

# Unemployment Insurance Claimants: 1st Quarter 2009

An Analysis of South Carolina's Population  
of Insured Unemployed, January – March,  
2009

Division of Research  
Labor Market Information Group  
South Carolina Department of Commerce

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This study represents an analysis of the set of Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimant data received from the South Carolina Employment Security Commission on April 24th, 2009. The dataset includes 103,844 claims for Unemployment Insurance in South Carolina between January 1st 2009 and March 31st 2009, representing 103,210 individuals.

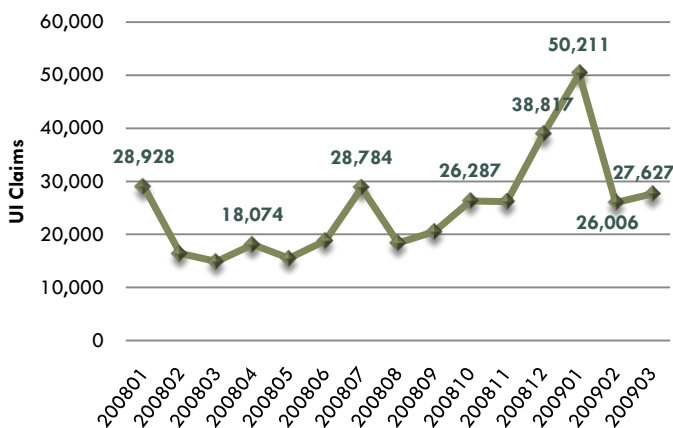


# 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER OVERVIEW: South Carolina's Unemployment Insurance Claimant Population

According to Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimant data received from the South Carolina Employment Security Commission on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 103,844 new claims were filed for Unemployment Insurance in South Carolina between January 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009, representing 103,210 individuals.

## Total Claims

**Figure 1-1. South Carolina Unemployment Insurance Claims Filed by Month, 2008Q1 – 2009Q1**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

The Unemployment Insurance system in South Carolina experienced the following activity between January 1, 2009 and March 31, 2009. Repeat claimants are defined as claimants who filed at least one previous claim within the preceding two years.

- ▶ **Claims:** 103,844
- ▶ **Unique Claimants:** 103,210
- ▶ **Repeat Claimants:** 33,856

Figure 1-1 exhibits the seasonal nature of UI claims, with large spikes in filings in January of each year and smaller spikes in filings in July of each year coinciding with temporary plant closings and seasonal industries.

Prior to 2009, claims followed a fairly regular pattern and stayed relatively constant year to year. January 2009 claims were 73.6% higher than the previous year as shown in Table 1-1. March 2009 is the first March to have more claims than February, experiencing an 85.4% increase over the prior year.

**Table 1-1. South Carolina UI Claims Filed by Month, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**

Month	2008 Claims	2009 Claims	% Increase
January	28,928	50,211	73.6%
February	16,397	26,006	58.6%
March	14,900	27,627	85.4%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Average monthly claims per quarter are shown in Table 1-2 for the trailing five quarters. Between 2006 and 2008 an average of 19,683 claims were filed each month. In 2009Q1, the average number of claims filed per month rose to 34,615.

**Table 1-2. South Carolina Average Monthly UI Claims by Quarter, 2008Q1 – 2009Q1**

Quarter	Average Monthly Claims per Quarter	% Change from prior Quarter
2008Q1	20,075	9.2%
2008Q2	17,456	-15.0%
2008Q3	22,552	22.6%
2008Q4	30,417	25.9%
2009Q1	34,615	12.1%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

## Age

**Table 1-3. South Carolina UI Claimant Age, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**

Age Range	2008Q1		2008Q4		2009Q1	
	Claimants	%	Claimants	%	Claimants	%
1-10	0	0.0	4	0.0	1	0.0
11-20	2,497	4.2	4,027	4.4	3,674	3.6
21-30	13,012	21.8	20,118	22.1	19,698	19.1
31-40	10,033	16.8	16,331	18.0	16,550	16.0
41-50	10,197	17.1	15,998	17.6	16,621	16.1
51-60	6,564	11.0	10,994	12.1	11,951	11.6
61-70	1,603	2.7	3,215	3.5	3,627	3.5
71-80	252	0.4	458	0.5	500	0.5
81-90	43	0.1	53	0.1	70	0.1
91+	50	0.1	107	0.1	73	0.1
Missing	15,337	25.7	19,682	21.6	30,445	29.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,588</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>90,987</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>103,210</b>	<b>100</b>

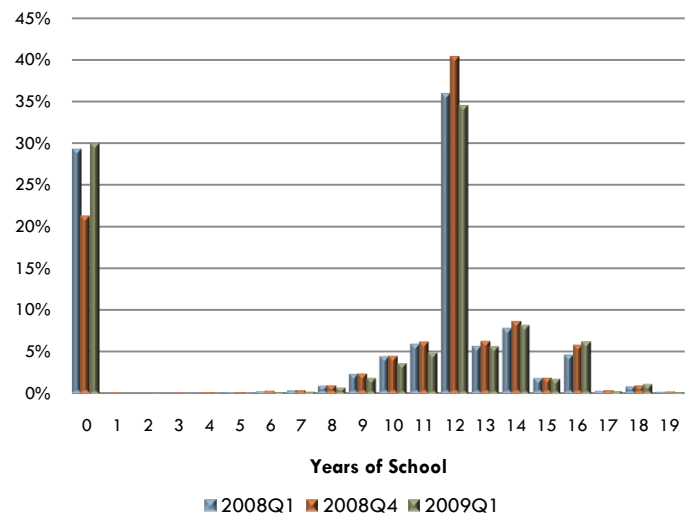
Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

The largest percentage of UI claimants fall within the 21 to 30 year old age range, representing 19.1% of claimants in the first quarter of 2009 compared to 21.8% of claimants in the first quarter of 2008 and 22.1% in the prior quarter. The percentage of claimants with unknown ages is 29.5%, up by 3.8 percentage points compared to the same period in the previous year and up 7.9 percentage points over the previous quarter.

