

Labor Force Programs Glossary

Source: U S Bureau of Labor Statistics

This glossary is divided into nine sections:

1. [Terms common to all Labor Force Programs](#) 2
2. [Statistical terms common to all Labor Force Programs](#) 10
3. [Terms used in the QCEW Program](#) 14
4. [Terms used in the CES Program](#) 18
5. [Terms used in the OES Program](#) 23
6. [Terms used in the CPS](#) 26
7. [Terms used in the LAUS Program](#) 29
8. [Terms used in the MLS Program](#) 33
9. [Terms used in the JOLTS Program](#) 37

This section of the glossary defines terms common to all Labor Force programs.

[Return to table of contents](#)

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) - Part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. A Federal statistical agency responsible for estimation of Gross Domestic Product. Data from the CES and QCEW programs are used in the GDP estimates.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) - Part of the U.S. Department of Labor, this Federal agency functions as the principal data-gathering agency of the Federal government in the field of labor economics. The BLS collects, processes, analyzes, and disseminates data relating to employment, unemployment, the labor force, productivity, prices, family expenditures, wages, industrial relations, and occupational safety and health. Well known data released by BLS include: the Consumer Price Index, the Producer Price Index, the unemployment rate, and nonagricultural employment levels.

Bureau of the Census - Part of the U.S. Department of Commerce. It conducts censuses of population and housing every 10 years and of agriculture, business, governments, manufactures, mineral industries, and transportation at 5-year intervals. The Census Bureau also conducts the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) in cooperation with BLS. Data from this survey are the source of unemployment statistics.

Business cycle - A periodically repeated sequence of fluctuations in the aggregate economy of an area, or the nation as a whole, varying in duration, but consisting of: a) upturn, including recovery and prosperity; b) cyclical peak; c) downturn, including recession; and d) cyclical trough.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) - A Bureau of Labor Statistics program which measures the average change in the prices of a fixed set of goods and services purchased by households. It is the most commonly recognized measure of inflation.

County Business Patterns (CBP) - An annual publication issued by the Bureau of the Census. CBP provides establishment-based employment totals of all employees covered under Social Security, by State and county, and by industry. The data are for March of the reference year, but are published 2-3 years after the reference period. Data are obtained from various Census Bureau establishment surveys and the administrative files of the IRS.

Current Employment Statistics (CES) Survey - A monthly survey of nonfarm business establishments used to collect wage and salary employment, worker hours, and payroll, by industry and area. Through the Federal/State cooperative effort, these data are used to compute current monthly employment, hours, and earnings estimates, by industry, for the nation, the 50 States and the District of Columbia, and Metropolitan Areas.

Current Population Survey (CPS) - A monthly household survey of the civilian noninstitutional population of the United States. This survey provides the National

unemployment rate and a variety of statistics on employment, unemployment, and earnings, detailed by demographic characteristics, occupation, and industry. The CPS is sponsored jointly by BLS and the US Census Bureau. The Census Bureau conducts the survey and BLS analyzes and publishes the results.

Deliverable - As specified by the LMI cooperative agreement, any product required to be delivered by the States to BLS is generically called a "deliverable".

Department of Labor (DOL) - Cabinet-level agency which enforces laws protecting workers, promotes labor-management cooperation, sponsors employment training and placement services, oversees the unemployment insurance system, and produces statistics on the labor force and living conditions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is an Agency under the Department of Labor

DBES - Division of Business Establishment Systems. The division within the Directorate of Survey Processing (DSP) which includes the staff more commonly known as the QCEW and OES "project" offices. This office is responsible for processing data and maintaining systems for the QCEW and OES Programs.

DCES - Division of Current Employment Statistics. (Also known the CES "program office".) The division within OEUS/Office of Industry Employment Statistics which is primarily responsible for setting CES program policy and directives, and producing national CES estimates.

DDDP – Division of Data Development and Publications – The division in OEUS that provides programming, production, and other data development services to support programs in DLFS and DLAUS, and also provides editing, formatting, and quality control services for all OEUS publications.

DFSMS - Division of Federal/State Monthly Surveys . The division within DSP which includes the staff more commonly known as the CES, LAUS, and MLS "project" offices. This office is responsible for processing data and maintaining systems for the CES, LAUS, and MLS Programs.

DSP - Directorate of Survey Processing - The BLS office which includes the various "project offices" for the QCEW, CES, OES, LAUS, and MLS programs. Also responsible for LABSTAT development and maintenance and for the BLS LAN.

DLAUS - Division of Local Area Unemployment Statistics. (also known as the LAUS/MLS "program office"). The Division within OEUS/ Office of Current Employment Analysis primarily responsible for LAUS and MLS program policy and directives.

DLFS - Division of Labor Force Statistics. The division within OEUS/Office of Current Employment Analysis which is primarily responsible for analyzing and publishing data from the Current Population Survey. DLFS is also responsible for the American Time Use Survey (ATUS).

DASLT - Division of Administrative Statistics and Labor Turnover. (Also known as the QCEW program office"). This division is responsible setting QCEW program policy and directives, producing national universe counts of employment and wages and maintaining the Longitudinal Data Base (LDB). The Division is also the program office for the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS), producing monthly estimates of job openings, hires, and separations.

DOES - Division of Occupational Employment Statistics. (Also known as the OES "program office"). Primarily responsible for OES survey program policy and directives and producing national OES data.

DOT - The Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

Durable goods - Manufactured items generally considered to have a normal life expectancy of three years or more. Automobiles, furniture, household appliances, and mobile homes are common examples.

Economic indicator - A set of data that serves as a tool for analyzing current economic conditions and future prospects. Usually classified according to their timing in relationship to the ups and downs of the business cycle, that is, whether they anticipate (lead), coincide with, or lag behind general business conditions.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) - A developing network of standardized automated data interchange between and among private industry and the government. One of the many uses of EDI is the collection of data for statistical surveys.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Collection Center - An Office of Field Operations run center in Chicago designed for the express purpose of collecting data from large firms via EDI for the CES and QCEW programs.

Employer Identification Number (EIN) - A 9-digit identification number assigned to employers by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.

Employment and Earnings - A monthly publication of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, containing current data for the CPS, CES, and LAUS programs.

Employment and Training Administration (ETA) - A part of the U.S. Department of Labor. This agency oversees the State UI programs and job training and placement services provided by State Workforce Agencies.

Enrollment – The process of contacting establishments selected as part of a sample and obtaining their cooperation to report data for the various BLS programs.

Establishment - An economic unit that produces goods or services, usually at a single physical location, and engaged in one or predominantly one activity.

Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) - Standards for information processing issued by the National Bureau of Standards in the U.S. Department of Commerce. Includes a numeric designation for geographic areas such as States, counties, and Metropolitan Areas.

Federal Reserve Board (Fed) - An independent government agency primarily responsible for keeping inflation under control. The Fed's best weapon in the fight against inflation is control over certain short term interest rates. The Fed is a key user of Labor Force Program data.

Federal/State Cooperative Programs - A series of programs in which the States and Federal government cooperate in accomplishing the goals of the program. CES, QCEW, OES, LAUS, and MLS are Federal/State cooperative programs.

Firm - A business entity, either corporate or otherwise. May consist of one or several establishments.

Fiscal Year (FY) - A 12-month period established for budgetary and accounting purposes. In the Federal Government, the fiscal year begins October 1 and ends September 30.

FUTA - Federal Unemployment Tax Act. This Act became Chapter 23, Sections 3301-3311, of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, authorizing the tax imposed on employers with respect to persons they employ for the purpose of funding unemployment insurance benefits. The FUTA made possible the federal/state system which established an employment security program in each state.

GDP - Gross Domestic Product. The total of all goods and services produced by the US economy. GDP is compiled quarterly by the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. CES employment and earnings data are used for advance GDP estimates. QCEW wage data are used for the final GDP estimates.

Goods producing industries - Those industries that primarily produce goods. Mining, construction, and manufacturing.

Household - As defined by the Census Bureau, all persons—related family members and all unrelated people—who occupy a housing unit. A housing unit is a room or group of rooms intended for occupancy as separate living quarters and having either a separate entrance or complete cooking facilities for the exclusive use of the occupants.

Industry - Describes the type of economic activity engaged in by a group of firms as used in the compilation of economic statistics. The North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) provides numerical classifications for industries.

Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) - A monthly survey of nonfarm establishments in both the private and public sectors, producing estimates of job openings, hires,

and total separations (quits, layoffs, and discharges, and other separations). DASLT is the program office, DBES is the project office, and SMS is the statistical office for this program.

