

# February 2026 Employment Analysis

(Embargoed until 9:30 am Thursday, April 16, 2026)

## Over-the-Month Job Change Overview

- Minnesota's unemployment rate increased one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.5% in February 2026. Nationally the unemployment rate ticked up one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.4% over the month.
- Minnesota's labor force decreased by 8,575 people over the month to 3,169,201 people. The number of employed decreased by 11,678 workers, and the number of unemployed increased by 3,103 people. The labor force participation rate ticked down three-tenths of a percentage point to 67.9% over the month. Nationally, labor force participation rate dropped one-tenth of a percentage point to 62.0%.
- Minnesota lost 6,100 nonfarm jobs over-the-month, on a seasonally adjusted basis, translating to 0.2%. Minnesota's private sector lost 5,900 jobs, also 0.2%. The U.S. total nonfarm employment decreased by 92,000 jobs, or 0.1%. The U.S. private sector lost 86,000 jobs, also 0.1%.
- Three supersectors in Minnesota gained jobs on a seasonally adjusted basis since the prior month:
  - Educational and Health Services gained 4,100 jobs, up 0.7%
  - Information gained 200 jobs, up 0.5%
  - Mining and Logging gained 100 jobs, up 1.6%
- Eight supersectors lost jobs over the month:
  - Trade, Transportation and Utilities lost 3,300 jobs, down 0.6%
  - Leisure and Hospitality lost 2,000 jobs, down 0.7%
  - Construction lost 1,700 jobs, down 1.2%
  - Other Services lost 1,700 jobs, down 1.4%
  - Manufacturing lost 1,300 jobs, down 0.4%
  - Professional & Business Services lost 200 jobs, down 0.1%
  - Government lost 200 jobs, or 0.0%
  - Financial Activities lost 100 jobs, down 0.1%
- Calculating seasonally adjusted 2-month job change:
  - Minnesota gained 5,400 jobs in October-December, up 0.18%; the U.S. grew 0.02%.
  - Minnesota lost 900 jobs in November-January, down 0.03%; the U.S. grew 0.07%.
  - Minnesota lost 7,700 jobs in December-February, down 0.25%; the U.S. grew 0.02%.

## Over-the-Year (OTY) Employment Growth by Industry Sector February 2026, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Industry Supersector	MN OTY Job Change	MN OTY Growth Rate (%)	US OTY Growth Rate (%)
Total	6,974	0.2	-0.4
Private	5,668	0.2	-0.3
Mining & Logging	95	1.6	-4.2
Construction	5,406	4.6	0.3
Manufacturing	-1,342	-0.4	-1.5
Trade, Transport. & Utilities	-5,629	-1.1	-1.7
Information	-2,061	-4.9	-4.5
Financial Activities	-3,671	-2.0	-0.7
Prof. & Business Services	-4,726	-1.3	-0.9
Ed. & Health Services	20,360	3.4	2.4
Leisure & Hospitality	-5,319	-2.1	-0.1
Other Services	2,555	2.2	0.4
Government	1,306	0.3	-1.1

- Minnesota gained 6,974 payroll jobs, up 0.2%, over the year. The private sector gained 5,668 jobs, also up 0.2% over the year. Five supersectors gained jobs, six lost jobs.
- U.S. employment declined 0.4% over the year with the private sector down 0.3%. Three supersectors gained jobs, eight lost jobs.
- Five supersectors posted positive annual growth in Minnesota:
  - Education and Health Services led with 20,360 jobs gained, up 3.4% for Minnesota. Growth was propelled by the Health Care & Social Assistance subsector (3.8%), followed by the Educational Services subsector (0.4%). Education and Health Services supersector grew 2.4% across the U.S.
  - Construction gained 5,406 jobs, up 4.6% over the year. Growth was incredibly robust in the subsector Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction at 21.9%. The subsector Specialty Trade Contractors grew 5.2%. The subsector Construction of Buildings declined 3.9%. The U.S. Construction supersector grew 0.3%.
  - Other Services gained 2,555 jobs, up 2.2% in Minnesota. Growth was spread across all subsectors. Nationally, this supersector grew 0.4%.
  - The Government supersector gained 1,306 jobs, or 0.3%. The Federal Government subsector declined 5.3%. The State Government subsector grew 1.0%. The Local Government subsector grew 0.7%. Across the U.S., the Government supersector declined 1.1%.
  - Mining and Logging gained 95 jobs, up 1.6% in Minnesota. This supersector declined 4.2% on the national level over-the-year.