The higher level of employer-filed claims during the month of January, driven by seasonal layoffs and economic downturn, largely affects the amount of missing data provided with each claim. Of the 30,445 claimants with unknown age in the first quarter of 2009, 87.0% are employer-filed claimants. In 2008 first quarter, of the 15,337 claimants with unknown age, 77.5% were employer-filed.

## Education

**Figure 1-2. South Carolina UI Claimant Educational Attainment, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data  
Note: Unknown values coded as zero (0)

Educational attainment is not collected for 30% of new claimants in the first quarter of 2009, up from 29.1% in the same quarter of 2008, and up from 21.3% in the quarter prior. Again, employer filings are responsible for the increase in missing data. Of the claimants with unknown education levels in 2009, 31,332 (85.6%) claimants are filed by their employers. In the first quarter of 2008, 68.4% of claimants with unknown education levels were filed by their employers. In the fourth quarter 2008, 73.7% of claimants with unknown education were filed by their employers.

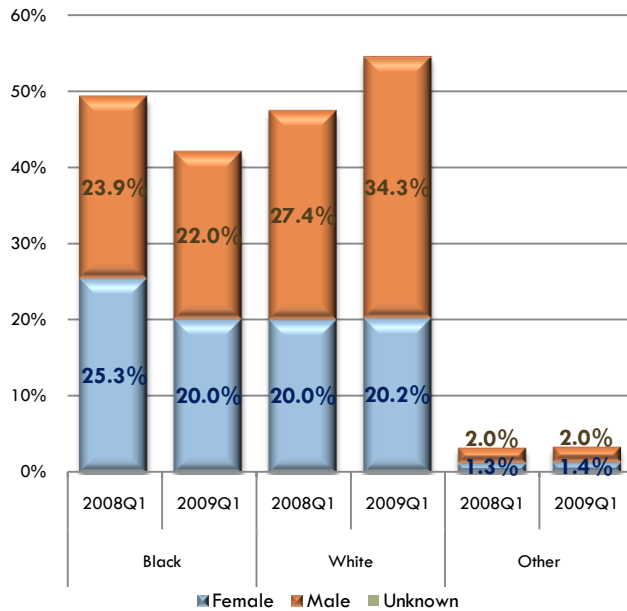
A shift in educational attainment occurred from the first quarter of 2008 to the first quarter of 2009. Fewer claimants with high school degrees or fewer years of education filed claims for UI, while claimants with some college experience and more participated at a higher rate. The only exception to the trend occurred in claimants with 12 years of education, which increased in the fourth quarter of 2008, during which time the number of claims with missing education levels declined.

Of 72,260 individuals for whom educational data was collected in the first quarter of 2009,

- ▶ 16.9% did not complete high school (down from 19.9% in 2008Q1 and 18.5% in 2008Q4),
- ▶ 49.3% had a high school diploma or equivalent (down from 50.6% in 2008Q1 and 51.3% in 2008Q4),
- ▶ 33.8% had at least one year of post-secondary education (up from 29.5% in 2008Q1 and 30.2% in 2008Q4).

## Gender and Race

**Figure 1-3. South Carolina UI Claimant Gender and Race, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

The percent of African-Americans participating in the UI system in the first quarter of 2009 is almost two-thirds that of Caucasians. Conversely, in the first quarter of 2008 the percent of claimants by race were roughly equal, albeit there were slightly more African-Americans claimants.

Caucasian males participated at higher rates than Caucasian females in both first quarters. Conversely, African-American males participate at lower rates than African-American females in the first quarter of 2008, but in the first quarter of 2009, African-American males participated at a higher rate.

Gender and race were unrecorded for 0.10% of individuals in the first quarter of 2009.

Of filers in 2009Q1,

- ▶ 42,935 were female, and
- ▶ 60,161 were male.

## Filing Method

**Table 1-4. South Carolina UI Claims Method of Filing, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**

Filing Method	2008Q1		2008Q4		2009Q1	
	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%
Unknown	277	0.5	163	0.2	62	0.1
Employer Filed	12,870	21.3	14,784	16.2	27,087	26.1
Claimant Filed	47,078	78.2	76,303	83.6	76,695	73.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,225</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91,250</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>103,844</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

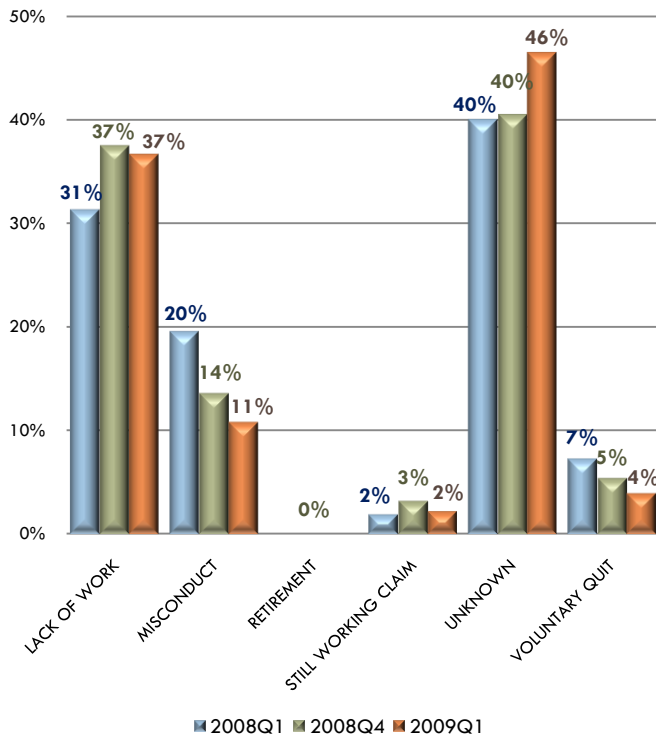
Claims can be filed by the individual claimant or by the employer of the claimant. Employer-filed claims are referred to as “job-attached,” as most of them are filed for temporary closures after which the claimant will return to work.

26.1% of claims are filed by employers, up from 21.3% in the first quarter of 2008 and 16.2% in the fourth quarter of 2008. The first quarter is historically high in seasonal employer-filed claims, which is demonstrated in the 9.9 percentage point increase in employer-filed claims in the first quarter of 2009 from the quarter prior.

