



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on April 23, 2020

## Another 4.4 Million File for Unemployment, Total Since March 1 Nearing 27M

The grim news on the American job market  kept coming this morning with the [U.S. Labor Department's announcement](#) that another 4.42 million Americans applied for unemployment last week.

The figure is a slight dip from the 5.2 million two weeks ago, but the number is still another major blow to the economy.

The latest numbers mean more than 26 million Americans have applied for unemployment since March 1, just after the Chinese Virus landed in the country and began spreading.

At this writing, infections in the United States [are nearing](#) 850,000, with fatalities closing in on 50,000.

### Slight Decline

Bad as the news is from the week ending April 18, it's not as bad as it was the week before.

Though 4,427,000 Americans applied for unemployment benefits, the [Labor Department reported](#), the figure is 810,00 less, or 15.5 percent less, than the week ending April 11. That number was 5,237,000.

The unemployment rate for the week ending April 11 was 11 percent, a 34-percent increase from the week ending April 4, when it was 8.2 percent.

The insured unemployed for the week ending April 11 numbered nearly 16 million, the department reported.

That week's increases in claims were just as staggering. Colorado suffered the most, with 58,246; while New York added 50,250; Missouri, 10,668; and Florida, 10,534.

The largest decreases, the [department reported](#), were in California, which enjoyed 263,342 fewer claims, Michigan with minus 166,347, New Jersey with minus 73,416, Georgia with minus 70,551, and Ohio with minus 66,874.

The department also reported unemployment rates for a number of states for the week ending April 4:

- Michigan: 17.4
- Rhode Island: 15
- Nevada: 13.7
- Georgia: 13.6
- Washington: 13.2
- New Hampshire: 12.2
- Minnesota: 11.9
- New York: 11.9
- Montana: 11.7
- Ohio: 11.6



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Adding last week's 4.4 million claims to what came before, the number of unemployment claims filed since March 1 is nearing 27 million, an average of roughly 3.85 million claims per week for seven consecutive weeks.

More than 10 million filed for unemployment in the two weeks ending March 28.

### **Real Unemployment Rate**

Though the unemployment rate for March was just 4.4 percent, two professors are tracking the downturn in the jobs market and estimate that the real figure is 20 percent, as [The New American reported](#) last week.

On April 15, Alexander Bick of Arizona State University and Adam Blandin of Virginia Commonwealth University reported that the nation's employment rate had dropped from 72.7 percent to 60.7 percent, which translated into a staggering 24 million jobs lost.

But even worse, elected officials and labor-market experts are dealing with numbers that are increasing at an almost incomprehensible pace.

"The April 2020 Employment Situation report will reflect labor market outcomes from the third week of April, but is not scheduled for release until May 8," the [professors wrote](#). "The gap between the data needs of policymakers and the time lag of traditional data sources has left policymakers 'flying blind' to a significant degree."

The Bick-Blandin estimate of 20 percent unemployment, which came from respondents who answered an online survey, is likely higher given last week's 4.4 million new unemployment claims.

A bright spot in the number, the professors wrote, was that "more than half of the unemployed in our sample are temporarily laid off. Somewhat less than 3/4 of the laid off have been either given a concrete date of return or the indication to be called back within 6 months. This suggests that large share of the unemployed might be quickly recalled to their previous jobs once the economy is opened up."

### **Help From the White House**

Policymakers, as the professors wrote, might be flying blind, but the country's top policymaker has at least partly seen the light on one issue: cheap foreign labor.

Yesterday, [President Trump closed](#) the border to legal immigrants to stop them from taking jobs that otherwise would go to Americans, although some foreigners will be permitted to enter the country.

Among them are the foreign spouses and children of citizens, tycoons who enter on investor visas, and medical personnel who can help fight the pandemic.

As for illegal immigration, last month, as [TNA reported](#) yesterday, border agents apprehended almost 34,000 illegal aliens who tried to jump the U.S. border with Mexico or were stopped at ports of entry.

That brought the total this fiscal year to more than 234,000.

Border authorities began immediately deporting illegals [pursuant to Trump's order of March 17](#) and have sent more than 10,000 back across the border to Mexico since then.

Those deportations will stop unscrupulous American employers from hiring cheap, illegal-alien labor.

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