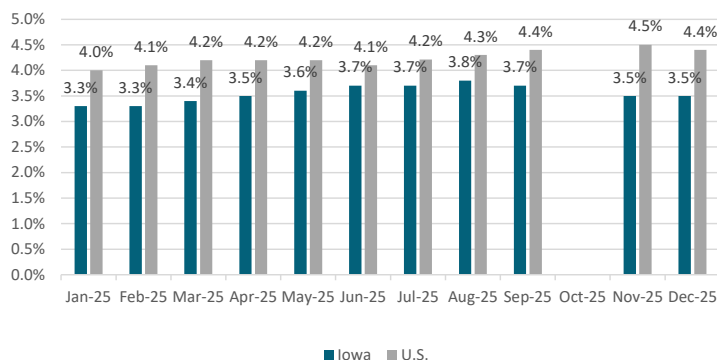


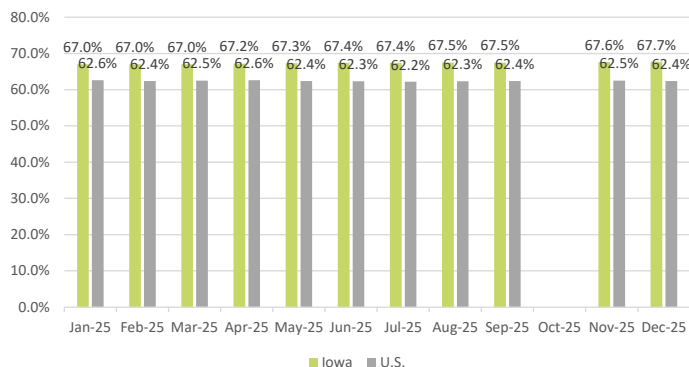
# Status of Iowa's Workforce & Economy December 2025

## Labor Force & Unemployment

Iowa and U.S. Unemployment Rates 2025



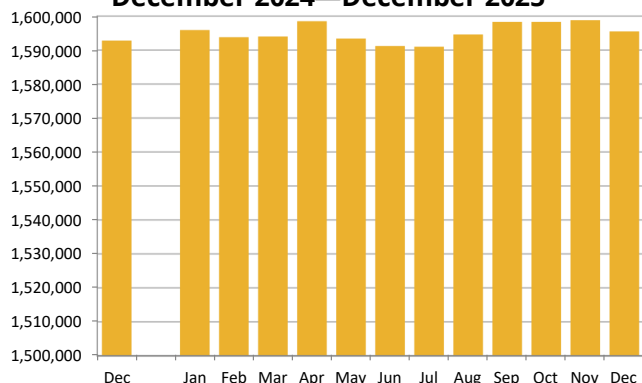
Iowa and U.S. Labor Force Participation Rates



- Iowa's unemployment rate held steady at 3.5 percent to finish the year. The state's jobless rate was 3.3 percent one year ago.
- The U.S. unemployment rate decreased to 4.4 percent in December.
- The state's total employment level increased to 1,688,700 in December. This figure is 5,000 higher than November and 27,300 higher than one year ago.
- Iowa's labor force participation rate increased to 67.7 percent in December.
- Iowa added almost 30,000 to its civilian labor force in 2025, increasing the labor force participation rate by 0.8 percent.

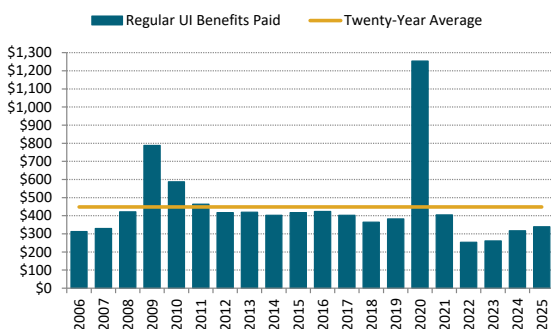
## Nonfarm Employment

Total Nonfarm Employment  
December 2024—December 2025



- Iowa establishments shed 3,300 jobs in December. Private service industries were responsible for most of the jobs shed. Despite the drop, total nonfarm employment is up annually (+2,700).
- Trade industries lost a combined 2,500 jobs. Retail trade shed the majority of the jobs lost (-1,500). Wholesale trade pared 1,000 jobs and is down 2,900 jobs annually.
- Accommodations and food services shed 1,800 jobs since November. Food services and drinking establishments declined the most.
- Manufacturing decreased by 1,300. Non-durable goods shops shed 800 jobs and durable goods factories lost 500 jobs.
- Construction leads all sectors in job growth over-the-year with 7,100. Health care and social assistance is second with 3,900 jobs gained. Alternatively, accommodations and food services leads all industries in jobs shed with 3,800.
- Nationally, the U.S. gained 50,000 jobs in December following a similar gain of 56,000 jobs in November. Bars and restaurants added the most jobs (+27,000).

## Iowa Unemployment Insurance Benefits Paid (millions)



- Unemployment Insurance benefits increased by 7.3 percent from \$316 million in 2024 to \$340 million in 2025. The 2025 benefit payout was 24 percent lower than the twenty-year average payout of \$448 million..
- Historically, UI benefits paid fell from a record high of \$1.25 billion in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic to the twenty-year low of \$254 million in 2022.
- Monthly UI benefits paid rose from \$13.8 million in November 2025 to \$33.7 million in December 2025 due to seasonal layoffs in construction and other outdoor activities. December 2024 benefits totaled \$30.8 million.

### Upcoming Monthly News Release Schedule

Reference Month	Statewide News Release	Local Area News Release
November	January 7, 2026	January 15, 2026
December	January 23, 2026	January 27, 2026
January	TBD	TBD

## Labor Market Information Division

IowaLMI.gov

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Source: Labor Market Information (LMI) Division, Iowa Workforce Development—Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) unless noted. (Reference: December 2025) \*updated due to shutdown