Due to state UI limitations, not all temporary furloughs can be filed by the employer, thus a number of temporary claims are filed by the claimant directly. No indicator in the UI system currently exists to distinguish between claims that are “job attached” versus permanent job loss.

## Reason For Separation

**Figure 1-4. South Carolina UI Claims by Reason for Separation, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data  
 Note: The Unknown category was segmented by filing method.

Between the first quarters of 2008 and 2009, Lack of Work and Unknown reasons for separation increased while Misconduct and Voluntary Quit reasons for separation decreased. Of the 103,844 claims filed in South Carolina in the first quarter of 2009, the reasons documented for unemployment were as follows:

- ▶ 37% were filed for Lack of Work, up 6 percentage points from 2008Q1, and roughly equal to 2008Q4
- ▶ 11% were filed for Misconduct, down 9 percentage points from 2008Q1, and 3 percentage points from 2008Q4
- ▶ 4% were filed by an individual who voluntarily quit, down 3 and 1 percentage point from 2008Q1 and 2008Q4 respectively.
- ▶ 2% did not yet have a reason for separation, as the Employment Security Commission was Still Working on the Claim, and
- ▶ 46% did not have any information recorded. Up 6 percentage points from 2008Q1 and 2008Q4
  - ▶ Of these Unknown reasons for separation, 26,882 were employer-filed claims, representing 55.9% of the total Unknown reasons for separation.

## Key Points

Central findings from the first quarter of 2009 include the following points:

- ✓ The total number of claims filed in the first quarter of 2009 increased markedly compared to the first quarter of the previous year, driven by nationwide declining economic activity.
- ✓ The first quarter of 2009 witnessed an increase in the educational attainment of claimants, with more highly educated claimants participating at higher rates than in the first quarter of 2008.
- ✓ Lack of Work accounts for 37% of claims filed in the first quarter of 2009. Misconduct and Voluntary Quit together account for 15%, both of which a declining over time. Unknown reasons account for 46% of claims.
- ✓ Claims filed by employers for temporary furloughs make up 26% of claims filed in the first quarter of 2009, up from 21.3% in the previous year.

# INDUSTRIES & OCCUPATIONS: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Trends

Industrial and occupational distributions are relatively the same from the first quarter of 2008 to 2009, but the volume of claims has increased. Manufacturing and Construction Industries make up most of the claims in the first quarter of 2009, as well as historically high UI participating industries such as Administrative Support/Waste Management (which includes temporary staffing firms).

## Claims by Industry

**Table 2-1. South Carolina UI Claims by Industry, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**

Industry	2008Q1		2009Q1		% Change
	Num	%	Num	%	
Administrative and Support Svcs.	7,653	12.7	10,688	10.3	-2.5%
Food Services and Drinking Places	4,744	7.9	6,985	6.7	-1.5%
Specialty Trade Contractors	4,115	6.8	6,458	6.2	-0.6%
Textile Mills	3,664	6.1	5,430	5.2	-0.9%
Machinery Manufacturing	2,426	4.0	4,551	4.4	0.4%
Transportation Equipment Mfg	1,785	3.0	5,980	5.8	2.8%
Professional, Scientific, and Tech.	1,389	2.3	3,144	3.0	0.7%
General Merchandise Stores	1,324	2.2	2,046	2.0	-0.2%
Heavy and Civil Construction	1,316	2.2	1,500	1.4	-0.8%
Construction of Buildings	1,238	2.1	2,214	2.1	0.0%
Accommodation	1,197	2.0	1,805	1.7	-0.3%
Merchant Wholesalers, Durables	966	1.6	2,508	2.4	0.8%
Truck Transportation	854	1.4	1,359	1.3	-0.1%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	835	1.4	1,176	1.1	-0.3%
Nursing and Residential Care	804	1.3	1,161	1.1	-0.2%
Textile Product Mills	800	1.3	930	0.9	-0.4%
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	754	1.3	1,503	1.5	0.2%
Gasoline Stations	749	1.2	895	0.9	-0.3%
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurables	674	1.1	981	0.9	-0.2%
Credit Intermediation and Related	671	1.1	993	1.0	-0.1%
Food and Beverage Stores	652	1.1	1,076	1.0	-0.1%
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	643	1.1	4,090	3.9	2.8%
Food Manufacturing	647	1.1	587	0.6	-0.5%
Real Estate	593	1.0	1,138	1.1	0.1%
Unknown	7,164	11.9	7,469	7.2	-4.7%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Industries from which the majority of UI claims were initiated are shown in Table 2-1. Industries with the highest number of claims include Administrative and Support Services (which includes temporary staffing firms); Hospitality subsectors (Food, Accommodations); Manufacturing subsectors; Construction subsectors; and Retail subsectors.

## Claims by Occupation

**Table 2-2. South Carolina UI Claims by Occupational Group, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**

Occupation	2008Q1		2009Q1		% Change
	Num	%	Num	%	
Production	6,856	11.4	11,831	11.4	0.0%
Sales	4,703	7.8	8,004	7.7	-0.1%
Construction/Extraction	4,453	7.4	6,590	6.4	-1.0%
Office/Administrative Support	3,350	5.6	5,515	5.3	-0.3%
Food Preparation/Serving Related	3,673	6.1	5,117	4.9	-1.2%
Transportation	2,926	4.9	4,276	4.1	-0.8%
Management	2,364	3.9	4,223	4.1	0.2%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	1,462	2.4	2,710	2.6	0.2%
Building/Grounds Maintenance	1,854	3.1	2,309	2.2	-0.9%
HealthCare Support	1,213	2.0	1,801	1.7	-0.3%
Business/Financial Operations	1,023	1.7	1,697	1.6	-0.1%
Architecture/Engineering	356	0.6	1,356	1.3	-0.3%
Personal Care	584	1.0	898	0.9	-0.1%
Healthcare Practitioners	631	1.1	837	0.8	-0.3%
Computer/Mathematical	477	0.8	820	0.8	0.0%
Protective Service	429	0.7	720	0.7	0.0%
Education/Training/Library	347	0.6	647	0.6	0.0%
Art, Entertainment, & Media	260	0.4	598	0.6	0.2%
Community/Social Sciences	190	0.3	406	0.4	0.1%
Legal	209	0.4	303	0.3	-0.1%
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	249	0.4	300	0.3	-0.1%
Military	164	0.3	210	0.2	-0.1%
Life/Physical/Social Science	50	0.1	100	0.1	0.0%
Unknown	22,402	37.2	42,576	41.0	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,225</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>103,844</b>	<b>100</b>	

