

# INSIGHTS

4.2%  
April  
Unemployment Rate

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S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

Business Intelligence Department

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## Unemployment rate declines to 4.2 percent, employment continues record climb

South Carolina's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped to 4.2 percent in April, down from 4.4 percent in March as the number of employed reached a new all time high.

The number of individuals working across the state inched upward in April by 318 people to a record level of 2,225,570. Unemployment decreased in April by 4,157 to a level of 97,922, resulting in the state's labor force declining by 3,839 to 2,323,492.

Since April of 2017, the seasonally adjusted labor force has grown by 15,916 people, and employment gains totaled 16,266. The level of unemployed declined by approximately 350 people.

Nationally, the unemployment rate edged down to 3.9 percent from March's rate of 4.1 percent. Similar to the state, driving the national rate lower was a decline in the labor force as fewer people looked for work.

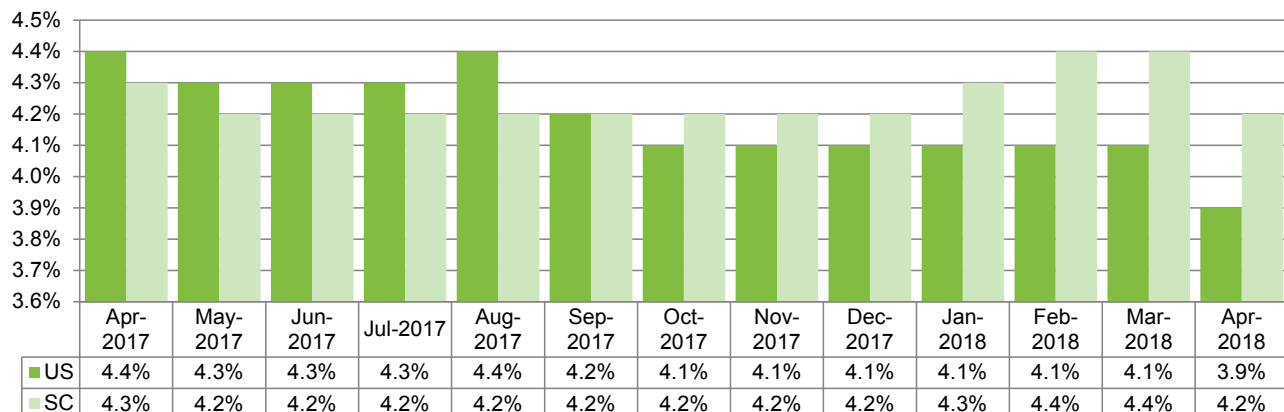


## Economic Indicators

April 2018 - Seasonally Adjusted (SA)

	United States	S.C.
Labor Force	161,527,000	2,323,492
Employed	155,181,000	2,225,570
Unemployed	6,346,000	97,922
Unemp. Rate	3.9%	4.2%

South Carolina vs U.S. Unemployment Rate  
April 2017 - April 2018



*Insights* is prepared in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The current month's estimates are preliminary, while all previous data are subject to revision. All estimates are projected from a first quarter 2017 benchmark. To subscribe to *Insights*, please email [bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov](mailto:bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov) or to provide feedback please click on the [BID Customer Feedback Form](#).

