

NEBRASKA WORKFORCE TRENDS

SUMMER 2024 ISSUE | NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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Inside this issue

Benchmarking
Snapshot

Nebraskans Urged
to be Cautious When
Hiring a Contractor

Nebraska Businesses Encouraged to
Offer Youth Apprenticeship Programs:
86 Businesses Now Participating



Contents

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 3 | Benchmarking Snapshot |
| 6 | Nebraska Employment Summary |
| 7 | Labor Law Updates and Contractor Information |
| 8 | Employment of Minors: Trends and Requirements |
| 9 | Nebraska Businesses Encouraged to Offer Youth Apprenticeship Programs |
| 10 | Registered Apprenticeships in Nebraska |
| 11 | Panhandle Labor Availability Reports Released |



EducationQuest Symposium

Research Analysts Jodie Meyer and Marc Bettis attended the EducationQuest Symposium, which was held on April 16 at the Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center in Lincoln.

Jodie presented during the breakout session on “Hot Jobs in Nebraska: High-Demand Careers.” She talked about H3 Occupations and shared career resources.

Marc and Jodie also attended the College Access Expo, where they distributed LMI publications, including career ladder posters, STEM posters, H3 handouts, and LMI brochures on using NWorks.

LMI publications can be viewed online at NWorks.nebraska.gov. If you’re interested in booking a presentation from a labor market information analyst, contact us at ndol.lmi_ne@nebraska.gov.

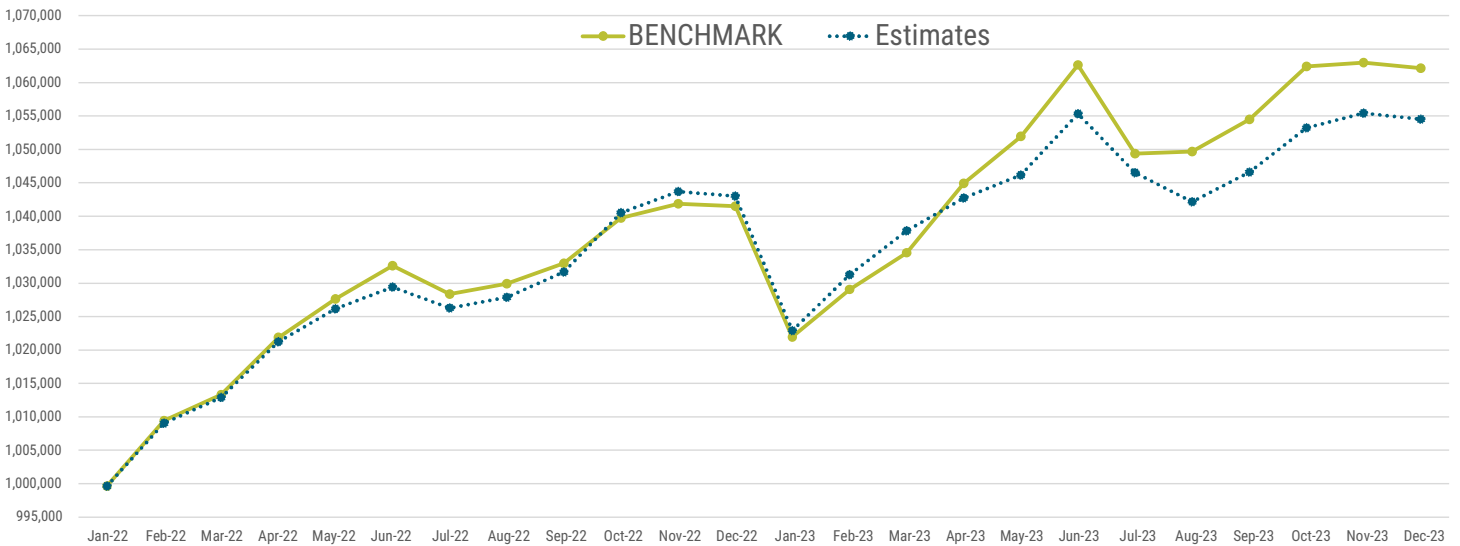
Benchmarking Snapshot:

Revisions to Nonfarm Employment and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

This year's annual benchmarking process completed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics included revisions to data from 2022 and 2023, as well as prior years. Data from both the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program and the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program was included in the revision process.