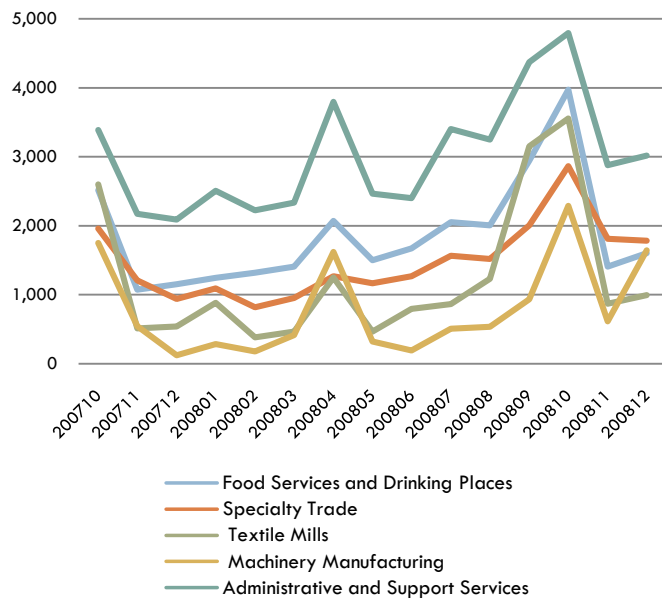
Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

41% of UI claims were missing occupational information in the first quarter of 2009, up from 37.2% the previous year. Claims continue to be dispersed across a variety of occupations.

- ▶ Production: 11.4%
- ▶ Sales: 7.7%
- ▶ Construction: 6.4%
- ▶ Food Preparation: 6.4%

## Seasonality of Claims by Industry

**Figure 2-1. South Carolina Unemployment Insurance Claims Filed by Month, 2008Q1 – 2009Q1**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Some industries exhibit seasonal trends in UI claim filing, particularly experiencing peaks during January and July of each year. Figure 2-1 displays the five industries with both the highest volume of claims and the most clearly defined seasonal patterns. Industries with the largest percentage peak-to-trough change in claims in the first quarter of 2009 are shown in Table 2-3. Peak-to-trough differences in claims in 2009 were generally similar or lower than in 2008 with the exception of Petroleum Manufacturing and Museum and Historical Site sectors.

**Table 2-3. South Carolina January to February Peak-to-Trough Difference in UI Claims Filed, 2008 vs. 2009**

Industry	2008 Peak-to-Trough	2009 Peak-to-Trough
Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	700.0%	1300.0%
Museums, Historical Sites, and Simi	425.0%	825.0%
Apparel Manufacturing	922.7%	603.1%
Food Manufacturing	237.2%	182.6%
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports,	1141.7%	372.5%
Textile Mills	404.5%	307.4%
Machinery Manufacturing	220.8%	273.3%
Crop Production	195.5%	220.7%
Food Services and Drinking Places	134.5%	182.6%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

## Employer-Filed Claims

**Table 2-4. South Carolina Employer-Filed UI Claims by Industry, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**

Industry	2008Q1		2009Q1	
	Num	%	Num	%
Food Services and Drinking Places	4,744	21%	6,985	28%
Transportation Equipment Mfg	1,785	49%	5,980	57%
Textile Mills	3,664	67%	5,430	68%
Machinery Manufacturing	2,426	76%	4,551	67%
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg	643	21%	4,090	54%
Plastics and Rubber Products Mfg	583	27%	1,962	47%
Electrical Equipment Manufacturing	353	62%	1,705	68%
Heavy and Civil Construction	1,316	34%	1,500	28%
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Mfg	516	42%	1,245	37%
Wood Product Manufacturing	460	22%	1,030	48%
Primary Metal Manufacturing	142	15%	1,011	48%
Chemical Manufacturing	390	37%	969	38%
Textile Product Mills	800	52%	930	54%
Paper Manufacturing	129	12%	926	67%
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	187	10%	591	44%
Apparel Manufacturing	522	72%	576	69%
Computer and Electronic Product Mfg	187	6%	510	41%
Furniture and Related Product Mfg	146	10%	436	25%
Printing and Related Support Activity	101	21%	311	31%
Forestry and Logging	206	17%	303	33%
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports	175	59%	251	46%
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	70	37%	213	74%
Crop Production	107	21%	138	34%
Transit and Ground Passenger	49	20%	113	48%
Museums and Historical Sites	26	42%	48	25%
Scenic/Sightseeing Transportation	34	50%	45	33%
Petroleum and Coal Products Mfg	47	75%	39	64%
Leather and Allied Product Mfg	1	0.00%	7	43%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Table 2-4 displays all industries (classified according to NAICS codes at the 3-digit level) for which employer-filed claims make up at least 25% of the total claims filed in the first quarter of 2009. Manufacturing sectors make up the majority of industries heavily utilizing employer-filed claims. The industries that have a high rate of employer-filed claims are very similar to 2008, which had a high number of manufacturing industries employer-filing. Overall, the rate of employer-filed claims increased in the first quarter of 2009.

## Key Points

Central findings regarding industry and occupational interaction in UI in the first quarter of 2009 include the following points.

- ✓ Manufacturing industry subsectors have higher incidence of employer-filed claims in the first quarter of 2009 than the prior quarter, which is historically true.
- ✓ Several industries in the first quarter of 2009 had a large drop in claims from January to February, which follows a seasonal pattern of spikes in claims in January and July. The drop off in claims for most industries was lower or the same as 2008 first quarter, except Petroleum Manufacturing and Museum and Historical Site industry subsectors, which doubled the peak-to-trough difference of the prior year.
- ✓ The percent of employer filed claims by industries in the first quarter of 2009 is higher than the first quarter of 2008. The same industry subsectors, primarily manufacturing, have an overall higher percentage of claims that were employer filed. Additionally, the total number of claims has increased.
- ✓ Administrative Support Services (which includes temporary staffing firms) makes up the highest group of claims, 10.3% of the total. The previous year, this industry made up 12.7% of claims in the first quarter. In the first quarter of 2009, 3,000 more claims were filed than the 7,653 claims in the first quarter of 2008



# “JOB-ATTACHED” CLAIMS: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Trends

In South Carolina, claims filed by the employer of the claimant are referred to as “job-attached.” This type of claim is typically seasonal, experiencing spikes in January and July. Employer-filed claims doubled in the first quarter of 2009 over the previous year, representing 26.1% of all claims.