## U.S., S.C. unemployment rates fall in April 2018, S.C. rate ranked 29th lowest

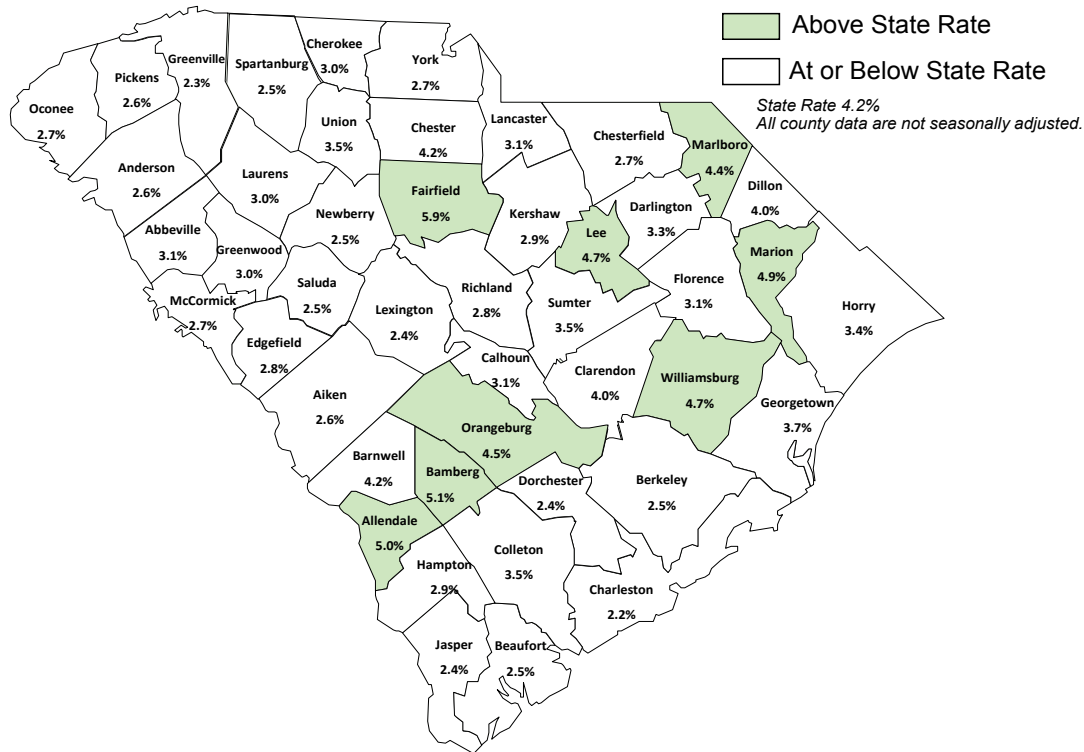
Unemployment rates were lower in April in four states and stable in 46 states and the District of Columbia. Twelve states had jobless rate decreases from a year earlier, and 38 states and the District had little or no change. The national unemployment rate edged down from March to 3.9 percent in April, while South Carolina's unemployment rate fell to 4.2 percent, ranking 29th lowest of 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Three states had over-the-month increases in nonfarm payroll employment in April 2018: Texas (+39,600, or +0.3 percent), California (+39,300, or +0.2 percent) and Louisiana (+9,200, or +0.5 percent). Twenty-eight states had over-the-year increases in nonfarm payroll employment in April. The largest job gains occurred in California (+356,800), Texas (+332,300) and Florida (+178,400). The largest percentage gain occurred in Nevada (+3.4 percent), followed by Idaho and Utah (+3.3 percent each).

### April unemployment rate by county

Not seasonally adjusted county unemployment rate estimates declined across the state in April as the not seasonally statewide unemployment rate raced lower for the third consecutive month. Driving the rate lower was fewer people looking for work. Overall, county unemployment rates ranged from 5.9 percent in Fairfield County to 2.2 percent in Charleston County.

Seasonal hiring in the coastal areas of Horry and Beaufort counties led the over-the-month growth as the tourist season prepares to ramp up.



Hawaii	2.0
New Hampshire	2.6
North Dakota	2.6
Maine	2.7
Iowa	2.8
Nebraska	2.8
Vermont	2.8
Wisconsin	2.8
Colorado	2.9
Idaho	2.9
Utah	3.1
Indiana	3.2
Minnesota	3.2
Virginia	3.3
Kansas	3.4
South Dakota	3.4
Tennessee	3.4
Massachusetts	3.5
Missouri	3.6
Alabama	3.8
Arkansas	3.8
Wyoming	3.8
Florida	3.9
<a href="#">United States</a>	<a href="#">3.9</a>
Kentucky	4.0
Montana	4.0
Oklahoma	4.0
Oregon	4.1
Texas	4.1
California	4.2
Delaware	4.2
<a href="#">South Carolina</a>	<a href="#">4.2</a>
Georgia	4.3
Maryland	4.3
Ohio	4.3
Illinois	4.4
North Carolina	4.4
Connecticut	4.5
Louisiana	4.5
New Jersey	4.5
Rhode Island	4.5
Mississippi	4.6
New York	4.6
Michigan	4.7
Pennsylvania	4.7
Washington	4.8
Arizona	4.9
Nevada	4.9
New Mexico	5.4
West Virginia	5.4
District of Columbia	5.6
Alaska	7.3