Labor Market Area (LMA) - An economically integrated geographical unit within which workers may readily change jobs without changing their place of residence. All States are divided into exhaustive LMA's, which usually consist of (except in New England) a county or a group of contiguous counties.

LABSTAT - BLS's automated repository of data, available through the INTERNET. LABSTAT is a database that contains most published BLS data. At this time, not all published BLS data are available on LABSTAT.

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program - A Federal/State cooperative program which produces employment, labor force, and unemployment estimates for States and local areas.

LMI -1. Labor Market Information. The body of data available on a particular labor market, including employment and unemployment statistics, occupational statistics, and average hours and earnings data.

2. LMI is also used to refer to the statistical research and analysis offices of the State Workforce Agencies. These offices are also referred to as Research and Analysis (R & A) or Research and Statistics (R & S) offices.

LMI Cooperative Agreement - A series of cooperative agreements between the State Workforce Agencies and BLS for the collection and sharing of Labor Market Information, including the QCEW, CES, OES, LAUS, and MLS programs.

Macrodata - Single establishment or household (micro) data aggregated to any level. Data at the estimating cell level and summary cell levels are all macrodata. Compare to microdata.

Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program - A BLS Federal/State cooperative program which collects and publishes data on layoffs of 50 or more persons from a single company.

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) - The general concept of a Metropolitan Statistical Area is that of an area containing a recognized population nucleus and adjacent communities that have a high degree of integration with that nucleus. OMB provides nationally consistent definitions of MSA's for collecting, tabulating, and publishing Federal statistics. OMB establishes and maintains the definitions of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, and New England City and Town Areas, solely for statistical purposes.

Microdata - Data reported from an individual establishment or household. Data on a single BLS-790 form or a single UI contribution report are microdata. Compare to macrodata.

Multi establishment - A firm or reporting unit which consists of more than one establishment.

National Office (NO) – Generic term used to refer to the offices and employees of BLS in Washington, DC.

Nondurable goods - Manufactured items generally considered to last for three years or less. Food, beverages, clothing, shoes, and gasoline are common examples.

Nonresponse - Failure to obtain usable data for eligible units.

Numbered Memoranda - A series of technical memoranda issued for the purpose of disseminating information to Regional offices (R-memos) and States (S-memos) on new developments in the Fed/State programs, changes in operating procedures, and updates to manuals.

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)- The system of classifying business establishments used by the USA, Mexico, and Canada. The NAICS Manual is published by the Office of Management and Budget.

Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Program. A Federal/State cooperative program which collects detailed occupational and wage data by industry.

Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics (OEUS) - The BLS office which includes the various "program offices" of the Labor Force Programs: OEUS program office divisions are: DCES (CES), DASLT (QCEW), DOES (OES), DLFS (CPS and ATUS), and DLAUS (LAUS and MLS). OEUS also includes other divisions: Statistical Methods Staff (SMS), Data Development and Publications (DDDP), Employment Research Staff.

Office of Field Operations (OFO) - The BLS office which directs the work of its regional offices and acts as a liaison between the national office and the regions. Regional offices are also considered part of the Office of Field Operations.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) - Located in the Executive Office of the President, this agency prepares the President's budget with the Council of Economic Advisors and the Treasury Department. OMB also oversees all Federal data collection. Among other duties, this federal agency is responsible for enforcing the Paperwork Reduction Act and, in so doing, must approve all surveys and data collection forms which represent a reporting burden on employers.

Out-of-business (OOB) - Status assigned to a unit which was once active but which has permanently ceased to conduct business or perform services and industrial operations.

Out-of-scope (OOS) - Status assigned to a unit which does not form part of the target population as defined by the scope of a survey. The reported NAICS code, ownership code, or employment of a unit may cause it to fall outside the scope of a survey.

Ownership code - A numerical code which specifies the several layers of government and the private sector of the economy.

10	Federal government
20	State government
30	Local government
40	International or foreign government
50	Private

Parent organization or company - A company which owns or operates one or more subsidiary companies or establishments.

Project offices - Generic term for the Divisions within the Directorate of Survey Processing (DSP) responsible for computer processing and User Manual documentation of the various Labor Force Program surveys. See DBES and DFSMS.

Program offices - Generic term for the Divisions within Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics (OEUS) responsible for the overall management and direction of the various Labor Force Programs. See DCES, DLAUS, DASLT, and DLFS.

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Program - A Federal/State cooperative program which collects and compiles employment and wage data for workers covered by State unemployment insurance (UI) laws, and Federal civilian workers covered by UCFE. State Workforce Agencies collect and compile quarterly UI contribution reports which are submitted by all employers. These data are maintained in the State in micro and macrodata forms, and are also shipped to BLS. Any data from this program may also be generically referred to as "ES-202" data.

Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) - An independent agency in the executive branch of the U.S. government which administers a comprehensive social insurance system for the nation's railroad workers and their families, providing protection against the loss of income resulting from old age, disability, death, unemployment, and temporary sickness.

Reference date - The reference date of a sample frame is the date when the characteristics of the population existed on the frame. The reference date of the survey, however, is the date for which the respondents are requested to submit the data.

Regional Office (RO) - Term used to refer to the offices and employees of the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the six regional office locations outside of Washington, DC: Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and San Francisco.

Schedule - A term sometimes used to refer to a survey questionnaire.

Series break - A large change in the level of a time series resulting from: A major change in methodology; A major change in industry definition; A major change in other definitions or concepts; A major industry or area coding error; The permanent loss of a major reporter; an Area

redefinition. If a series has been broken, data prior to the break are not comparable to data after the break.

Service providing industries - Those industries that primarily provide services as opposed to goods.

State and Workforce Agency (SWA) - Generic name for the State agency usually responsible for three activities:

- 1) The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program -- UI tax collection, administration, and determination and payment of unemployment benefits.
- 2) The Employment or Job Service Program -- an exchange for workers seeking work and employers seeking workers.
- 3) Research and Analysis -- collection, analysis, and publication of labor market information.

Stateweb – A BLS maintained Intranet site with extensive program documentation and other resources for the Labor Force programs. It is available only to State users with BLS accounts.

Statistical Methods Staff (SMS) - A division within OEUS which researches and sets statistical standards for Federal/State surveys.

This section defines statistical terms common to all Labor Force programs.

[Return to table of contents](#)

Benchmark - A point of reference (either an estimate or a count) from which measurements can be made or upon which adjustments to estimates are based. See individual program glossaries for specific program references to benchmarks.

Bias - The difference between the expected value of the estimate from a probability sample and the true value of the population.

Business Births -) Those units which are within scope of a survey as of the reference date of the survey but were not in the sampling frame. They include units which existed in the universe but were not on the sampling frame as well as units which came into existence after the creation of the sampling frame. 2) Within the QCEW program Longitudinal Data Base system, a Business Birth is defined as a unit appearing for the first time with non-zero employment for which no predecessor unit in the previous time period is identified.

Business Deaths - 1) Units which were in a sampling frame but are not now within the scope of the survey. They include units which have gone out of business, have changed to an out-of-scope NAICS, or were erroneously included on the sampling frame. 2) Within the QCEW program Longitudinal Data Base system, a business Death is defined as a unit that over some period of time ceases reporting with no successor identified or decreases employment from greater than zero to zero and does not resume operations (i.e. report positive employment) during the subsequent four quarters.

Census - A complete count (as opposed to a sample) of a specified population or some other measurable characteristic in a given area (housing, industry, etc.).

Certainty unit - A universe unit whose probability of selection is one; therefore, it is sure to be included in the sample.

Confidence interval - A measure of the range of probable parameters attributable to the sample design (estimate plus or minus the standard error). The BLS standard is generally the 90 percent level of confidence.

Disaggregate - Divide a statistic into its component parts.

Estimate - A numerical quantity calculated from sample data, or from a model, and intended to provide information about a universe.

Estimating cell - The most basic or lowest level (or strata) for which estimates are made. All higher level strata are aggregations of estimating cells. For establishment surveys, the estimating cell structure is generally stratified by NAICS, area, and size of establishment. For household surveys, the estimating cell structure is generally stratified by demographic characteristic

Extrapolate - To project values of a variable in an unobserved interval from values within an already observed interval.

Interpolate - To estimate values of a variable between two known values.

Mean - A number typifying or representing a set of observations, obtained by dividing the sum of the observations by the number of observations. The mean can be weighted or unweighted.