Statewide total nonfarm employment, professional and business services, and financial activities all saw the number of filled jobs revised up in portions of 2022 and throughout 2023 compared to original estimates (see pages 3 and 4). In the LAUS data (see page 5), both statewide figures and the metropolitan statistical areas of Omaha, Lincoln, and Grand Island saw upward revisions to 2023 employment numbers.

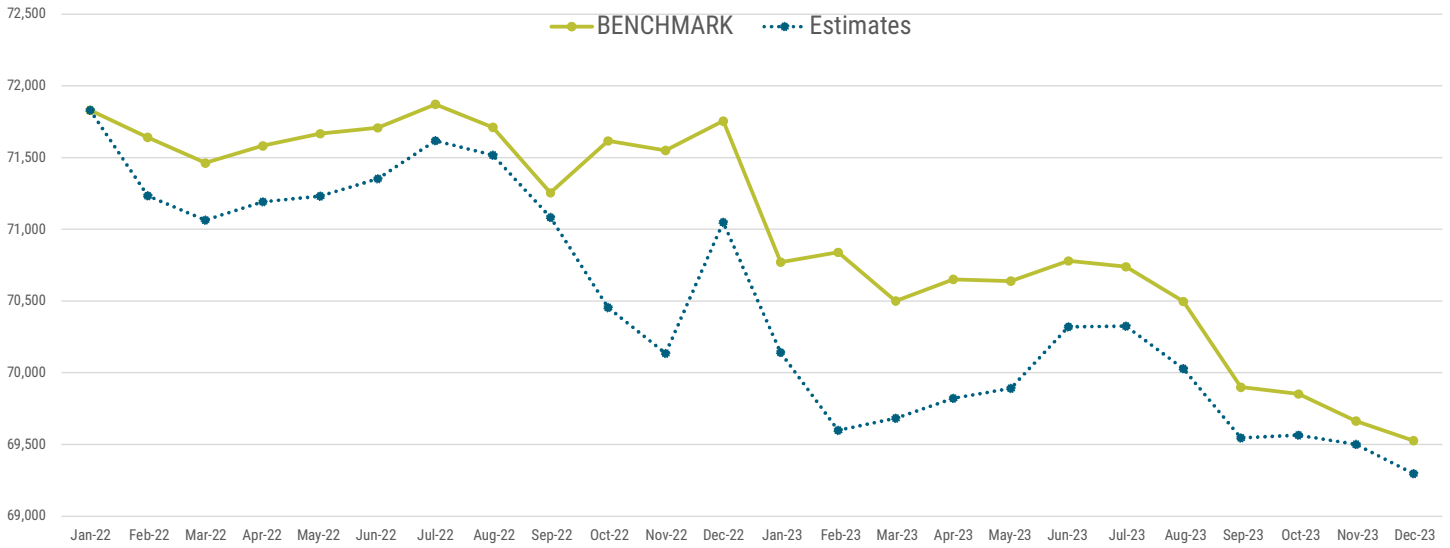
Statewide Total Nonfarm Employment



Total Nonfarm Employment

2023 benchmarked numbers show peak nonfarm employment in November at 1,062,977. Preliminary numbers for 2024 show nonfarm employment climbing higher in April.