### April 2018

Highest County Unemployment Rates		Lowest County Unemployment Rates	
Fairfield	5.9%	Charleston	2.2%
Bamberg	5.1%	Greenville	2.3%
Allendale	5.0%	Dorchester	2.4%
Marion	4.9%	Jasper	2.4%
Lee	4.7%	Lexington	2.4%

### April 2018

Economic Indicators Average Hours & Earnings		
	United States (SA)	S.C. (Unadj.)
Manufacturing		
Avg. Weekly Earnings	\$1,106.00	\$838.43
Avg. Weekly Hours	41.1	43.6
Avg. Hourly Wage	\$26.91	\$19.23

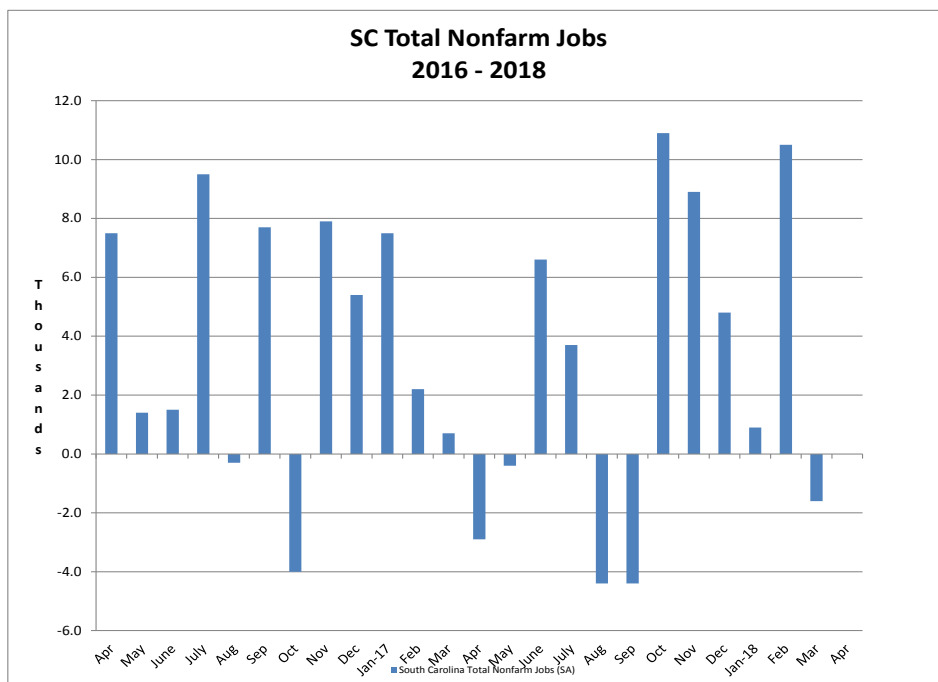
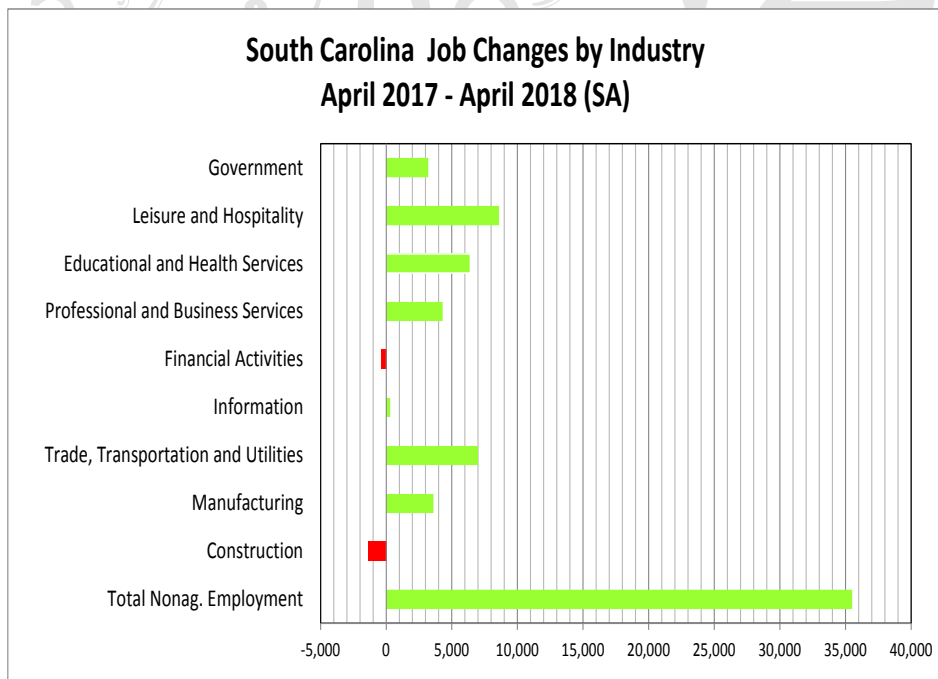
### South Carolina nonfarm employment trends for April - seasonally adjusted