## Overview

**Table 3-1. South Carolina UI Claims Method of Filing, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**

Filing Method	2008Q1		2008Q4		2009Q1	
	Num	%	Num	%	Num	%
Unknown	277	0.5	163	0.2	62	0.1
Employer Filed	12,870	21.3	14,784	16.2	27,087	26.1
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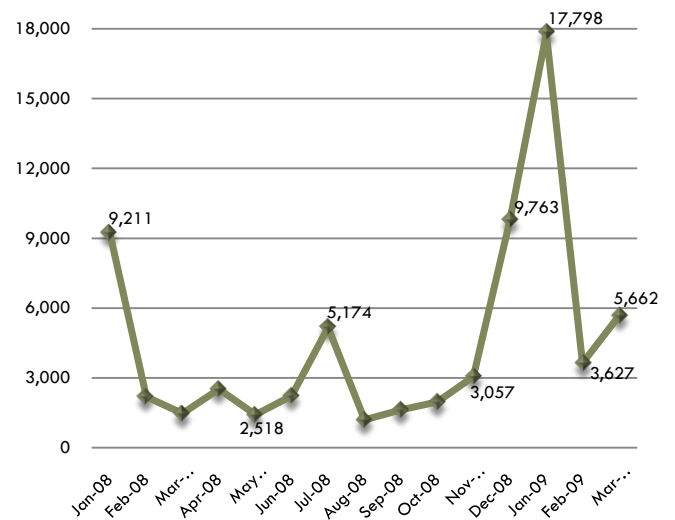
Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

In the first quarter of 2009 26.1% of claims were employer-filed, up nearly 5 percentage points from the year prior. Some difficulties exist in maintaining an accurate count of employer-filed claims, namely that data in the UI system changes daily. For instance, a claim that was once employer-filed may switch to employee-filed as time goes on and the employer ceases to continue filing the claim. Thus, the number of employer-filed claims may under-represent the true number of claims originally filed by employers.

South Carolina is one of only a few states that still allow employers to file UI claims for employees. All other states require employees to self-file. Employees on temporary furloughs are counted by the US Department of Labor as unemployed in monthly statistics.

## Employer-Filed Claims

**Figure 3-1. South Carolina Employer-Filed UI Claims by Month, 2008Q1 – 2009Q1**



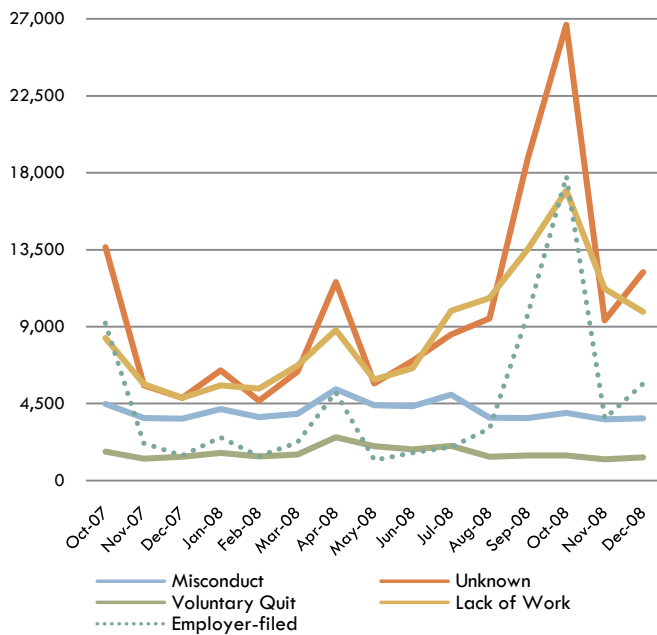
Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Employer-filed claims follow highly seasonal patterns, with sharp increases in “job-attached” claims in January. The number of claims in first quarter of 2009 nearly doubled compared to the number of claims last year, even though the percent of employer-filed claims represented only 5% more of the total claims filed. This reverses the declining trend in employer-filed claims from previous years, and reflects increased furloughs and temporary shut downs during this economic downturn.

- ▶ During January 2009, employer-filed claims account for 35.5% of claims filed. In January 2008 the percent of employer-filed claims was 31.8%.
- ▶ March 2009 had more employer-filed claims than February, suggesting the economic downturn is causing employers to file out of season.

## Employer Filed Vs. Reason for Separation

**Figure 3-2. South Carolina UI Claims Filed by Reason for Separation, 2008Q1 – 2009Q1**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Due to state UI limitations, not all temporary furloughs can be filed by the employer, thus a number of temporary claims are filed by the claimant directly. No indicator in the UI system currently exists to distinguish between claims that are “job attached” versus permanent job loss.

Figure 3-2 shows the seasonality of claims for both employer-filings as well as reasons for separation. As previously discussed, employer-filed “job attached” claims are highly seasonal. The large seasonal spikes in claims filed due to Lack of Work as well as Unknown reasons strongly suggest that some of the temporary “job-attached” claims are absorbed in this category. Employer-filed, Lack of Work, and Unknown reasons experienced large increases in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2008 and the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2009, exhibiting the effects of the current economic downturn.