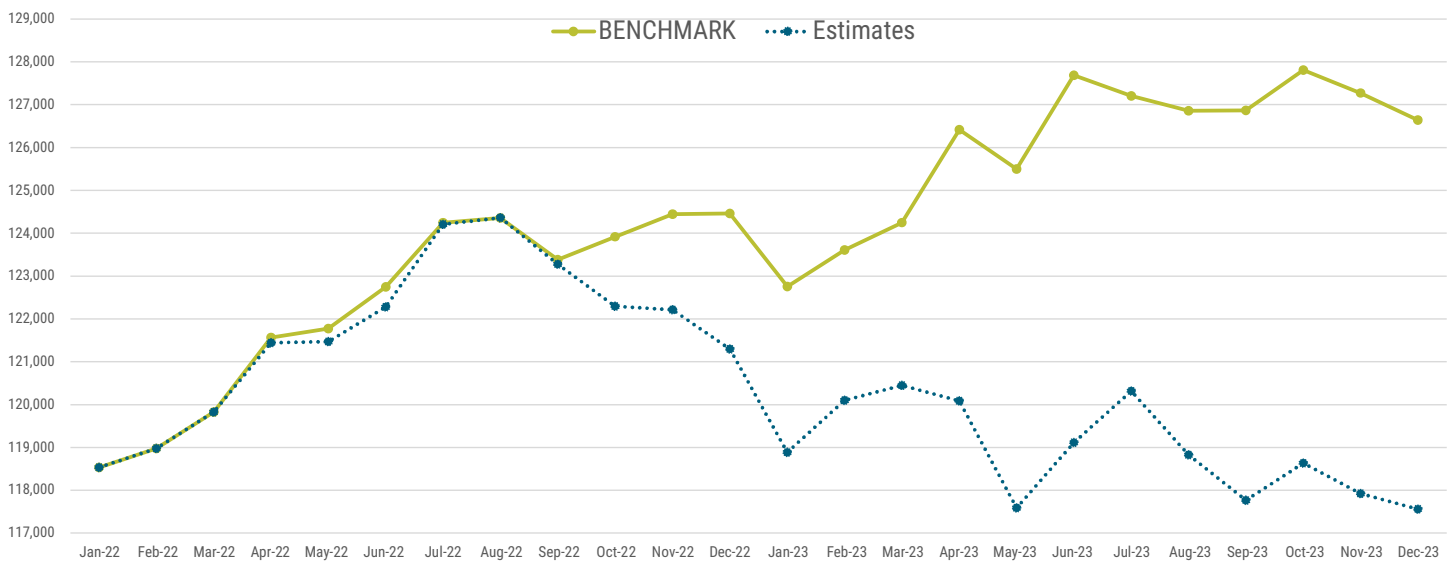
Statewide Financial Activities Employment



Financial Activities

The number of filled jobs in the financial activities industry was revised up throughout 2023. The high for the year was in February at 70,839.

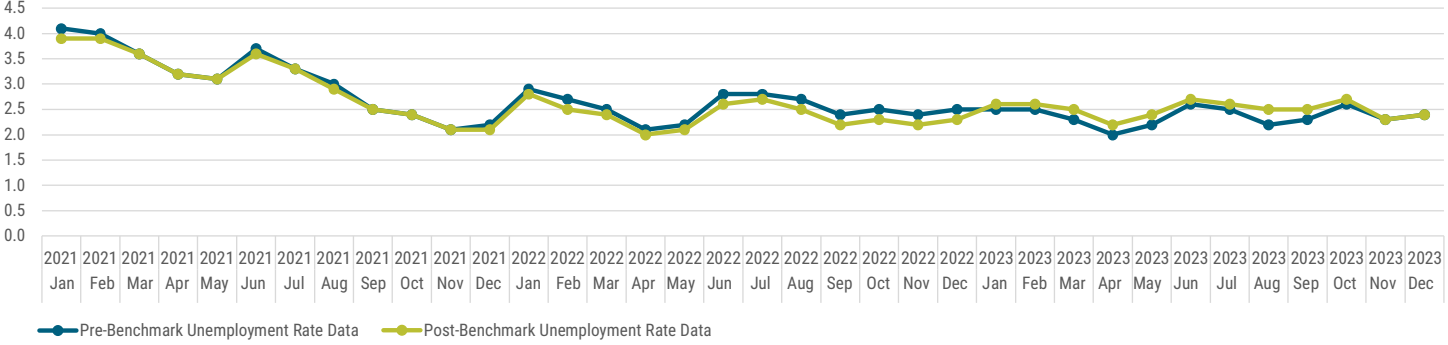
Statewide Professional and Business Services Employment



