



JobWatch
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Ohio added jobs in May but at slower pace

The takeaway: More hiring in May pulled more Ohioans back into the workforce and kept the state on the path to recovery, but at a slower pace than in recent months. As inflation remains at 40-year highs, policymakers at the Federal Reserve raised interest rates and economists fear a recession next year. Advocates this month urged Ohio policymakers to focus on a continued inclusive recovery through [the All in for Ohio Agenda](#), and today Ohio public workers who helped guide us through the pandemic are [demonstrated for respect on the capitol](#).

“Federal policymakers’ quick response to the COVID recession in directing historic levels of financial help to affected workers, families, and communities, drove a rapid early recovery,” said Policy Matters Ohio researcher, Michael Shields. “The challenge now is to ensure that the recovery continues until it reaches everyone, as policymakers gear up to fight inflation. Advocates introduced a plan this month that [centers families and working people](#), and makes the wealthy pay their share.”

The numbers: Seasonally adjusted data released today by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) show that Ohio employers restored 4,800 jobs over the month, from an upwardly revised 5,474,700 in April to 5,479,500 in May. May posted the smallest gains since October 2021 when employers cut jobs. Figures are from a survey of employers and preliminary numbers are subject to revision. Ohio has restored 84.8% of jobs lost to COVID-19 and still needs 134,300 jobs to recover our pre-COVID number from February 2020.

The details: Ohio goods producers, after nearly restoring jobs to pre-COVID levels as of April, cut 5,400 jobs last month. The service sector added 7,000 jobs. State and local government – which have made the public sector the slowest to recover – added jobs last month for overall gains of 3,200 government jobs.

The household survey: According to the separate household survey, 19,000 Ohioans entered the workforce last month to accept a job or begin their search, and 25,000 job seekers found work. Ohio’s unemployment rate fell 0.1 points to 3.9% in May. The nation’s was 0.3 points lower at a steady 3.6%, unchanged over recent months. The share of working age Ohioans working or seeking work rose 0.2 points to 62.0%, closing in on the nation’s rate of 62.3%.

“Ohio policymakers should focus on [a continued recovery that includes everyone](#), by fully funding education and other basic needs, making the wealthy pay what they truly owe, and ensuring dignity for all at work. Advocates this month introduced a six point plan,” said Shields. “And the [public sector workers we all relied on](#) to help us through the COVID-19 pandemic are in Columbus today to remind lawmakers that they are still here teaching our kids, cleaning our streets, and keeping our neighborhoods safe and vibrant for us all. It’s time to give them and all Ohio workers the respect they deserve with fair pay, safe workplaces, and paid leave when they need it to care for themselves and their families.”