Mean Square Error (MSE) - A measure of the total error that can arise in an estimate. It is equal to the variance plus the bias squared. Mean square error is a more comprehensive measure of estimation error than is variance and, hence, is an important statistical analytical tool.

Months for Cyclical Dominance (MCD) - An estimate of the time span required to identify significant cyclical movements in a monthly economic time series. The MCD indicates the shortest span of months over which changes in the series are dominated by cyclical rather than irregular or erratic movements.

Moving average - A series of calculations made by initially taking the simple average, or arithmetic mean, of a consecutive number of items, and then dropping the first item and adding the next item in sequence and averaging, so that the number of items in the series remains constant. This is a continuous process.

Non-sampling error - Any error in the estimate other than the sampling error. Non-sampling error can arise from the use of an inaccurate sampling frame, improper sample allocation and selection procedures, poorly designed survey questionnaires, inaccurate data clarification/verification techniques, inaccurate reporting or coding from survey respondents, errors in estimation methodology, incorrect specifications, human error in execution and validation, computer program errors, etc. It is important to note that non-sampling errors also occur in censuses.

Optimum allocation - An allocation procedure for stratified sampling which, for a given target relative error, will generate the minimum necessary sample size.

Probability of selection - (Also referred to as sampling rate and sampling ratio) The numerical value expressing the likelihood that a particular unit will be selected in a sample. All units (within scope) on the sampling frame should have a probability greater than 0, but less than or equal to 1 ($0 < p \leq 1$) of being in the sample.

Probability sampling - A sampling procedure which gives each of the possible samples a fixed and determinate probability of selection or which gives each unit on a sampling frame a fixed and known chance of being included in the sample. Probability samples permit the calculation, from the sample data, of measures of reliability for the estimates.

Regression - A statistical tool which utilizes the relation between two or more variables so that one variable can be predicted or estimated from the other(s).

Relative error - The difference between the estimate and the actual population value expressed as a percentage of the latter.

Relative error, target - A value assigned to the relative error which specifies the degree of precision desired in an estimator.

Relative standard error - The ratio of the standard error of an estimator to the estimator's expected value. An estimate of it is the estimated standard error divided by the estimate.

Reliability - The degree of confidence that can be assigned to an estimate.

Sample - A subset of a universe. Usually selected as representative of the universe.

Sample allocation - The process of assigning a sample size or sampling rate to each stratum in a stratified sampling plan.

Sample frame - (also known as "frame"). A listing of all units in the universe, from which a sample can be drawn.

Sample plan - (also called sample design). The procedures that are used for sample allocation, selection, and estimation. It is often the object of a sample plan to provide the best possible representation of the universe for a fixed cost.

Sample refinement - The process by which newly selected sample units are investigated prior to enrollment. "Sample refinement" can involve identification of establishments within a reporting unit, correction of addresses, determination of industrial classification to a finer level of detail.

Sample survey - A survey in which only a sample or part of the population is studied.

Sample weight - A numerical value, assigned to a sample unit for use in estimation. It is equal to the sampling rate reciprocal.

Sampling error - The measure of sampling variability, that is, the variations that might occur by chance because only a sample of the population is surveyed. In other words, that part of the error of an estimate which is due to the fact that the estimate is obtained from a sample rather than from a census of the universe.

Sampling ratios - The proportion of units needed to be sampled to provide data of a specified level of statistical reliability. Sampling ratios vary by cell, depending on the degree of variability of the measured item.

Seasonal adjustment - Adjustment of time-series data to eliminate the effect of seasonal variations. Examples of such variations include school terms, holidays, yearly weather patterns, etc.

Standard deviation - A measure of dispersion around the mean value of a population. Frequently denoted by sigma, (s) is the square root of the variance.

Strata - The parts into which a sample frame are partitioned according to predetermined criteria for the purpose of sampling and estimation. In Federal/State programs, these strata are usually based on NAICS, geographic area, and size. The process of partitioning the sample frame is called "stratification".

Survey - A study of all or a portion of the whole, conducted for the purpose of making generalized statements about the whole.

Survey design - All procedures used in a survey. Includes frame development, sample design, form design, tabulation plans, etc..

Time series - A variable in which the values are successive observations over time. A key characteristic of a time series is that any 2 points in a time series can be compared. Data produced by the CES, OES, CPS, LAUS, MLS and JOLTS programs are economic time series. Data from the QCEW program is an Administrative series and technically not a time series.

Trend - The long term or overall movement of a series over time. Any economic time series is assumed to be made up of trend, irregular, cyclical, and seasonal movements.

Universe - The entire population to be measured.

Variance - A mathematical measure of the dispersion of the values of a variable around its mean. The variance may arise from a sampling of the population under study, or may just measure the variability of population values around its mean. The variance is denoted as sigma squared, s^2 .

This section defines terms used in the QCEW program.

[Return to table of contents](#)

Annual Refiling Survey (ARS) - A survey conducted by the QCEW program to verify and update the industry and ownership codes, geographic area codes, and addresses of business establishments covered by State unemployment insurance programs and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees.

Average Monthly Employment (AME)

Computed as the average of the three monthly employment figures in a given calendar quarter.

$$AME = \frac{(M1+M2+M3)}{3}$$

where M1 = Month One Employment

M2 = Month Two Employment

M3 = Month Three Employment

Average Quarterly Wages (AQW)

Computed as total quarterly wages (TQW) divided by average monthly employment (AME).

$$AQW = \frac{TQW}{AME}$$

Average Weekly Wages (AWW)

Computed as average quarterly wages divided by 13.

$$AWW = \frac{AQW}{13}$$

Business Employment Dynamics (BED) – Quarterly data produced by the QCEW program that shows the number of job gains from opening and expanding establishments, the number of job losses from closing and contracting establishments, and the net gain or loss. BED statistics show the dynamic labor market changes that underlie the net employment change statistic.

Centroid - The calculated geographic center of a zip code area. The centroid is part of the methodology used to assign latitude and longitude to addresses based on zip code.

Code Change Supplement (CCS) - A computer file that documents all non-economic changes to industry, area, and ownership classification codes that will be made effective with the first quarter EQUI file. The CCS is used to measure the impact of classification changes on QCEW macro data tabulations.

Comment Codes - Standardized numeric codes used by the CES and QCEW programs to explain fluctuations and unusual economic and noneconomic occurrences in the data. For QCEW, these codes are assigned to micro data records.

Covered Employment - Employees who are subject to State Unemployment Insurance (UI) laws or the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employee (UCFE) program. These "covered" employees should be counted in the QCEW micro data if they worked or received pay for the pay period that included the 12th day of the month.

Economic Code Change (ECC) - A change in the reporting unit's industry, area, or ownership classification code resulting from the actual conversion or re-location of the unit from one industry, area, or ownership type to another. Furthermore, the conversion or re-location must take place within a 30-day time period.

Enhanced Quarterly Unemployment Insurance (EQUI) file - A computer file prepared quarterly by State QCEW programs and provided to BLS-Washington. These files store the names, addresses, employment, wages, as well as other data items, of the establishments covered by State unemployment insurance programs and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees. The EQUI file is the primary State deliverable for the QCEW program.

EUSWeb - A data communication system developed by BLS to support file transfers between States and the BLS.

EXPO - A mainframe State QCEW processing system developed and maintained by the State of Utah and used by the majority of States. Many States access it centrally at the SunGard service center.

Geocode - The geographic information associated with a unique address or centroid, such as longitude and latitude coordinates, census block group, census tract, or county.

GIS - Geographic Information System is an organized collection of computer hardware, software, geographic data, and personnel designed to efficiently capture, store, update, manipulate, analyze, and display all forms of geographically referenced information.

Imputation - A process used to estimate employment and wages data when the actual data are not provided by the employer.

Longitudinal Database (LDB) - The LDB is a BLS maintained database of business establishments based on the micro data submitted quarterly by the States on the EQUI files. Included on the database is information on monthly employment, quarterly wages, business name and addresses, industry and area codes, and other administrative data. Every unit on the database contains a unique identifier that allows tracking of individual establishments across quarters. The LDB is the sampling frame for many Bureau of Labor Statistics surveys, and serves as an important resource for labor market research. It is used to produce tabulations on business births and deaths, and job creation and destruction.