Professional and Business Services

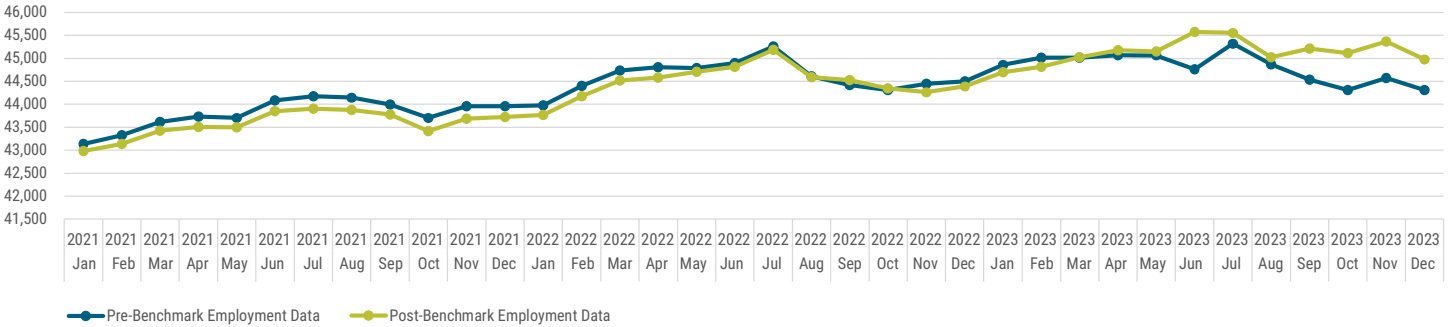
Professional and business services employment reached its peak for 2023 in October at 127,810.

Omaha MSA Unemployment Rate



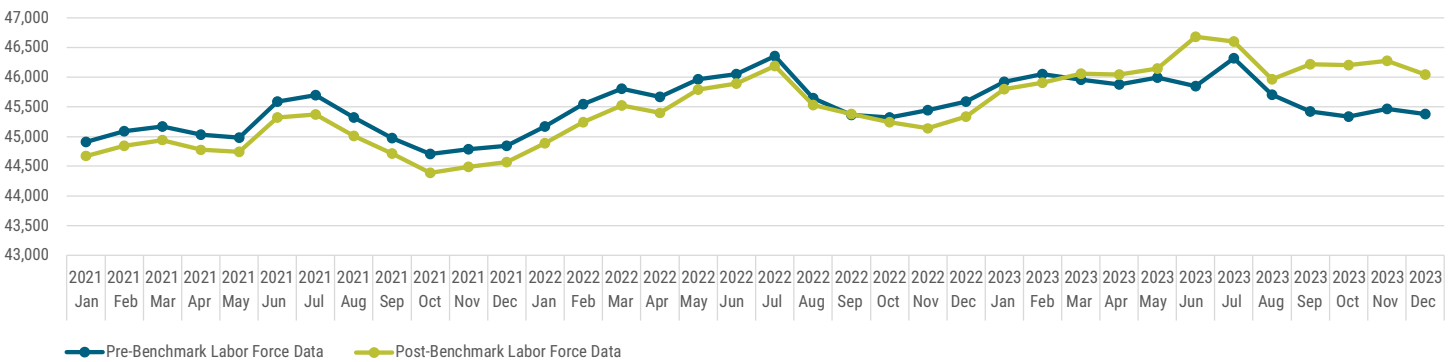
The unemployment rate reached a historical low in April 2022 at 2.0%, rather than in April of 2023 (pre-benchmarking low).

Grand Island MSA Employment



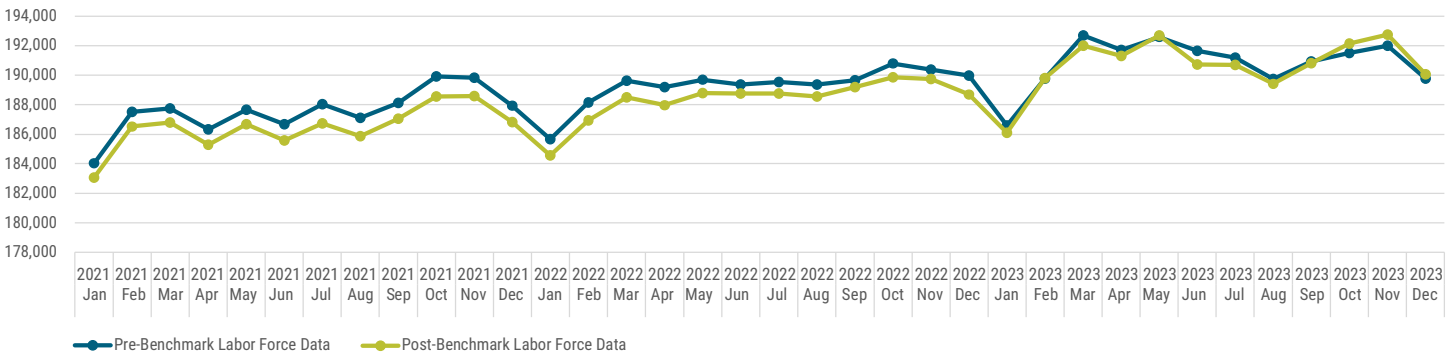
For 2023, Grand Island's peak number of workers employed came in July, reaching 45,721.