In April 2018 seasonally adjusted, nonfarm payrolls remained the same over the month at a level of 2,119,800. The consistency in employment was primarily due to growth in Manufacturing (+900); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+600); Education and Health Services (+600); Other Services (+600); and Government (+200). The industries reporting declines during the same period were Construction (-1,300); Leisure and Hospitality (-1,200); Financial Activities (-200); Professional and Business Services (-100); and Information (-100).

From April 2017 to April 2018, South Carolina's economy added 35,500 seasonally adjusted, nonfarm jobs with noticeable gains in Leisure and Hospitality (+8,600); Education and Health Services (+6,400); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+7,000); Professional and Business Services (+4,300); Other Services (+3,800); Manufacturing (+3,600); Government (+3,200); and Information (+300). The only industries recording a decline during this period were in Construction (-1,400) and Financial Activities (-400).

For the Metropolitan Statistical Areas, seasonally adjusted, total nonfarm payrolls' most significant job growth was in Spartanburg (+1,100); Hilton Head Bluffton Beaufort (+400); and Sumter (+200). Over-the-month reported decreases were in Myrtle Beach (-1,000); Greenville (-400); Charleston (-400); and Columbia (-100). The employment in Florence (0) remained constant over the month.

Over-the-year, the Metropolitan Statistical Areas saw a surge in seasonally adjusted payroll. Notable employment gains were seen in Greenville (+7,700); Charleston (+5,700); and Spartanburg (+4,300).



