11	1,424	1,155
Virginia	23	14	2,063	1,141	5	4	413	285
West Virginia	(³)	5	(³)	500	(³)	1	(³)	125
Midwest	383	216	44,126	26,205	77	54	8,825	6,551
Illinois	56	38	6,701	5,969	11	10	1,340	1,492
Indiana	41	17	4,689	4,867	8	4	938	1,217
Iowa	17	13	2,143	1,388	3	3	429	347
Kansas	5	9	381	726	1	2	76	182
Michigan	50	23	6,813	2,313	10	6	1,363	578
Minnesota	16	8	1,023	455	3	2	205	114
Missouri	23	27	2,259	1,770	5	7	452	443
Nebraska	9	3	768	289	2	1	154	72
North Dakota	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-
Ohio	87	34	11,082	3,651	17	9	2,216	913
South Dakota	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-	(³)	-
Wisconsin	76	44	7,965	4,777	15	11	1,593	1,194
West	534	524	48,979	40,538	107	131	9,796	10,135
Alaska	9	9	1,137	1,008	2	2	227	252
Arizona	40	30	5,635	4,627	8	8	1,127	1,157
California	348	391	29,264	26,375	70	98	5,853	6,594
Colorado	15	12	1,750	1,401	3	3	350	350
Hawaii	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Idaho	10	7	896	771	2	2	179	193
Montana	7	6	438	526	1	2	88	132
Nevada	23	13	1,703	1,051	5	3	341	263
New Mexico	9	4	711	327	2	1	142	82
Oregon	25	17	2,886	1,276	5	4	577	319
Utah	13	5	1,232	482	3	1	246	121
Washington	28	26	2,725	2,301	6	7	545	575
Wyoming	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)	(³)
Puerto Rico	17	12	1,676	1,169	3	3	335	292

¹ See footnote 1, table 3.

³ Data do not meet BLS or state agency disclosure standards.

² See footnote 2, table 3.

NOTE: Dash represents zero.