Grand Island MSA Labor Force



Grand Island's labor force reached its high for 2023 in July at 46,680.

Lincoln MSA Labor Force



Lincoln's labor force reached its high for 2023 in November at 192,742 rather than March of 2023 (pre-benchmarking high).

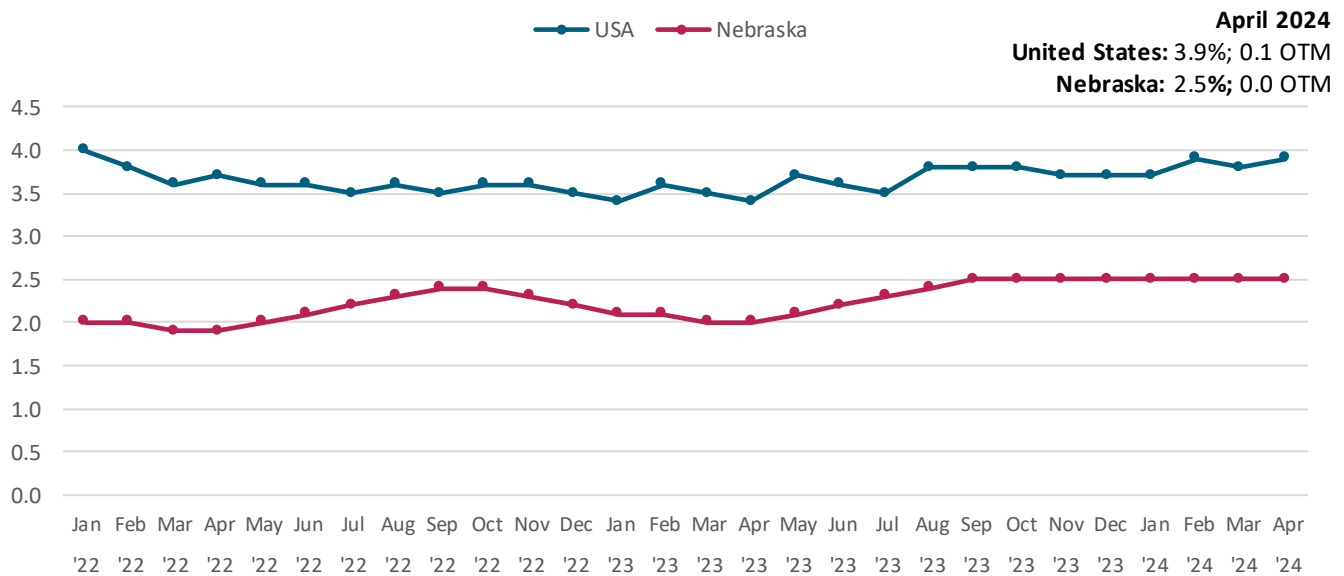
LABOR AREA SUMMARY

View historical data at [Neworks.nebraska.gov/laus](https://nworks.nebraska.gov/laus)

NEBRASKA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Nebraska Employment Summary, April 2024



LABOR FORCE DATA¹ SEASONALLY ADJUSTED

| | Apr-24 | Mar-24 | Apr-23 ² | OTM ³ | OTY ³ | OTM |
|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------|
| | Preliminary | Revised | | Changes | | % Change |
| Unemployment Rate | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 | 0.0 | 0.5 | — |
| Labor Force | 1,054,580 | 1,054,621 | 1,054,413 | -41 | 167 | 0.0 |
| Unemployed | 26,115 | 26,293 | 21,462 | -178 | 4,653 | -0.7 |
| Employed | 1,028,465 | 1,028,328 | 1,032,951 | 137 | -4,486 | 0.0 |