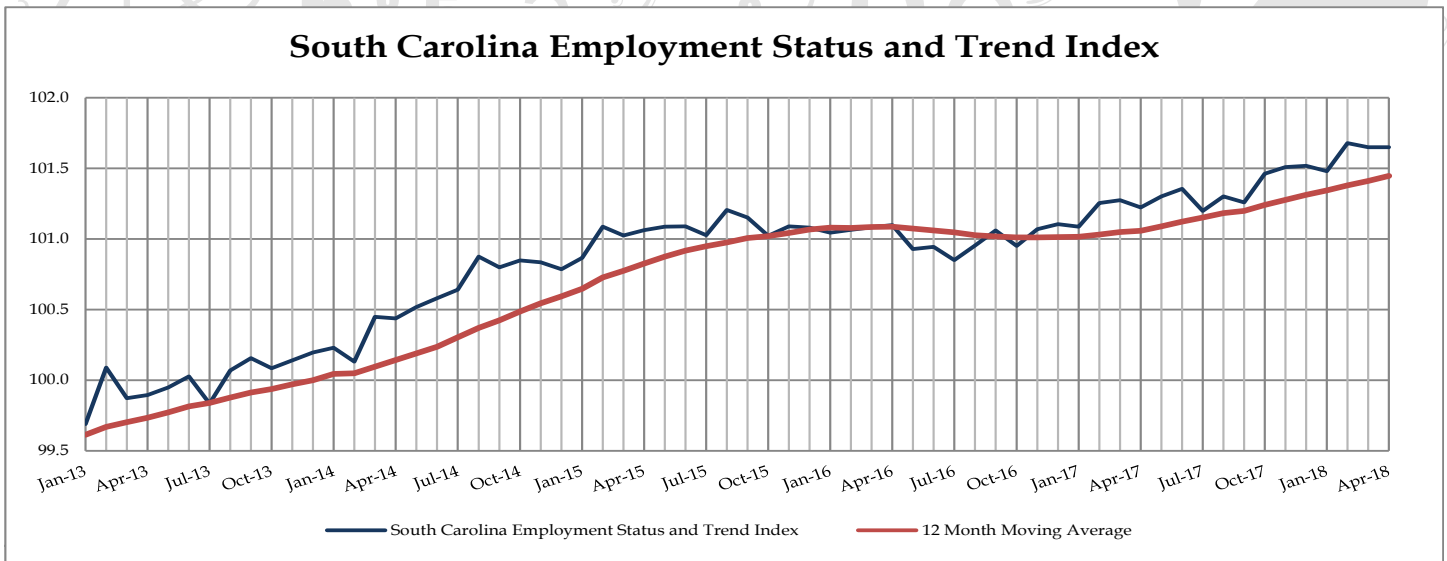
MSA	Over Month % Change	Over Year % Change
Sumter MSA	0.51%	1.28%
Florence MSA	0.00%	1.14%
Columbia MSA	-0.03%	-0.23%
Greenville MSA	-0.09%	1.86%

To see the monthly not seasonally adjusted data series, go to [www.SCWorkforceInfo.com](http://www.SCWorkforceInfo.com) (Employment and Wage Data section)

**Employment changes by county**  
February 2018 through April 2018

County	Employment			Net Change From	
	Apr 2018	Mar 2018	Feb 2018	Mar '18 - Apr '18	Feb '18 - Mar '18
Abbeville	9,691	9,718	9,747	-27	-29
Aiken	73,466	72,732	72,693	734	39
Allendale	2,586	2,573	2,617	13	-44
Anderson	86,719	87,041	86,400	-322	641
Bamberg	4,842	4,829	4,892	13	-63
Barnwell	7,715	7,696	7,747	19	-51
Beaufort	72,406	71,280	70,225	1,126	1,055
Berkeley	94,863	95,149	94,281	-286	868
Calhoun	6,475	6,462	6,476	13	-14
Charleston	198,172	198,739	197,281	-567	1,458
Cherokee	23,319	23,344	23,407	-25	-63
Chester	12,931	12,910	12,842	21	68
Chesterfield	20,871	20,858	20,988	13	-130
Clarendon	11,810	11,774	11,904	36	-130
Colleton	16,274	16,292	16,370	-18	-78
Darlington	28,387	28,443	28,335	-56	108
Dillon	12,015	11,984	12,120	31	-136
Dorchester	71,540	71,746	71,126	-206	620
Edgefield	10,349	10,224	10,278	125	-54
Fairfield	9,279	9,271	9,268	8	3
Florence	62,730	62,968	62,579	-238	389
Georgetown	24,566	24,402	24,454	164	-52
Greenville	240,413	241,358	239,463	-945	1,895
Greenwood	29,627	29,686	29,795	-59	-109
Hampton	7,976	7,896	7,953	80	-57
Horry	139,040	135,285	131,594	3,755	3,691
Jasper	11,984	11,807	11,703	177	104
Kershaw	27,736	27,715	27,697	21	18
Lancaster	37,765	37,723	37,521	42	202
Laurens	29,088	29,176	29,014	-88	162
Lee	6,056	6,043	6,078	13	-35
Lexington	142,173	142,178	141,885	-5	293
McCormick	3,273	3,274	3,288	-1	-14
Marion	11,764	11,701	11,694	63	7
Marlboro	8,796	8,803	8,859	-7	-56
Newberry	17,795	17,733	17,933	62	-200
Oconee	33,262	33,306	33,450	-44	-144
Orangeburg	32,884	32,880	33,131	4	-251
Pickens	54,749	54,967	54,561	-218	406
Richland	191,035	191,222	190,332	-187	890
Saluda	8,466	8,395	8,521	71	-126
Spartanburg	142,477	142,041	142,045	436	-4
Sumter	41,970	41,887	41,777	83	110
Union	11,292	11,257	11,263	35	-6
Williamsburg	11,795	11,795	11,877	0	-82
York	129,720	129,665	128,810	55	855