Master Record - In QCEW micro data, a master record represents the Quarterly Contributions Report data for multi-establishment employers (employers with more than one worksite). A master record's economic data is the summation of data from all of its composite worksites. Master records are not included in macro data aggregations because they duplicate the economic data of the worksite records.

Multi-establishment Employer Indicator (MEEI) - A one-digit indicator code assigned to business establishment records on QCEW files to specify the multi-unit status of a reporting unit.

Multiple Worksite Report (MWR) - A standardized data collection form approved by OMB that the State QCEW staff sends employers with multiple worksites. The Multiple Worksite

Report allows the QCEW program to obtain worksite-level information that is not otherwise available from the administrative files of the State Unemployment Insurance programs. MWR reporting is mandatory in some states and voluntary in other states.

Non-Economic Code Change (NECC)

A change in a reporting unit's industry, area, or ownership classification code that:

1. Does not result from an actual conversion or re-location of the unit from one industry, area, or ownership type to another.
2. Results from an actual conversion or re-location that took longer than 30 days or was discovered by QCEW staff long afterwards.
3. Lacks sufficient evidence to be classified as an economic code change.

Predecessor - The previous owner of a business establishment. In QCEW microdata, a predecessor is an establishment that previously reported under one UI Account Number or Reporting Unit Number, that is now being reported under a different UI Account Number/Reporting Unit Number configuration. The purpose of Predecessor (and Successor) UI/RUN is to identify establishments as continuous, especially when they change ownership or UI number.

QCEW Program - A Federal/State cooperative program that collects and compiles employment and wage data for workers covered by State unemployment insurance (UI) laws, and Federal civilian workers covered by UCFE. State Workforce Agencies collect and compile quarterly UI contribution reports which are submitted by all employers. These data are maintained in the State in micro form and are forwarded to BLS-Washington via data deliverables. Any data from this program is generically referred to as "ES-202" data.

Quarterly Contribution Report (QCR) - A mandatory report filed quarterly by almost all U.S. employers to the State Workforce Agencies for Unemployment Insurance purposes. Employers report the number of employees, total quarterly wages, and UI taxable wages, and compute their UI tax liability for each quarter. The QCR is used by the QCEW program as the source of most data on the States' QCEW database.

Report of Federal Employment and Wages (RFEW) - A standardized data collection form (BLS 3021) that the State QCEW staff sends to Federal Government employers with multiple worksites in their State. The RFEW allows the QCEW program to obtain worksite level information from Federal agencies located within their state.

Reporting Unit - The most detailed economic unit for which data are reported by the employer. Usually, a reporting unit is an individual establishment, but sometimes two or more establishments are reported as a single unit.

Status Determination Form - (Also called Status Report) A mandatory form filed by most U.S. employers to their State Workforce Agency when they begin business operations in the State.

Information on the Status Determination Form is used to determine the employer's UI liability, establish a UI account, and assign a NAICS industry code.

Successor - The new owner of a business establishment. In QCEW microdata, a successor is an establishment that is now reported (or that will be reporting) under one UI Account Number or Reporting Unit Number, that was being reported under a different UI Account Number/Reporting Unit Number configuration. The purpose of Successor (and Predecessor) UI/RUN coding is to identify establishments as continuous, especially when they change ownership or UI number.

Taxable Wages - The portion of total UI-covered wages subject to State Unemployment Insurance tax.

UCFE - Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees. The Federal program which provides temporary financial assistance to eligible Federal workers who become unemployed. (Federal employees are not covered under State-administered Unemployment Insurance programs.)

UI - Unemployment Insurance. Social welfare program first instituted in the Great Depression to provide temporary financial assistance to eligible unemployed workers. Unemployment Insurance programs are administered by State Employment Workforce Agencies under State law, subject to Federal minimum standards.

UI Account Number - The number which identifies the State Unemployment Insurance account for which an establishment pays UI taxes. These taxes fund Unemployment Insurance benefits for eligible workers in that State. UI account numbers are assigned by the State Workforce Agency's UI Tax Unit. Generally, one UI account number is assigned per firm per State, regardless of how many establishments the firm has in the State.

Wage Records - An attachment filed with an employer's Quarterly Contribution Reports that lists the Social Security numbers, the individual quarterly wages, and, in some instances, the names of all UI-covered employees on the payroll.

WIN-202 - A client/server QCEW processing system developed and maintained by the state of Maine, and used as the standardized processing system in some States. It is a PC-based system that operates in a Windows environment.

This section defines terms used in the Current Employment Statistics program[Return to table of contents](#)

ACES - Automated Current Employment Statistics. Automated processing system used by all States for the CES program. Developed and maintained by the State of Iowa under contract with BLS. All States access ACES through the Sungard Service Center

All Employees (data item collected on BLS-790 form) - Persons who worked full or part time or received pay for any part of the pay period including the 12th of the month.

Atypical establishment - A sample establishment showing a trend in employment, hours and/or earnings that is thought to be unrepresentative of the universe. An atypical may be caused by events such as: storms, strikes, fire, a plant going out of business or being temporarily shut down, or a new plant hiring employees at a rapid rate. In CES estimation, an atypical establishment will represent itself, but will not represent any other part of the universe.

Average Hourly Earnings estimate (AHE) - An estimate of the average wage earned per hour by production or non supervisory workers in a given industry. In the future, BLS will publish AHE for all employees. Information on production workers, payroll, and hours collected by the CES survey are used to calculate the AHE estimate.

Average Weekly Hours estimate (AWH) - . An estimate of the average hours worked per week by production or non supervisory workers in a given industry. In the future, BLS will publish estimates of AWH for all employees. Information on production workers and hours collected by the CES survey are used to calculate the AWH estimate

Average Weekly Earnings estimate (AWE) - Average weekly hours times average hourly earnings. (AWH x AHE).

Average Weekly Overtime Hours estimate (AWOH) – An estimate of the average overtime hours worked per week by production workers in manufacturing industries. In the future, BLS will publish estimates of AWOH for all employees in manufacturing industries. Information on production workers and overtime hours collected by the CES survey are used to calculate the AWOH estimate

Benchmark – Employment data from the CES survey are estimates based on a sample. Annually, the CES survey revises its estimates to a “benchmark”. A benchmark is a complete count of all employees in the CES universe. The primary source of benchmark data in the CES program is the QCEW program.

Benefits - Compensation given to employees other than wages, such as life and health insurance. The value of benefits are not included in the CES definition of earnings.

Bias - The difference between the expected value of an estimator and the true value. In CES, the bias is consistent error in all employee estimates thought to be due primarily to underrepresentation in the sample of new establishments. Bias can be up or down; generally, bias in CES estimates is downward, since the CES misses the initial hiring of employees in newly created firms.

Birth/Death adjustment factor - An adjustment factor used to compensate for persistent downward bias in CES all employee estimates. To the result of the weighted link relative is added an estimate of the net gain or loss of employment due to business births and deaths. The Birth/death factor therefore compensates for sample bias. The size of the birth/death adjustment factor is based on observation of past bias in the industry.

BLS-790 - The federal Office of Management and Budget assigns numbers to all U.S. Government survey forms. BLS-790 is the assigned number of the form used to collect data for the CES survey. Some people still refer to the CES program as the “790 program.”

Closing - The date by which CES microdata must be received in Washington, DC from the States and Data Collection Centers for use in national CES estimates. There are 3 closings each month.

Comment codes - Standardized numbers that reflect the reason why microdata has changed for a particular establishment. Comment codes can be assigned by the reporter or by the data collector.

CATI - Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing. In CES, a structured system of microdata collection by telephone which speeds up the collection and editing of microdata and also permits the interviewer to "educate" the respondents on the importance of timely and accurate CES data.

Construction Workers (CES definition) - In the construction industry; all those who are non-supervisory, up through the level of working supervisors, and are also directly involved in the construction project either at the site or working in shops or yards.

Data Collection Centers (DCC's) - Office of Field Operations run centers in Kansas City, Dallas and Atlanta staffed by contractors who collect microdata for the CES program.

Economic code change - Occurs when an establishment actually changes its line of business, ownership (public, private), or location. The current NAICS, ownership, or area code is no longer valid and new codes, reflecting the new business, ownership, or location, are assigned. In CES estimates, economic code changes should be reflected as they actually occurred.

Editing - Verification of micro or macrodata for consistency and conformance with preestablished criteria or tolerance limits.

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Center – Similar to DCC's, this Chicago EDI Center specializes in collecting CES and QCEW program data from the largest US corporations, preferably through electronic means.