NONFARM EMPLOYMENT⁴ BY PLACE OF WORK (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

| April Nonfarm Jobs | 1,063,738 | Manufacturing | 107,476 |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| OTM Change | 7,102 (0.7%) | OTM Change | 614 (0.6%) |
| OTY Change | 18,816 (1.8%) | OTY Change | 3,316 (3.2%) |

NEBRASKA HOUR & WAGE DATA⁴

| Average Weekly Hours | 39.5 | Average Weekly Earnings | \$998.56 |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| OTM Change | 0.4 (1.0%) | OTM Change | \$18.32 (1.9%) |
| OTY Change | 1.2 (3.1%) | OTY Change | \$54.08 (5.7%) |
| Average Hourly Earnings | \$25.28 | | |
| OTM Change | \$0.21 (0.8%) | | |
| OTY Change | \$0.62 (2.5%) | | |

¹ Sources: Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program (LAUS), Nebraska Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor

² 2023 data has been benchmarked

³ OTM: over the month; OTY: over the year

⁴ Current Employment Statistics Program (CES), Nebraska Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor

Labor Law Updates

Nebraskans Urged to be Cautious When Hiring a Contractor

As the agency enforcing Nebraska's Contractor Registration Act, the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) reminds Nebraskans to use caution when hiring contractors to repair or remodel their homes and businesses.

Make sure all contractors you speak with are registered with the NDOL and are in compliance with local licensing and building permit requirements. A searchable listing of registered contractors is available at dol.nebraska.gov/conreg/Search

Consumers can minimize the chances of being scammed by an unscrupulous contractor by following these recommendations:

- **Beware of a contractor who makes you an unsolicited offer by showing up at your doorstep with a great deal.**
- **Check references.**
- **Get written estimates, a written contract, proof of insurance, and a written warranty.**

Contractor registration is required of all contractors prior to doing work in Nebraska, but does not ensure quality of work or protect against fraud. However, consumers following the above recommendations can greatly increase their chances of having a positive experience when using the services of a construction contractor. For more information, go to the Nebraska Department of Labor website at dol.nebraska.gov or call 402-471-2239.



Roughly **19,000** Contractors were registered in Nebraska last year.

Wage Payment and Collection

NDOL administers the Wage Payment and Collection Act and conducts investigations regarding possible wages owed to employees. Wage complaints are filed through the Department of Labor’s website, dol.nebraska.gov, and a team of labor law investigators determines the amount of wages owed, if any. Since 2020, wage investigations have recovered over **\$3.4 million** in wages.



Employment of Minors: Trends and Requirements

In Nebraska, minors must be at least 14 years of age to be employed. There are a few exceptions, including minors working for their parent’s business, minors working in agriculture, and minors working in the performing arts. Fourteen to 15 year old minors not working in detasseling or for their parent's business must obtain an Employment Certificate from the school district in which they reside. Home schooled children may obtain an Employment Certificate by providing proof of age and grade level to the school within their district. The minor must be present in order for a certificate to be issued.

Under Nebraska law, minors 14-15 years of age are not permitted to work more than eight hours a day or 48 hours per week, and not before 6 a.m. or after 10 p.m. Federal child labor rules are stricter. They can be viewed online at www.dol.gov. When both laws apply, the more stringent standard must be observed.

In 2023, NDOL received **2,801** certificates for the employment of minors ages 14-15, and the number of certificates received each year has been increasing since 2020. So far, in 2024, **632** certificates have been received, with an expected seasonal increase occurring since March.

Youth Employment Certificates Received by NDOL

| | Jan | Feb | March | April | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Total |
|-------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-----|------|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2024 | 86 | 119 | 137 | 290 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2023 | 157 | 165 | 185 | 287 | 585 | 393 | 135 | 269 | 192 | 172 | 167 | 94 | 2,801 |
| 2022 | 126 | 114 | 237 | 240 | 415 | 444 | 259 | 283 | 228 | 208 | 177 | 143 | 2,874 |
| 2021 | 42 | 95 | 101 | 217 | 411 | 447 | 263 | 192 | 262 | 186 | 173 | 179 | 2,568 |
| 2020 | 61 | 72 | 84 | 64 | 69 | 157 | 167 | 157 | 155 | 84 | 47 | 107 | 1,224 |
| 2019 | 45 | 47 | 102 | 239 | 333 | 162 | 67 | 130 | 127 | 128 | 78 | 119 | 1,577 |

New Child Labor Web Complaint Form

Visit dol.nebraska.gov/ChildLaborSubmission/SubmitChildLaborCaseForm to file a child labor complaint.