S. C. Employment Status and Trend Index remains steady again in April 2018



S.C. Employment Status and Trend Index (SCESTI), an aggregate of five labor-market indicators, did not change again in April 2018, remaining at its revised March value of 101.65. The Index continued above its 12-month moving average, which rose to 101.45 for the month from 101.41 in March.

Three of the five underlying labor-market components moved in a positive direction in April. The Conference Board’s Employment Trends Index grew in April to 108.08 points from a March value of 107.37. The Conference Board’s Consumer Confidence Index rose by 1.7 points from March’s value of 127.0 to 128.7 in April. The Conference Board’s Help Wanted Online data, which tracks the number of available job openings posted online, climbed by 847 in April to 61,188 from 60,341 in March. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance increased from a March average of 2,024 per week to an April average of 2,119 per week. The Bureau of Labor Statistic’s Weekly Manufacturing Hours data showed production hours decreasing to a preliminary 43.6 hours per week in April over its revised March level of 44.4.

SCESTI is well ahead of its year-ago figure of 101.22 in April of 2017. With the Index remaining above the 12-month moving average, SCESTI indicates a positive employment trend over the next several months.

## U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics rolls out new separations methodology

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has implemented a new separations methodology to measure occupational separations for 2016-2026 employment projections. The separations methodology was developed to better capture a more accurate picture of the workforce and give BLS the ability to differentiate between workers who are leaving the labor force entirely, for example, for retirement and those who are changing jobs and leaving an occupation, such as for a promotion to a different position.

Employment projections are utilized to predict what will happen in the future in regard to occupations and help stakeholders determine what areas of the economy are expected to see growth and decline. Projections help higher education professionals, labor market analysts and employers determine what occupations will have more openings than others to best train and prepare the workforce.

Workers once entered the labor force at a young age, typically working until retirement in the same occupation. New, younger workers would replace them once they retired. It is no secret the workforce has changed. From technology advancements and trends in the workforce, to policy updates and new standards in human resources, the U.S. labor force is vastly different.

These changes in the workforce have brought about the need for a new methodology. Workers today are more likely to be transient and work in a number of occupations during their lifetime. The separations methodology accounts for this workforce trend, capturing reasons workers leave an occupation other than retirement, such as changing careers, being promoted into management or completing a retraining program.

“The once-traditional career path of entering an occupation at a young age and working until retirement in that same occupation is no longer the norm for American workers,” said Michael Wolf, chief of the Division of Occupation Employment Projections at BLS. “Now, it’s common for workers to work in a number of occupations throughout the course of their career. The separations methodology captures different job changes and allows us to better produce employment projections.”

The separations methodology incorporates past data, patterns and trends to generate employment projections. Projections from the past replacements methodology should not be compared with projections created using the new separations method. Past projections become outdated when actual employment catches up with them or new projections are released. These are no longer an accurate representation of the workforce.

Projections produced using the new separations methodology will vary from the projections derived from the previous method. This is due to methodological, not conceptual, factors. To compare historical trends to current projections, a practitioner should use actual employment figures from the time period. When new projections are released, old projections become obsolete.

States finalized short-term employment projections using the separations methodology in February 2018. In January 2018, all states began preparing long-term employment projections using the separations methodology, finalizing results in June 2018.

For more information about the new separations methodology, please visit: [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_separations.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_separations.htm).