Enrollment - The process of requesting newly selected sample units to cooperate in the CES survey. Enrollment is done by the Data Collection Centers.

Escalation Clause - Written into long-term labor or production contracts, an escalation clause permits an increase or decrease of the settlement price depending on certain factors, such as the movement of average hourly earnings in a selected industry. Escalation clauses are prevalent in the Defense industry.

Estimating cell - The CES universe, total nonfarm establishments, is broken down at its lowest level into pieces called estimating cells. Estimating cells are grouped by NAICS industry. Estimates of AE, PW, AHE, etc, are made for each estimating cell. "Basic" estimating cells add to the next highest level. "Independent" estimating cells do not. Also see "summary cell".

Gross Monthly Earnings – Total gross wages paid to all employees during the entire previous month, before deductions. All wages subject to FICA taxation. BLS will begin publication of Gross Monthly Earnings in 2007.

L/P code - Length of pay code. A decimal value that, when multiplied by the reported payroll on a BLS-790 form, reduces the reported payroll to a weekly equivalent. Example: L/P code for a weekly payroll is 1. L/P code for a biweekly payroll is 0.5.

Matched sample - The portion of the CES sample for which microdata was received for both the current and previous months.

Noneconomic code change (NECC) - Occurs when an NAICS, ownership, or area code for an establishment must be changed for any reason other than an economic code change. This includes: 1) Code changes due to a restructuring of the NAICS coding system or MSA definition, 2) when there was an error in assigning the original code, or 3) when there was a previous change in economic activity, ownership, or location, but an economic code change was not made.

Nonresponse prompting (NRP) - A systematic method of calling CES reporters who have not submitted data. Used primarily for CES reporters who are reporting via TDE. Both States, Data Collection Centers, and contractors make NRP calls.

Nonsupervisory workers (CES definition) - Used in service producing industries; every employee except those whose major responsibility is to supervise, plan, or direct the work of others.

Pay period - Frequency with which worker's wages are calculated and paid; usually weekly, biweekly, semimonthly, or monthly.

Presumed Noncovered (PNC) Employees - Employees who are in the CES universe but who are not subject to Unemployment Insurance (UI) laws or the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) program, and are therefore not included in QCEW employment counts. Examples: railroad employees, students working at the colleges they attend, members of the clergy.

Production workers (data item collected on BLS-790 form) - Used in manufacturing and mining; all those workers who worked at least one hour during the reference period who are non-supervisory, up through the level of working supervisor, and are also directly involved in production.

Production worker hours (data item collected on BLS-790 form) - For production or nonsupervisory workers, the total number of hours paid for during the entire reference period.

Production worker overtime hours (data item collected on BLS-790 form) - The total number of production worker hours for which overtime premiums were paid because the hours were in excess of the regularly scheduled hours during the reference period. This data item is collected separately only in the Manufacturing Sector.

Production worker payroll (data item collected on BLS-790 form) - Total gross wages paid, before deductions, to production or non supervisory workers for work performed during the reference period. Payroll does not include irregular items such as vacation pay advances or Christmas bonuses.

Reference period - The pay period to which collected survey data apply. For CES, the reference period is the pay period including the 12th of the month.

Registry - The complete list of CES sample establishments and identifying information for each individual establishment. A State registry is maintained by each State and a national registry is maintained by BLS.

Sampling proportional to employment - A type of sample plan used in the CES survey where the chance of being selected in the sample is proportional to the employment size of the firm. Larger firms have a greater chance of being in the CES sample than to smaller firms.

Shift differential pay - Additional compensation paid to workers employed at other than regular daytime hours, such as a night shift. Not the same as overtime pay.

Size Class - Standardized groupings of establishments according to their employment size used in the QCEW program. The CES program uses QCEW size class groupings to stratify the universe by size of establishment prior to sample selection.

Small Domain Model - A regression model used to estimate All Employees in small State and MSA cells where there is insufficient sample.

Summary Cell - An aggregation of a group of estimating cells. Estimates are not made for summary cells. There are several different layers of summary cells, such as 2 and 3-digit NAICS, Sector level, Super Sector level, Total Private, and Total Nonfarm.

TDE - Touch-tone Data Entry. A method of collecting CES microdata in which reporters call an 800 number and punch in their data on a touch-tone telephone.

Wedge - Adjustments which smooth out the difference between two figures in a time series (e.g. benchmark and estimate).

Weighted Difference Link and Tapers technique - The name of the procedure used for estimating PW, AHE, AWH, and AWOH in the CES survey. This technique takes into account both the trend of the current matched sample (the difference link); the previous month's estimate, and the previous month's sample ratio from the current matched sample. (the taper). The taper is used so that changes caused solely by changes in sample composition will be smoothed (tapered) into the estimates.

Weighted Link relative - The ratio of the weighted matched sample total (ae_C) for the current month to the weighted matched sample total (ae_P) for the previous month.

Weighted link relative technique - The name of the procedure used for estimating All Employees in the CES survey. The weighted link relative technique consists of multiplying the weighted link relative by the all employee estimate for the previous month (AE_P) to produce the all employee estimate for the current month (AE_C).

This section defines terms used in the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey[Return to table of contents](#)

Check Digit - The tenth digit in the schedule number (after the dash) used to validate the schedule number.

COC - Central Office Collection. Usually multi-establishment firms that have requested to report the OES data for their establishments to BLS from a central source.

Employer ID Number (EIN) - A 9-digit identification number assigned to employers by the Internal Revenue Service, also referred to sometimes as an FEIN.

Family Code - Identifies establishments that are part of one company when that company is a COC. Constituent sample units of a single company are assigned the same unique Family Code.

MSA Code - The geographic sub-state location of the establishment(s) identified by State designated or FIPS codes.

Occupation Associate Title - An alternative title that is synonymous with the listed OES title on the survey. Various associate titles may be linked to specific SOC codes.

Panel Code - An identifier code for a survey reference date (200702)

Parameter File - Contains various OES survey specifications which may be modified each survey year. Among the parameters are survey codes, titles, and reference dates; industry coverage, descriptions, and codes; occupation codes, titles, and definitions; and lists of dependent and independent occupations.

Quality Assurance (QA) Edits - Tests which alert States to potential problems with OES occupational and wage data by identifying specific reported data that do not fall within predetermined guidelines. Consists of micro edits involving specific questionnaires and macro edits involving ranges of occupational and wage responses.

Reference Date - Represents the date for which respondents are requested to submit data.

Reference Materials - Refers to various data and tables used to enable the State analysts to process returned questionnaires. Included are such items as the OES dictionary, alphabetic and numeric indices, associated title lists, and the survey form industry coverage.

Reported Total Employment (RTE) - The figure the respondent provides as the total number of employees in the unit as of the survey reference date.

Reporting Unit - One or more establishments participating in the OES survey as a single entity.

Reporting Unit Number - Number assigned by the State QCEW staff to identify a specific establishment within a multi-establishment employer.

Schedule Number - A unique number assigned to each sample member for processing purposes.

Size Class - Code based on total employment of a unit used to group similar size units.

<u>OES/QCEW Size classes</u>		<u>OES Sampling Size Classes</u>	
SC	EMPL	SC	EMPL
0	0	1	1-4
1	1-4	2	4-9
2	5-9	3	10-19
3	10-19	4	20-49
4	20-49	5	50-99
5	50-99	6	100-249
6	100-249	7	250+
7	250-499		
8	500-999		
9	1000+		

State FIPS Code - A 2-digit code used by the OES program to identify States and Territories.

Status Codes - A two-digit code that indicates the status of a sample member. Initially, the status code is set to 60 (nonresponse) and is updated during the course of the survey.

SOC Code - Standard Occupational Classification Code - A six-digit identifier of a particular occupation (e.g., 19-3011).

SOC Definition - The Standard Occupation Classification description of an individual occupation.

SOC Title - The Standard Occupational Classification name of an individual occupation.

Summed Total Employment (STE) - The total employment of a unit calculated by summing individual occupational employment figures provided by the respondent.

Survey Form - The data collection form sent to each non-COC establishment in the sample. The form is selected based on the industry and size of the establishment.

Survey Processing and Management (SPAM) System - The processing system used to enter, edit, and disseminate data for the OES survey.

Wage Category - Refers to an alphabetic designation (A-L) which represents a wage range assigned to each employee.

Wage Range - The dollar values assigned to each wage category representing both an hourly wage and a yearly salary.