## Key Points

Primary conclusions for the first quarter of 2009 include the following:

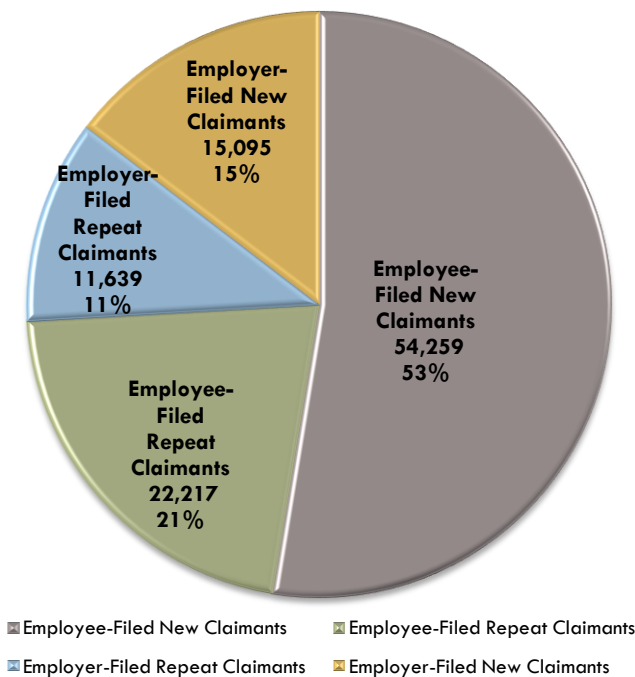
- ✓ First quarter of 2009 had more employer-filed claims than any previous quarter in the dataset, which began in 2006.
- ✓ Historically March has fewer employer-filed claims than February, yet 2009 witnessed a reversal.

# REPEAT CLAIMANTS: 1<sup>ST</sup> Quarter Profiles

In the first quarter of 2009 there was a 4% decrease in repeat claimants (defined as a claimant who filed a claim in the two year prior to their current claim), suggesting economic hardships are extending past the normally unemployed segments of the population. The industries with the largest percentage of repeat claimants—Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation; Food Service; and Administrative Support (which includes temporary staffing firms)—remained relatively similar to first quarter 2008 percentages. A 20% decline in repeat claimants occurred in the Manufacturing industry in first quarter 2009 over the previous year.

## Overview

Figure 5-1. Repeat Versus Single Claimants, 2009Q1



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

In the first quarter of 2009, a total of 103,210 individuals filed for unemployment benefits. Approximately 33% of these individuals filed at least one other claim within the two years prior to their claim. The number of repeat claimants is down approximately 4% from the first quarter of 2008. With the number of claims nearly doubling from first quarter of 2008 to 2009, and the percent of repeat claimants decreasing, current economic situations are causing first time claimants to come out at a much higher rate.

## Repeat Claimants by Industry

Table 5-1. Percent Repeat Claimants by Industry, 2009Q1 vs. 2008Q1

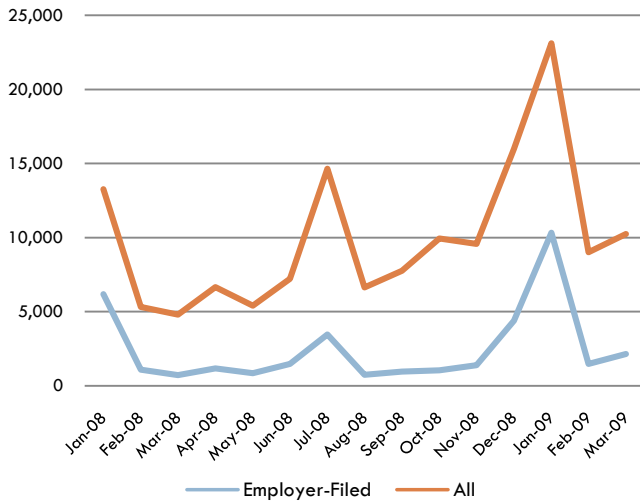
Industry	% 2009Q1	% 2008Q1
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	43.8%	44.9%
Food Services	42.4%	42.2%
Administrative Support/Waste Mgmt	41.8%	39.2%
Manufacturing	36.6%	55.0%
Construction	33.0%	32.7%
Agriculture-Hunting	32.4%	39.7%
Transportation/Warehousing	27.5%	29.7%
Retail Trade	25.5%	23.9%
Real Estate-Leasing	25.5%	25.3%
HealthCare	25.4%	24.9%
Other Services	24.6%	24.4%
Wholesale Trade	24.5%	23.3%
Mining-Extraction	23.1%	22.9%
Public Administration	22.6%	19.8%
Professional Services	22.3%	20.2%
Educational Services	22.1%	24.7%
Management	21.8%	35.3%
Utilities	18.8%	16.1%
Finance/Insurance	18.3%	12.5%
Information	17.5%	15.0%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Seasonal industries and industries with high turnover rates have higher numbers of individuals filing for benefits more than once in a two year period. In the first quarter of 2009, the three industries with the highest percentage of repeat claimants remained relatively stable compared to the previous year.

## Seasonality of Repeat Claims

**Figure 5-2. Repeat Claims by Month Filed, 2008Q1 to 2009Q1**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Repeat claims follow highly seasonal patterns, with sharp increases in repeat claims being filed in January and July, corresponding with temporary facility closings. Employer-filed repeat claims closely follow the same seasonal pattern.

- ▶ January 2009 had the highest number of repeat claims, 50% more than January 2008. In addition, January 2009 had 50% more employer-filed repeat claims than January 2008.

**Table 5-2. South Carolina Repeat UI Claims Filed by Month, 2009Q1 vs. 2008Q1**

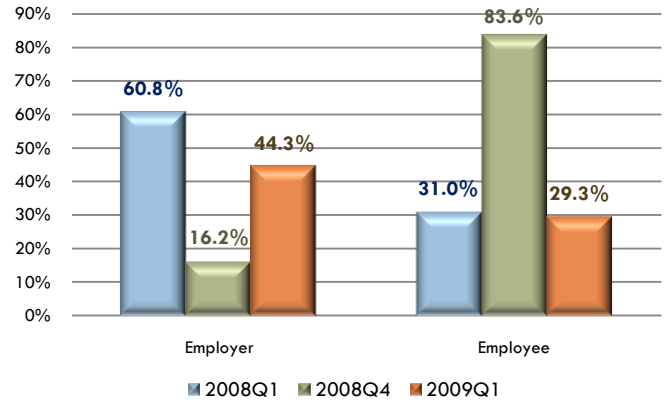
Month	2008Q1 Claims	2009Q1 Claims	% Increase
January	13,020	19,377	48.8%
February	5,073	7,054	39.0%
March	4,451	8,059	81.1%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

The percent increase in claims in March 2009 is the highest of all the first quarter 2009 months when compared to 2008. March 2009 also differentiates from the past three years by having more claims than the preceding February.