- Six supersectors lost jobs over the year in Minnesota:
  - Trade, Transportation, and Utilities lost 5,629 jobs, or 1.1%. The Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities subsector declined 4.1%. The Retail Trade subsector grew 0.5%. The Wholesale Trade subsector declined 1.8%. Nationally, this supersector declined 1.7%.
  - Leisure and Hospitality lost 5,319 jobs, down 2.1%. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation subsector declined 8.0%. The Accommodation and Food Services subsector declined 0.8%. At the national level, Leisure and Hospitality supersector declined 0.1%.
  - Professional & Business Services lost 4,726 jobs, down 1.3% in Minnesota. Decline was driven by the subsector Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (-3.9%), followed by the subsector Management of Companies and Enterprises (-0.5%). The subsector Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services grew 0.1%. In the U.S., this supersector declined 0.9%.
  - Financial Activities lost 3,671 jobs over the year, down 2.0%. The Finance and Insurance subsector declined 2.6%. The smaller subsector Real Estate and Rental Leasing grew 0.8%. Nationally, this supersector declined 0.7%.
  - Information lost 2,061 jobs, down 4.9%. The U.S. Information supersector declined 4.5% over the year.
  - Manufacturing lost 1,342 jobs in Minnesota, down 0.4%. The decline was driven by Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing subsector, which dropped 3.1%. The Durable Goods Manufacturing subsector grew 1.1%. The U.S. Manufacturing supersector declined 1.5%.

## Wage and Hour Data

- Over the month, average hourly wages for all private sector workers decreased 16 cents to \$39.41 in February 2026. Over the year average hourly earnings increased 52 cents, up 1.3%.
  - For the U.S., private sector wages increased 25 cents over the month and grew 3.9% over the year.
  - The CPI inflation index for all urban consumers rose 2.4% over the year in February.
- At 33.0 hours per week, Minnesota's February average work week increased a full hour over-the-month. It did not change over-the-year.
  - Nationally, the average work week increased six-tenths of an hour to 34.5 hours over-the-month. Over-the-year, it increased by two-tenths of an hour.

## Unemployment Data

- Over the month, the unemployment rate increased one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.5% on a seasonally adjusted basis. The number of employed decreased by 11,678 workers, and the number of unemployed increased 3,103. The employment to population ratio ticked down three-tenths of a percentage point to 64.9% since the prior month.
- The labor force decreased 8,575 people over the month, totaling 3,169,201 people in February. The labor force participation rate ticked down three-tenths of a percentage point to 67.9%. Minnesota's labor force is now 45,332 people more than in February 2020 when the participation rate was at 70%.

- Nationally, the unemployment rate ticked up one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.4% over the month. The employment to population ratio ticked down one-tenth of a percentage point to 59.3%. The labor force participation rate dropped one-tenth of a percentage point to 62.0%.

## Industry Details

**Mining and Logging:** Employment in Mining and Logging was up by 100 jobs, or 1.6%, over the month (OTM) in February, on a seasonally adjusted basis. Employment in the supersector has been up or flat in every month since July 2025, when it lost 100 jobs. Over the year, Mining and Logging employers added 95 jobs, or 1.6%, on a not-seasonally adjusted basis. This was in contrast to national-level employment in the supersector, which was down by 4.2% over the year. In January, Minnesota employment in the supersector was up by 1%, and in December it was down by 1.5%.

**Construction:** Construction employment was down by 1,700, or 1.2%, OTM in February. The supersector added 3,300 jobs (2.3%) on a seasonally adjusted basis in January. On an annual basis, employment in Construction was up by 5,406 jobs, or 4.6%. Nationally, employment in the supersector was up by 0.3%. Specialty Trade Contractors added 4,009 jobs (5.2%) in Minnesota and Heavy and Civil Engineering added 2,565 jobs (21.9%), while Construction of Buildings was down by 1,168 jobs, or 3.9%.

**Manufacturing:** Employment in the Manufacturing supersector was down by 1,300 jobs, or 0.4%, OTM in February following a loss of 1,700 jobs (0.5%) in January. Both component sectors lost jobs on the month, with Durable Goods Manufacturing down 600 jobs (0.3%) and Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing down 700 jobs (0.6%). Over the year, Manufacturing employment was down by 1,342 jobs, or 0.4%. This was stronger than at the national level, where employment in the supersector was down by 1.6%. Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing employers in Minnesota lost 3,480 jobs (3.1%), while their counterparts in Durable Goods Manufacturing added 2,138 jobs, or 1.1%, with positive growth in all published component sectors.

**Trade, Transportation, and Utilities:** Trade, Transportation and Utilities employment was down by 3,300 (0.6%) OTM in February, on a seasonally adjusted basis, the same as it posted in January. All three component sectors lost jobs on the month. Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities lost 1,800 jobs (1.6%), Retail Trade lost 1,400 jobs (0.5%) and Wholesale Trade lost 100 jobs (0.1%). Annually, employment in the supersector was down by 5,629 jobs, or 1.1%, which was better than the national loss of 1.7%. Wholesale Trade lost 2,345 jobs (1.8%) and Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities lost 4,778 jobs (4.1%), while Retail Trade added 1,494 jobs, or 0.5%.

