

Ohio unemployment down as job growth continues

Ohio saw strong job growth in October, continuing the positive trends of increasing jobs and a growing labor force. The data suggest Ohioans remain confident in the job market and employers are shifting to meet demand for work. The inflation rate rose 0.2 percentage points to 2.6%, the first uptick in inflation we've seen since March.

Ohio's economic indicators remain strong, although another rise in inflation suggests working families are still feeling increasing pressure from everyday prices.

The numbers: Seasonally adjusted data released today by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) show that Ohio gained 6,400 jobs last month, up from 5,675,600 jobs in September to 5,682,000 in October. Monthly numbers are preliminary and subject to revision. October's gains follow substantial job growth seen in September (+13,500). Ohio employers have added 53,000 jobs since this time last year.

The takeaway: "While [national job growth is slowing](#), Ohio's remains consistent, accounting for more than half of jobs added nationally," said Molly Bryden, researcher with Policy Matters Ohio. "Sluggish national growth was not unexpected: The number of U.S. workers striking or out of work due to devastating impacts of recent hurricanes could distort national employment trends. Ohio did not share in those events, and the state continues to have strong, consistent job growth."

"Persistent inflation continues to strain household budgets, despite job market growth. Its recent uptick coincides with uncertainties about the economic impacts of the incoming Trump administration. [Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's recent comments](#) indicated that the Fed will take a slower, more conservative approach to lowering interest rates with inflation holding above their 2% target.

"Though Ohio's job growth reinforces the resilience of our economy – potentially supported by overdue interest rate cuts in September and November – Ohioans shouldn't expect to see a huge increase in their borrowing power as the Fed moves forward with caution."

The details: Service providers drove Ohio's job growth, adding 6,100 jobs this month, with marginal growth in the public sector (+300) and no change in goods-producing jobs. Modest growth in federal and local government jobs (+200 and +700, respectively) were offset by continued losses in state government employment (-600).

State government jobs fell again in October, following a notable drop in September (-1,800). "Falling state government employment has worrying implications for Ohio's

ability to meet the need for public services,” Bryden said. “It will be particularly troubling if this trend continues in anticipation of broad cuts to federal funding programs pending an administration change.”

Durable goods manufacturing jobs increased for the second month in a row (+1,100), a positive indicator for broad economic conditions. “While inflation may not be cooling as quickly as we had hoped, the Fed should continue reducing interest rates to maintain strong production levels and a robust job market in Ohio,” Bryden said.

The household survey: The separate household survey showed the number of unemployed Ohioans fell by 7,000 with an unemployment rate of 4.3%, 0.2 percentage points lower than September’s rate. After several months of stubborn unemployment, Ohio got closer to the national unemployment rate of 4.1%, unchanged from September. October’s employment gains (+19,000) exceeded the number of Ohioans entering the labor force (+11,000) by 8,000.

In 2024, the monthly increase in jobseekers entering the labor force has exceeded available jobs by an average of 400 each month. This trend began to reverse in August, when increases in employment started keeping pace with consistent growth in the labor force. By October, employment increases finally lowered Ohio’s stagnant unemployment levels, even as 11,000 Ohioans entered the workforce. This is the second time this year when monthly increases in employment surpassed the number of new jobseekers, indicating Ohio employers are building more capacity to meet Ohioans’ demand for work.

“Employment trends in Ohio offer a positive economic outlook, though we remain cautiously optimistic with many uncertainties ahead. Lower interest rates may have given Ohio employers the push they needed to raise employment levels, but it’s unlikely that interest rate cuts have had the same effect on household budgets for the average Ohioan. Since long-term mortgage and [credit card borrowing rates have yet to respond to reduced interest rates](#), Ohio’s working families will need further cuts to increase their financial security,” Bryden said.