## Filing Method

**Figure 5-3. Percent Repeat UI Claims by Filing Method, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**

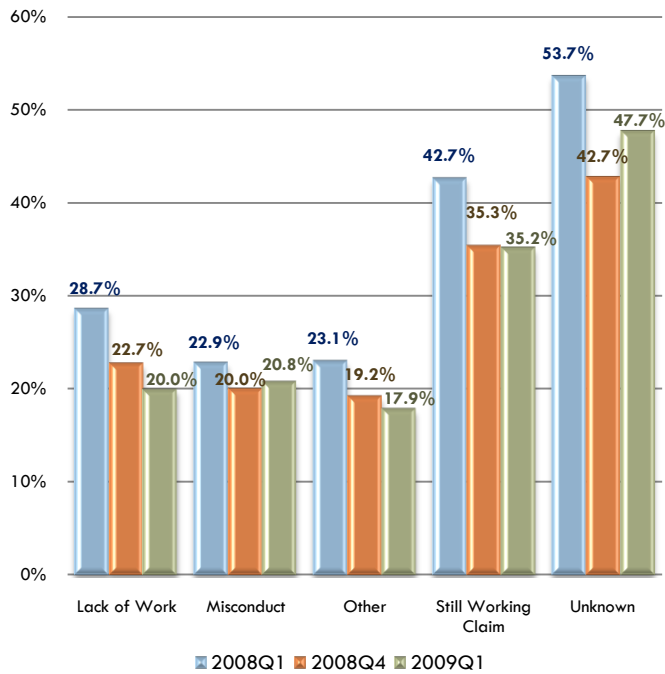


Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Large differences exist in the tendency to file a repeat claim by filing method. Claims that are employer-filed are repeat filings 44.3% of the time compared to only 29.3% of the time for employee-filed claims. This difference is narrower than in the first quarter of the previous year. 60.8% of employer-filed claims were repeat claims while 31% of employee-filed claims were repeat claims in 2008Q1. During the fourth quarter of 2008 (during seasonal troughs), repeat claims were much more likely to have been filed by employees rather than employers.

## Reason for Separation

**Figure 5-4. Percent Repeat UI Claims by Separation Reason, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**



Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Repeat claims by separation reason has the same approximate distribution in the fourth quarter of 2008 as the first quarter of 2009 yet 2009 first quarter had a significantly higher percent of repeat claims in the unknown separation reason. Each separation reason is lower in first quarter 2009 than the year prior, indicating a greater number of first-time claimants in the first quarter of 2009 than the first quarter of 2008. The largest variation over the previous year occurs in claims filed for Lack of Work claims. Here, repeat claims were down approximately 9% from first quarter 2008 to first quarter 2009.

## Age and Education Levels

**Table 5-2. Percent Repeat Claims by Age and Education, 2009Q1 vs. Previous Quarter and Year Ago**

	Percent Repeat 2008Q1	Percent Repeat 2008Q4	Percent Repeat 2009Q1
<b>Age</b>			
< 18 years	4.7%	3.0%	4.0%
18-24 years	23.0%	22.3%	23.4%
25-40 years	29.5%	29.6%	29.9%
41-55 years	30.7%	31.7%	30.0%
56-65 years	29.4%	30.2%	27.2%
> 65 years	27.0%	32.3%	29.5%
Unknown	62.2%	29.1%	44.2%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>			
0: Unknown	54.9%	34.4%	42.2%
1-8: No High School	33.3%	31.8%	32.4%
9-11: Some High School	32.9%	32.3%	34.1%
12: High School Graduate	32.8%	32.3%	32.2%
13-15: Some College	25.6%	25.9%	26.1%
16+: College Graduate+	17.8%	18.0%	16.4%

Source: Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

Repeat claims peak in the 41 to 55 year age range. The percentage of repeat claims declines in each direction from that age group, with the exception of the fourth quarter of 2008, which has a higher relationship between age and percent of repeat claims for individuals over 65.

Educational attainment exhibits a declining trend in relation to repeat claims: as education increases, the percent of repeat claims decrease, excluding claims of claimants who never went to high school in the first quarter of 2009 and the fourth quarter of 2008. The inverse relation between education and percent of repeat claims (claims filed by a claimant with at least one other claim in the two years prior) suggests that as skill or experience increases, the probability of repeated spells of unemployment decreases.

The percentages of repeat claims in the first quarter of 2009 are the same as the first quarter of 2008 for all categories except Unknown values of age and education. These categories are 87% and 86%, respectively, employer-filed claims. In both age and education, unknown values have dropped significantly in percent of claims that are repeat claims, indicating both an increase in first-time participants in the UI system as well as a lack of data collection about them.

## Key Points

Central findings regarding repeat claims for the first quarter of 2009 include the following:

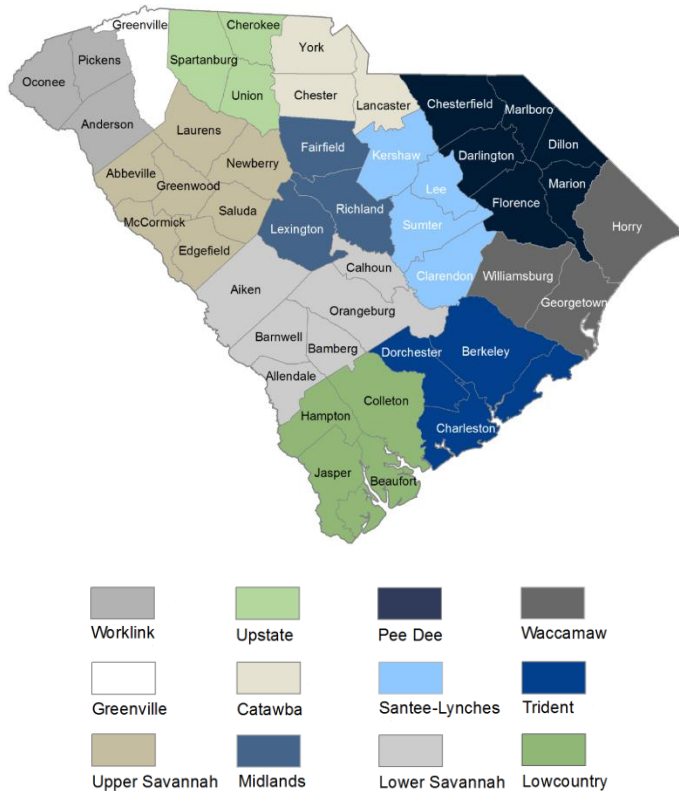
- ✓ Employer-filed claims tend to have a strong association with repeat spells of UI.
- ✓ About one in three individuals filing a claim in the first quarter of 2009 filed at least one additional claim in the prior two years.
- ✓ More first-time claimants used the UI-system in the first quarter of 2009 than 2008, potentially due to the current economic downturn.
- ✓ More claims were filed in March than February in 2009—the first time March has had more claims than February since the beginning of the dataset in 2006.
- ✓ The percent of employer-filed repeat claimants decreased in the first quarter of 2009 over the previous year. More companies are filing for employees that haven't used the UI system before.