**Information:** Employment in Information was up by 200, or 0.5%, OTM in February. It was the first positive monthly growth in the long-declining supersector since October of 2025. On an annual basis, employment in Information was down by 2,061 jobs, or 4.9%, while at the national level employment in this supersector was down by 4.5%. Publishing Industries in Minnesota lost 1,101 jobs, or 6.2%.

**Financial Activities:** Financial Activities employment was down by 100, or 0.1%, OTM in February. Finance and Insurance lost 200 jobs (0.1%), while Real Estate and Rental and Leasing added 100 jobs (0.3%). Over the year, employment in Financial Activities was down by 3,671 jobs,

or 2%, compared to a loss of 0.7% nationally. Minnesota's decline came entirely in the Finance and Insurance component, which lost 3,934 jobs, or 2.6%. Insurance Carriers lost 1,776 jobs, or 4.2%. Employment in Real Estate and Rental and Leasing was up by 263 jobs, or 0.8%.

**Professional and Business Services:** Employment in Professional and Business Services was down by 200 jobs, or 0.1%, OTM in February. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services added 900 jobs (0.5%), but that growth was more than countered by the loss of 800 jobs (0.9%) in Management of Companies and Enterprises, and 300 jobs (0.3%) in Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services. Over the year, employment in Professional and Business Services was off by 4,726 jobs, or 1.3%, while nationally this supersector grew by 0.9%. Employment Services drove the annual losses, shedding 4,013 jobs, or 8.8%. Management of Companies lost 437 jobs (0.5%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services added 196 jobs (0.1%).

**Education and Health Services:** Education and Health Services employment was up by 4,100, or 0.7%, OTM in February. The last time the supersector lost jobs over the month was July of 2024. Educational Services added 1,000 jobs (1.3%) in February, and Health Care and Social Assistance added 3,100 jobs (0.6%). On an annual basis, employment in the supersector was up by 20,360 jobs, or 3.4%, which was better than the national rate of 2.4%. The annual growth was primarily in Health Care and Social Assistance, which added 20,031 jobs (3.8%), with growth in every published component sector. Educational Services employment was up by 329 jobs, or 0.4%.

**Leisure and Hospitality:** Employment in Leisure and Hospitality was off by 2,000 jobs, or 0.7%, OTM in February. The losses came entirely in Accommodation and Food Services, which shed 2,100 jobs, or 0.9%. Arts, Entertainment and Recreation employment was up by 100 jobs, or 0.2%. Over the year, employment in Leisure and Hospitality was off by 5,319 jobs, or 2.1%, compared to a national loss of 0.1%. Arts, Entertainment and Recreation employment was off by 3,586 jobs (8%) OTY. Accommodation and Food Service was off by 1,733 jobs, or 0.8%, with Food Services and Drinking Places losing 2,176 jobs (1.2%) and Accommodation adding 443 jobs (1.9%).

**Other Services:** Other Services employers shed 2,100 jobs (0.9%) OTM in February on a seasonally adjusted basis. It was the first monthly job loss for the supersector since August of 2025. On an annual basis, employment in Other Services was up by 2,555 jobs, or 2.2%, while national growth in the supersector was 0.4%. All three component sectors added jobs in Minnesota. Repair and Maintenance was up 391 jobs (1.7%), Personal and Laundry Services added 653 jobs (2.4%), and Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional and Similar Organizations added 1,511 jobs (2.3%).

**Government:** Government employers lost 200 jobs (0.0%) OTM in February. Local Government employment was down 400 jobs (0.1%) and State Government employment was flat, while Federal Government employment was up by 200 jobs (0.6%). Over the year, Government employment was up by 1,306 jobs, or 0.3%, while the employment in the supersector was down by 1.1% nationally. Local Government in Minnesota added 1,979 jobs (0.7%), State Government added 1,100 jobs (1%) and Federal Government lost 1,773 jobs (5.3%).

## Over-the-Year Job Change by MSAs

February 2026 data released by DEED, not seasonally adjusted

<b>Metropolitan Statistical Area</b>	<b>OTY Employment Change (#, NSA)</b>	<b>OTY Employment Change (% , NSA)</b>
Minneapolis-St. Paul MN-WI MSA	-5,261	-0.3
Duluth-Superior MN-WI MSA	-1,436	-1.1
Rochester MSA	526	0.4
St. Cloud MSA	-564	-0.5
Mankato MSA	-529	-0.9
Fargo-Moorhead ND-MN MSA (Jan)	-1,700	-1.1
Grand Forks-East Grand Forks ND-MN MSA (Jan)	0	0
La Crosse-Onalaska WI-MN (Jan)	1,000	1.2

**Labor Market Information Office**  
**MN Department of Employment and Economic Development**  
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