Did you know?



86

businesses across the state are now employing youth Registered Apprentices in 30 different occupations.

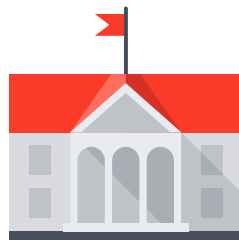


Six high schools, three community colleges, and two universities are partnering with these businesses to offer youth ages 16-24 positions that earn a wage while teaching valuable job skills.



6

High Schools



3

Community Colleges



2

Universities

Nebraska Businesses Encouraged to Offer Youth Apprenticeship Programs: 86 Businesses Now Participating

The Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) invites businesses across Nebraska to join a growing group of employers providing youth Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. Eighty-six businesses across Nebraska are now employing youth apprentices in 30 different occupations. Six high schools, three community colleges, and two universities are partnering with these businesses to offer youth ages 16-24 positions that earn a wage while teaching valuable job skills.

In May, the NDOL was among the organizations on hand for the youth apprenticeship signing ceremony at Grand Island Career Pathways Institute. Career & Technical Education (CTE) and Grand Island Senior High (GISH) hosted the annual event. For the eighth straight year, juniors in the GISH Academy of Technical Sciences signed on to participate in Registered Apprenticeships with local businesses. Registered Apprenticeships combine supervised on-the-job training with technical classroom instruction in subjects related to the apprentice's chosen occupation.

Grand Island Senior High became the first high school in Nebraska to offer paid apprenticeships for students in career and technical education (CTE) programs. **Over 60 students have since completed Registered Apprenticeships, with Grand Island representing 18 apprenticeship business partners across the state.**

Lt. Gov. Joe Kelly addressed the latest group of apprentices at the Grand Island event. "What a great way to keep you here in Nebraska," said Lt. Gov. Kelly. "We're always looking for that. I think everybody in the state can look at a program like this and say, 'Yeah, let's do it like Grand Island.'"

Youth Apprenticeship Week (YAW) was celebrated May 5–11 nationwide. The week celebrates the benefits and value of Registered Apprenticeship program opportunities for youth. **There are 101 enrolled youth apprentices in Nebraska across 11 different programs.**

If you're an employer interested in learning more about Youth Apprenticeship Programs, email NDOL.Apprenticeship@nebraska.gov.

Registered Apprenticeships in Nebraska

Registered Apprenticeships are employment training programs registered with the USDOL and employ an “Earn while you learn” model.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs are registered for specific occupations and combine on-the-job training with related classroom instruction.

Statewide Metrics

- **There are 113 registered apprenticeship programs statewide.**
- **There are over 300 partner employers signed on to existing registered apprenticeship programs.**
- **Currently, there are approximately 2500 active registered apprentices in Nebraska.**
- **Last year, 378 apprentices completed their respective programs in Nebraska.**



Panhandle Labor Availability Reports Released

Labor Availability and Hiring Needs Reports for **Scottsbluff, Sidney, Alliance, and Chadron** are now available at NEworks.nebraska.gov. The reports cover responses from **11 counties, 390 businesses**, and over **1,200 households** on topics including hiring difficulty, barriers to employment, job openings, and important factors when seeking employment. The survey area population total includes over **63,000 adults** and an estimated total labor force of over **41,000**.

Job Seeker Findings

- **The surveys found an estimated 19,695 potential job seekers 18 and older in the survey areas.**
- Most employed potential job seekers listed **commute time, work schedule, security and stability**, and **using their existing skills** as the top factors that lead to job satisfaction.
- Potential job seekers reported **inadequate pay and benefits, lack of job opportunities in the area**, and **work schedule flexibility** as obstacles to employment.