Wage Range A	Under \$7.50	Under \$15,600
Wage Range B	\$7.50 - \$9.49	\$15,600 - \$19,759
Wage Range C	\$9.50 - \$11.99	\$19,760 - \$24,959
Wage Range D	\$12.00 - \$15.24	\$24,960 - \$31,719
Wage Range E	\$15.25 - \$19.24	\$31,720 - \$40,039
Wage Range F	\$19.25 - \$24.49	\$40,040 - \$50,959
Wage Range G	\$24.50 - \$30.99	\$50,960 - \$64,479
Wage Range H	\$31.00 - \$39.24	\$64,480 - \$81,639
Wage Range I	\$39.25 - \$49.74	\$81,640 - \$103,479
Wage Range J	\$49.75 - \$63.24	\$103,480 - 131,559
Wage Range K	\$63.25 - \$79.99	\$131,560 - \$166,399
Wage Range L	\$80.00 and Over	\$166,400 and Over

This section defines terms used in the Current Population Survey[Return to table of contents](#)

Civilian Labor Force: This represents the "pool" of available workers. It includes all civilians 16 years and older who are either employed or unemployed.

Civilian Noninstitutional Population: The base population used in the calculation of labor force statistics includes only persons aged 16 years and over residing in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Active duty members of the Armed Forces are excluded. Also excluded are persons confined to institutions such as correctional, psychiatric, and long-term care facilities.

Class of Worker: This is a classification scheme that divides the employed into *wage and salary workers*, *self-employed workers*, and *unpaid family workers*. Wage and salary workers—those who receive wages, salary, commissions, tips, pay in kind from an employer—are further subdivided into private and government workers. Self-employed workers are those who work for profit in their own business or farm. Unpaid family workers are persons working without pay for at least 15 hours per week in a business or farm operated by a member of the household related by birth or marriage.

Computer-Assisted Interviewing (CAI): The CPS is conducted using computer-assisted interviewing. This enables the use of "dependent" interviewing techniques wherein respondents who have been in the survey in prior months receive questions on some topics (industry, occupation, duration of unemployment) based on answers previously given. It also allows for the use of complicated "skip patterns" in the interviewing process which are not possible with a paper-based system.

Discouraged Workers: These are persons who had no employment during the reference week, want a job, have looked for work during the past year, and are available to work, but did not look for work in the last four weeks because they believed that no jobs were available to them. Discouraged workers are classified as not in the labor force. They are not counted as unemployed because they have not made specific efforts to find work in the last four weeks.

Duration of Unemployment: This is a measure of the number of weeks that a person has been unemployed. BLS publishes several series on duration that show the number unemployed for various lengths of time. Also published are: *mean duration* and *median duration*. Mean duration is the arithmetic average duration of unemployment in weeks; median duration is the midpoint of a distribution of weeks of unemployment. All of these measures refer to unemployment spells in progress, not to completed spells.

Employed: Persons who, during the survey reference week, did any work as paid employees; worked in their own business, practice, or farm; or worked at least 15 hours as unpaid workers in a family business are employed. Also included are persons who had a job or business, but were temporarily absent because of illness, vacation, bad weather, labor-management disputes, or personal reasons.

Employment-Population Ratio: The proportion of the population that is employed.

Family: A group of two or more persons residing together who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Families are classified as either married-couple families or as families maintained by women or men without spouses.

Full Time: Persons who usually work for 35 hours or more per week are designated as working full time.

Job leavers: This is a category of unemployed persons who quit their previous job voluntarily.

Labor Force Participation Rate: The proportion of the population that is in the labor force.

New entrants: These are persons who are unemployed and have never been employed.

Non-interview Adjustment: A procedure whereby the weighting of data obtained from interviewed households is adjusted to account for households from which no data were obtained.

Not in the Labor Force: All persons in the civilian noninstitutional population who are neither employed nor unemployed are not in the labor force.

On Layoff: This is a category of unemployment that consists of people who expect to be recalled to their previous job.

Other Job Losers: This is a category of unemployed persons whose employment ended involuntarily and who do not expect to be recalled to their previous job. It includes people who completed temporary jobs.

Part Time: Persons who usually work between 1 and 34 hours per week are designated as being part time. Part-time workers are further classified by their reason (economic or noneconomic) for working part time in the reference week.

Part Time for Economic Reasons: Persons who worked part time involuntarily in the reference week because of slack work, material shortages, repairs to plant and equipment, start or termination of a job during the week, or inability to find full-time work. To be classified in this category, respondents must want and be available for full-time work.

Part Time for Noneconomic Reasons: Persons who worked part time voluntarily in the reference week. This includes reasons such as vacation, illness, and family obligations.

Race and Hispanic Origin: Many CPS series are grouped according to race or ethnic background. At present the racial groups published by BLS are "white," "black or African American," and "Asian." "Hispanic or Latino ethnicity" refers to an ethnic rather than a racial designation and persons in this group may be of any race.

Re-entrants: These are unemployed persons who have been employed in the past, but were out of the labor force prior to beginning their current job search.

Ratio Adjustment: A procedure designed to correct for differences between the CPS sample and the actual population in such demographic characteristics as age, race, and sex.

Reference Week: The calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that contains the 12th of the month. Employment data collected in the survey refer to this week.

Sample Rotation: A portion of the sample households in the CPS is changed each month. Each household is in the survey for a total of 8 months, divided into two equal periods. The sample households will be in the sample for 4 months, out of the sample for the following 8 months, then in the sample again for 4 more months. This system, which allows for 75 percent of the sample to be common from month to month and 50 percent from year to year, reduces discontinuities in the data without placing undue burdens on sample households.

Survey Week: The calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that contains the 19th of the month. The CPS is usually conducted during this week.

Unemployed: Persons who had no employment during the survey reference week but were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find work during the preceding 4 weeks are unemployed, as are persons awaiting recall to a job from which they have been laid off. Persons waiting to start a new job are counted as unemployed only if they have looked for work during the prior four weeks. Otherwise, they are considered to be out of the labor force.

Unemployment Rate: This is the number of unemployed persons as a percent of the civilian labor force. The unemployment rate is calculated for a large number of groups within the labor force classified by sex, race, Hispanic origin, age, marital status, educational attainment, etc.

Usual Weekly Earnings: These are weekly earnings data for wage and salary workers, before taxes and other deductions. Included are overtime pay, tips, or commissions, if usually received.

This section defines terms used in the Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program

[Return to table of contents](#)

Additional Claim - A notice of new unemployment filed at the beginning of a second or subsequent series of claims within a benefit year or within a period of eligibility when there has been intervening employment. (One of three types of initial claims.)

Agent State - The State in which a claimant files an interstate claim for compensation against another (liable) State where wages were earned.

All Other Nonagricultural Employment (other than wage and salary) - This category includes the self-employed, unpaid family workers, and domestics in private households.

Base Period (Base Year) - A specified period of 12 consecutive months or, in some States, 52 weeks preceding the beginning of a benefit year during which an individual must have the required employment and/or wages in order to establish entitlement to compensation or allowances under an applicable program.

Benchmarking - The process in which revisions to CES and UI data are incorporated into State and sub-State LAUS estimates. Benchmarking also involves adjusting monthly Statewide model estimates so that they sum to the CPS annual average, while maintaining as much of the original series seasonal pattern as possible.

Benefit Year - A period, generally 52 weeks, during which an individual claimant may receive his/her maximum potential benefit amount.

Claim - A notice filed to request a determination of unemployment insurance eligibility and the amount of benefit entitlement, or to claim benefits or waiting period credit.

Claimant - A person who files either an initial claim or a continued week claimed under (1) any State or Federal unemployment compensation program or (2) any other program administered by the State agency.

Commutation - The regular travel of a person from the place of residence to the job location or the place of filing for UI benefits.

Commuter Claimant - Under the Intrastate Benefit Payment plan, a worker who travels regularly across a State line from home to work and, by mutual agreement between States, files in the State where the individual last worked when employed.

Continued Claim - A claim filed after the initial claim by mail, telephone, or in person for waiting period credit or payment for one week or more of unemployment.

Covered Employment - Those jobs covered by the unemployment compensation programs. At this time, those not covered include some agricultural workers, employees of religious and small nonprofit organizations, household workers, and self-employed workers.

Delayed Filers and Never Filers - Unemployed workers from establishments covered by unemployment insurance who, even though having qualifying earnings for benefits, delay filing claims or do not file at all.

Denial of Benefits - Action imposed by State agency after a non-monetary determination or an appeals decision which cancels, reduces, or postpones a claimant's benefit rights.