# 1<sup>st</sup> QUARTER OVERVIEW: Workforce Investment Areas (WIA)

Accounting for differences in population, the Upper Savannah WIA had the largest number of unique claimants in the first quarter of 2009. Sizable differences exist in the percentage of each WIA's workforce involved in seasonal industries such as manufacturing, construction, and entertainment. Santee Lynches experienced the largest percent increase in claims from first quarter 2008 to 2009.

## Distribution by WIA

**Figure 6-1. South Carolina Workforce Investment Areas**



**Table 6-1. UI Claimants as a Percentage of Population by WIA, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**

WIA	2008 Population	2008Q1 % of Pop.	2009Q1 % of Pop.
Upper Savannah	255,721	1.8%	3.7%
Upstate	362,804	1.6%	2.8%
Pee Dee	335,958	1.7%	2.7%
Santee Lynches	216,089	1.2%	2.6%
Waccamaw	353,201	1.6%	2.4%
Lower Savannah	307,616	1.5%	2.2%
Greenville	438,119	1.0%	2.1%
Catawba	325,979	1.0%	1.9%
Midlands	635,954	1.1%	1.8%
Worklink	371,014	1.0%	1.8%
Trident	644,506	1.0%	1.8%
Lowcountry	232,839	0.8%	1.6%

Source: US Census Bureau County Population Estimates and Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

3.7% of the Upper Savannah WIA population filed a claim in the first quarter of 2009 alone. The Upper Savannah WIA also had the highest percentage of their population file at least one claim in 2008 as well. Each WIA experienced an increase in the percentage of their population filing claims. The Lowcountry WIA had the lowest percentage of its population file a claim for UI in the first quarters of both 2008 and 2009.

South Carolina has twelve Workforce Investment Areas as displayed in Figure 6-1. Table 6-1 shows Upper Savannah WIA had the highest percentage of their population file at least one claim during the period in the first quarter of 2008 and 2009.

## Claims by WIA

**Table 6-1. UI Claims by WIA, 2008Q1 vs. 2009Q1**

WIA	2008Q1 Claims	2009Q1 Claims	% Change
Midlands	7,184	11,403	58.7%
Trident	6,181	11,308	82.9%
Upstate	5,644	10,041	77.9%
Upper Savannah	4,641	9,375	102.0%
Greenville	4,526	9,366	106.9%
Pee Dee	5,737	9,136	59.2%
Waccamaw	5,559	8,397	51.1%
Lower Savannah	4,574	6,644	45.3%
Worklink	3,854	6,612	71.6%
Catawba	3,145	6,032	91.8%
Santee Lynches	2,514	5,524	119.7%
Lowcountry	1,826	3,800	108.1%
MISSING	4,203	5,572	32.6%

Source: US Census Bureau County Population Estimates and Commerce analysis of ESC UI Claimant data

The Midlands WIA had the most claims in first quarter of 2009. The Santee Lynches WIA had the largest percent increase in claims from first quarter 2008 to first quarter 2009, over twice as many claims as the year prior. Four WIAs had more than double the number of claims from the year prior including: Santee Lynches (120%), Low Country (108%), Greenville (107%), and Upper Savannah (102%). The smallest percentage increase in UI claims was experienced by the Lower Savannah WIA, which witnessed a 45.3% increase.

### 1st Quarter 2009 WIA Characteristics:

- ▶ Santee Lynches had the highest increase in participation in the UI system, increasing the number of claimants by 119.7%.
- ▶ The Upper Savannah and Greenville WIAs have higher percentages of Caucasian claimants while the Midlands, Santee-Lynches, Pee Dee, and Lower Savannah service significantly higher percentages of African-American claimants.
- ▶ High numbers of employer-filed first claims include Worklink (33.7%), Upper Savannah (34.4%), and Santee Lynches (38.1%) possibly related to higher concentrations of manufacturing industries in these areas that have temporary layoffs on a regular or semi-regular basis.
- ▶ Areas with the highest levels of educational attainment are urban areas, including Greenville, Midlands, and Trident WIAs.

- ▶ The percent of first-time claims citing manufacturing as their industry were highest in the Worklink (12.4%) and Pee Dee (11.51%) WIAs. Coastal areas of Waccamaw (12.3%) and Trident (14.6%) had the highest percentage of first time claimants in construction along with the Midlands (10.9%),
- ▶ First-time claimants in the Administrative Support/ Waste Management industries were concentrated in Greenville, the Midlands, and Trident WIAs. A large percentage of the Waccamaw claimants reported being in the highly seasonal Food Service industry.

### Key Points

Main points regarding geographic distribution of claims in the first quarter of 2009 are provided as follows:

- ✓ In the first quarter of 2009, 2.3% of South Carolina's population applied for UI at least once.
- ✓ Santee Lynches WIA had the largest percent growth in the number of claimants using the UI system in the first quarter of 2009, nearly doubling 2008.
- ✓ Midland WIA had the smallest percent growth in the number of claimants using the UI system in the first quarter of 2009, up 58.7% from 2008.