Employer Findings

- Survey respondents listed professional, scientific, and technical services; health care and social assistance; construction; and agriculture as the industries with the most difficulty hiring workers. **Difficulty hiring in professional, scientific, and technical services industries was notable in that 100% of related businesses in all four areas reported difficulty hiring.**
- **The percentage of frequently hired jobs reported as difficult to fill ranged from 84 percent in Scottsbluff to 91 percent in the Alliance area.**
- **By far the most common reason for hiring difficulty cited by employees was a lack of applicants (82-95% depending on the area).** Poor work history and lack of work experience were reasons reported by at least half of employers in each survey area.
- **The most commonly listed skill where employers said employees needed additional training was leadership.** Critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork were also listed. More Alliance employers noted advanced computer skills as an area for additional training.
- **Between 78 and 88 percent of businesses in all areas surveyed indicated that they increased pay to expand their candidate pool.** More than 42 percent of businesses in Alliance and Chadron reported hiring interns/temporary workers to address difficulty hiring. Other measures taken by employers included increasing benefits and reducing work experience requirements, among others.

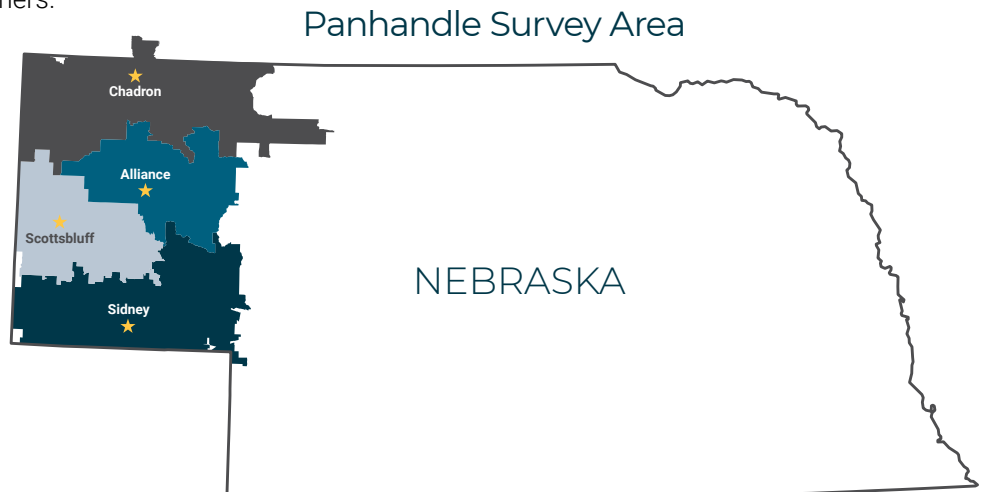
Factors most important to potential job seekers when considering new employment:

- Salary
- Job security and stability
- Company values
- Paid vacation
- Retirement benefits
- Paid sick Leave

Questions about the survey findings may be directed to lmi_ne@nebraska.gov.

Upcoming Labor Availability and Hiring Needs Reports

- Ogallala
- North Platte
- McCook
- Broken Bow
- Ord
- Valentine
- O'Neill



1,054,580

Total Nonfarm Employment (filled jobs)
Not Seasonally Adjusted
for April 2024

Nonfarm employment, a count of filled jobs, was up 7,102 over the month and 18,816 over the year. Private industries with the most growth month to month were mining and construction (up 2,097 jobs); leisure and hospitality services (up 1,968 jobs); and trade, transportation, and utilities (up 920 jobs). Private industries with the most over-the-year growth were private education and health services (up 6,643 jobs); trade, transportation, and utilities (up 4,381 jobs); and leisure and hospitality services (up 3,316 jobs).

Data Source:

NE- Nebraska Department of Labor. Current Employment Statistics. NWorks. networks.nebraska.gov/ces.

33,525

Job count on NWorks as of
June 11, 2024

.....

59,433

Total job count on NWorks for the
month of **May 2024**

This number reflects the number of job openings advertised on NWorks in Nebraska in May 2024.

Data Source:

NE- Nebraska Department of Labor. Online advertised jobs data. NWorks. networks.nebraska.gov.

Helpful Links

[Labor Market Publications](#)

[Previous Issues](#)

NWorks.nebraska.gov

Labor market information is updated continuously.
For the latest data, visit networks.nebraska.gov or contact us
at 800-876-1377 or email lmi_ne@nebraska.gov.



Equal Opportunity Employer/Program.
TDD: 1.800.833.7352

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.