Earnings Disregarded - The amount prescribed by State unemployment compensation laws that a claimant may earn without any reduction in the weekly benefit amount for a week of total unemployment. Also referred to as the forgiveness level for earnings. This amount varies for each State.

Earnings Due to Employment - Any earnings, either from the regular employer or from odd jobs, which a UI claimant may receive while certifying to a week of unemployment. The existence of these earnings classifies the claimant as employed, even when earnings are less than the State's forgiveness level.

Exhaustees: - Persons who have exhausted all of their unemployment insurance benefits and are no longer eligible for any further benefits.

Extended Benefits (EB) - The supplemental program that pays extended compensation during a period of specified high unemployment to individuals for weeks of unemployment after they have exhausted regular compensation.

Final Payment - The last payment to a claimant, which exhausts the individual's maximum potential benefit entitlement under a specific program.

Forgiveness Level - See earnings disregarded.

Initial Claim - Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Insured Unemployment - Unemployment during a week for which waiting period credit or benefits are claimed under the regular compensation programs, supplemental extended benefit programs, or the railroad unemployment insurance program.

Interstate liable claims. Claims against wages earned in one State filed in a State other than that where the wage credits were earned. Determination on eligibility, disqualifications, and the amount and duration of benefits are made by the liable State which funds and pays the benefits, if any.

Intrastate Claim - A claim filed in the same State in which the individual's wage credits were earned. A nonresident of the State filing an intrastate claim is called a commuter claimant.

Labor Market Area (LMA) - An economically integrated geographical unit within which workers may readily change jobs without changing their place of residence. All States are divided into exhaustive LMAs, which usually include (except in New England, where cities and towns are used in place of counties) a county or a group of contiguous counties. Independent Handbook estimates of employment and unemployment are made monthly for each LMA and form the basis for the LAUS estimates.

LAUS Estimate - The BLS-published employment and unemployment estimates which have been derived in one of three ways: By a regression model approach; based on the Handbook estimate adjusted to the State level; or disaggregated from a labor market area estimate.

Liable State - Any State against which a worker files a claim for compensation through the facilities of another (agent) State.

LAUS State System (LSS) - The automated system developed by DFSMS and used by the States to produce estimates of employment, unemployment, and the labor force for the LAUS program. LSS operates on a PC in a Windows (called WinLSS) platform.

Monetary Determination - A written notice issued to inform an individual whether or not the individual meets the employment and wage requirements necessary to establish entitlement to compensation under a specific unemployment insurance program and, if entitled, the weekly and maximum benefit amounts the individual may receive.

New Claim - The first claim filed in person, by mail, or telephone to request a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation (one of three types of initial claims—see also additional claim and transitional claim).

New Entrants - In the CPS, new entrants are prospective workers looking for a job, such as students entering the labor market after graduation from school, and others who have not previously worked.

Nonmonetary Determination - Process of determining whether a claimant meets legal criteria other than wage credits under State UI law. Usually concerned with: (1) the reason the claimant left the job (separation issues); and (2) the job search (whether claimant is able, available, and actively seeking work).

Re-entrants - Unemployed persons who have previously worked but were out of the labor force prior to their most recent job search.

Reference Week - The week for which data are collected. For the CPS, the reference week is the calendar week including the 12th of the month. For UI data, it is the certification period. In

most States, the UI certification week is the calendar week including the 12th. Exceptions are States with flexible benefit weeks and New York, whose week is a Monday-through-Sunday week.

Residency Adjustment of Employment - Adjusting establishment-based data, which are on a place-of-work basis, to reflect the place of residence of the employed. The current adjustment also corrects for multiple jobholding and unpaid absences in the place-of-work series.

STARS (State Time-series Analysis and Review System) - A collection of interactive WYLBUR command procedures and SAS macro language programs which allows multiple users to make State model estimates, and extract and review related data. STARS currently resides on the SunGard mainframe, but will be moving to client-server.

Transitional Claim - A new claim filed to request a determination of eligibility and establishment of a new benefit year, having an effective date within a 7-day period immediately following the ending date of the benefit year, and a week for which compensation was claimed.(one of three types of initial claims—see also additional claim and new claim).

Unemployed Disqualified - Persons who are disqualified from receiving UI benefits for separation issue non-monetary reasons but are able to work and are available for work.

Unemployed Exhaustees - Unemployed persons who have exhausted all of their unemployment compensation benefits and are no longer eligible for benefits under the regular program.

Waiting Period - A non-compensable period of unemployment in which the worker must have been otherwise eligible for benefits. All except 11 states require a waiting period of one week of total unemployment before benefits are payable.

WinLSS - Another name for the PC-based LAUS State System (LSS).

Youth Population Ratio (YPR) - The ratio between the 16 to 19 year old population and the population 20 years of age and over (16-19 divided by 20+). It is used in estimating Handbook unemployed entrants.

This section defines terms used in the Mass Layoffs Statistics Program

[Return to table of contents](#)

Additional claim. A notice of new unemployment filed at the beginning of a second or subsequent series of claims within a benefit year or within a period of eligibility when there has been intervening employment. (One of three types of initial claims--see also new claim and transitional claim.)

Base period (base year). A specified period of 12 consecutive months or, in some cases, 52 weeks preceding the beginning of a benefit year during which an individual must have the required employment and/or wages in order to establish entitlement to compensation or allowances under an applicable program.

Benefit year. A period, generally of 52 weeks, during which an individual claimant may receive his/her maximum potential benefit amount.

BLS Event. A layoff for which the total number of initial claims within a 5-week period meets or exceeds the BLS Trigger. A confirmed BLS event differs from a Potential BLS event in that number of separations has been confirmed with the employer.

BLS trigger. The number of initial claims within a consecutive 5-week period that indicates a potential mass layoff event. The trigger for a BLS event is currently set at 50 initial claims. Some States have an exception to this trigger level to track layoffs with fewer than 50 initial claims in a five weeks. See State Trigger.

Claim. A notice filed to request a determination of unemployment insurance eligibility and the amount of benefit entitlement, or to claim benefits or waiting period credit.

Claimant. A person who files either an initial claim or a continued week claim under (1) any State or Federal unemployment compensation program or (2) any other program administered by the State agency.

Confirmed event. Any type of layoff event that has been confirmed via employer contact.

Continued claim. A claim filed after the initial claim by mail or in person for waiting period credit or payment for one week or more of unemployment.

Delayed filers and never filers. Unemployed workers from establishments covered by unemployment insurance who, even though having qualifying earnings for benefits, delay filing claims or do not file at all.

Dislocated worker layoff event. A layoff event that qualifies as a closure, or a substantial layoff. DW closures are layoff events in establishments with 20 or more workers where the worksite is permanently closed, according to the employer. Substantial layoffs are events where

50 or more workers are separated and the number of separations is at least one-third of pre-layoff employment, or layoff events of 500 or more separated workers.

Earnings disregarded. The amount prescribed by State unemployment compensation laws that a claimant may earn without any reduction in the weekly benefit amount for a week of total unemployment. This is also referred to as the forgiveness level for earnings. This amount varies for each State.

Earnings due to employment. Any earnings, either from the regular employer or from odd jobs, which a UI claimant may receive while certifying to a week of unemployment. The existence of these earnings classifies the claimant as employed, even when earnings are less than the States forgiveness level.

Exhaustees. Persons who have exhausted all of their unemployment insurance benefits and are no longer eligible for any further benefits.

Extended mass layoff event. Fifty or more initial claims filed against an establishment during a 5-week period, with at least 50 workers separated for more than 30 days, according to the employer.

Final payment. The last payment to a claimant, which exhausts the individual's maximum potential benefit entitlement under a specific program.

Initial claim. Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Insured unemployment. Unemployment during a week for which waiting period credit or benefits are claimed under the regular compensation programs, supplemental extended benefit programs, or the railroad unemployment insurance program.

Interstate liable claims. Claims against wages earned in one State filed in a State other than that where the wage credits were earned. Determination on eligibility, disqualifications, and the amount and duration of benefits are made by the liable State which funds and pays the benefits, if any.

Mass Layoff Statistics (MLS) program. A Federal-State cooperative program using a standardized, automated approach in identifying, describing, and tracking the impact of major job cutbacks. The MLS program had been developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in response to Section 462(e) of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), PL 97-300. Language found in Section 309 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), PL 105-220, replaces the reference in JTPA.

Mass layoff event. Fifty or more initial claims filed against an establishment during a 5-week period.

Monetary determination. A written notice issued to inform an individual whether or not he/she meets the employment and wage requirements necessary to establish entitlement to compensation under a specific program and, if entitled, the weekly and maximum benefit amounts the individual may receive.

Movement of work. A company that has reassigned work activities that were performed at a worksite by the company's employees to one of the following:

1. to another worksite within the company;
2. to another company under formal arrangements at the same worksite ; or
3. to another company under formal arrangements at another worksite

New claim. The first claim filed in person, by mail, or telephone to request a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation. (One of three types of initial claims--see also additional claim and transitional claim.)

Nonmonetary determination. The process of determining whether a claimant meets legal criteria other than wage credits under State UI law. This is usually concerned with: (1) the reason the claimant left the job (separation issues) and (2) the job search (whether the claimant is able, available, and actively seeking work.)

Primary reason for separation. The reason for layoff as reported by the employer. Examples include seasonal work, contract completion, slack work, reorganization within the company, and financial difficulty.

Potential State event. An event in which {State Trigger Value} claims have been filed against an establishment during a 5-week period. Note: State Events are not present in the monthly or quarterly transmission; the 'State trigger value' is determined by each State. If no 'State trigger value' is entered, the WinMLS system defaults to the BLS value of 50.

Reference week. The week for which data are collected. For the Current Population Survey (CPS), the reference week is the calendar week including the 12th day of the month. For UI data, it is the certification period. In most States, the UI certification week is the calendar week including the 12th day. Exceptions are States with flexible benefit weeks and New York, whose week is Monday through Sunday.

Separating employer. The last employing unit (LEU) of a claimant. Within the MLS program, the identification of the separating employer is through the UI account number.

Separations. The number of individuals who have become permanently separated during a particular layoff event, as provided by the employer.

State-wide establishment. A number of decentralized individual units within a State engaged in a single economic activity. These individual units are represented by a single UI account number.

State trigger. An optional value set by the State to determine the minimum number of Initial Claims that will trigger a potential State-defined mass layoff event. The trigger may be any number less than the BLS Trigger, but greater than zero.

Stop date. Within the MLS program, the final week that initial claims are collected for a particular layoff event.

Total unemployment. A week in which the individual performs no services and with respect to which no remuneration is payable.

Transitional claim. A new claim filed to request a determination of eligibility and establishment of a new benefit year, having an effective date within a 7-day period immediately following the ending date of the benefit year, and a week for which compensation was claimed. (One of three types of initial claims--see also additional claim and new claim.)

Trigger week. The week-ending date when enough initial claims are filed to create a potential layoff event.

Valid initial claim. In the MLS program, an initial claim which has a positive monetary determination, i.e., that enough employment and wage credits were met to establish entitlement to compensation under a specific UI program.

Waiting period. A noncompensable period of unemployment in which the worker must have been otherwise eligible for benefits. All except 11 States require a waiting period of one week of total unemployment before benefits are payable.

WinMLS. A PC-based software package designed to assist States in identifying and describing both mass layoffs and dislocated worker populations.

Year/week of separation. The first week of separation activity, for a given layoff event, as provided by the employer.

This section defines terms used in the JOLTS Program[Return to table of contents](#)

Active Recruiting – Taking steps to fill a position, which may include advertising in newspapers, on television, or on radio; posting Internet notices; posting "help wanted" signs; networking with colleagues or making "word of mouth" announcements; accepting applications; interviewing candidates; contacting employment agencies; or soliciting employees at job fairs, state or local employment offices, or similar sources.

Beveridge Curve - The empirical relation linking job openings, or vacancies, with unemployment and the overall economy. First described by William Beveridge in the 1940s, the curve reflects an inverse relationship between vacancies and unemployment. The steady-state relationship between the unemployment rate and the vacancy rate is derived from the matching function between vacancies and job seekers. Therefore, the Beveridge curve is not a fundamental economic relationship, but rather a correlation brought about by underlying labor market flows. It can be used as an indicator of labor market effectiveness. It is typically drawn with the unemployment rate on the horizontal axis and the vacancy rate on the vertical axis.

Census Region – A grouping of States into four regions: the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West.

Data Collection Center – Center in Atlanta, Georgia staffed by BLS employees and contractors who collect microdata for the JOLTS program.

Discharge – An involuntary separation initiated by the employer who has released or dismissed an employee from employment.

Employee Leasing Company – An establishment primarily engaged in supplying temporary or continuing help on a contract or fee basis, which serves as the employer of the leased employees for payroll, benefits, and related purposes and exercises varying degrees of decision-making relating to their human resource or personnel management role, but does not have management accountability for the work of their clients' operations with regard to strategic planning, output, or profitability; referred to as Professional Employer Organizations (PEOs) in the NAICS manual.

Employer – The legal entity responsible for payment of quarterly unemployment insurance taxes or for reimbursing the state fund for unemployment insurance benefits costs in lieu of paying the quarterly taxes.

Faculty Under Contract – Includes all faculty members who are under contract regardless of type of pay schedule. Schools are instructed to include faculty under contract in total employment during periods when school is not in session, even if faculty members do not work or are not paid during those months.

Hire – Any addition to the payroll that may be new, rehired, or recalled from layoff.

Intermittent Employees – Employees who are not permanent but who are called to work when work is available, usually in addition to permanent employees.

Internal Transfers – Transfers from one division of the establishment to another at the same physical location.

Job Opening – A position that is open (not filled) on the last business day of the month and 1) a specific position exists and there is work available, 2) work could start within 30 days, and 3) the employer is actively recruiting to fill the position.

Last Business Day of the Month – The last day of the month on which an establishment is “open;” may or may not be the same as the last day of the calendar month, but is not in the following calendar month.

Layoff – An involuntary separation initiated by the employer that is a period of forced unemployment. For the purposes of JOLTS, formal layoffs should be reported if they last or are expected to last more than seven days.

Multi Establishment – A legal entity with establishments in more than one location or engaged in more than one distinct economic activity. All may be reported under a single unemployment insurance account in a state; one contact person usually reports data for all of the establishments.

On-Call Employees – Employees who are not permanent, but called to work as needed, often on short-notice, although they can be scheduled to work for several days or weeks in a row.

Other Separations – Separations for miscellaneous reasons such as retirements, deaths, transfers, or separations due to employee disability.

Outside Contractors or Consultants – May be identified as independent contractors, independent consultants, or free-lance workers. The majority are self-employed but may be wage and salary workers and should direct their own work.

Pay Period That Includes the 12th of the Month – The standard for all Federal agencies collecting employment data from business establishments, it is the time unit that employers use to pay employees that overlaps the 12th of the month. The length of the pay period does not matter, as long as the 12th of the month is included in the pay period. For establishments with a Monday through Friday pay period, if the 12th of the month falls on a Saturday, it should be taken as the last day of the requested pay period, and if the 12th of the month falls on a Sunday, it should be taken as the first day of the requested pay period.

Professional Employer Organization (PEO) – A business that supplies management and administrative services with regard to human resource responsibilities for employers and serves as the co-employer of the client’s employees for payroll, benefits, and related purposes. Referred to as employee leasing companies in the SIC manual.

Proprietor(s) – Owner(s) of a business establishment and has exclusive rights and title to the establishment.

Quit – A voluntary separation initiated by the employee who has resigned from a job or position.

Reporting Number/Schedule Number – A unique number assigned to each sample member.

Reporting Unit – Most detailed economic unit for which an employer will report data, and is usually a single establishment, but occasionally, an employer may give a consolidated report for more than one establishment.

Temporary Help Agency – An establishment primarily engaged in supplying workers to clients' businesses for limited periods of time to supplement the work force of the client. The individuals provided are employees of the temporary help service establishment, but these establishments do not provide direct supervision of their employees at the clients' work sites.

Total Employment – A count of persons on the payroll who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. JOLTS collects employment for benchmarking purposes but does not publish employment estimates.

Total Separations – The sum of quits (voluntary), layoffs and discharges (involuntary), and other separations.

Turnover Rate – The number of total separations divided by employment.

Worked During or Received Pay for – Employees should be counted in total employment if they: 1) worked during the pay period that included the 12th of the month and/or 2) received pay for work they performed or for leave taken during the pay period that included the 12th of the month (NOTE: if employees only receive pay during the pay period that included the 12th of the month for work performed or leave taken during a previous pay period and did not satisfy one of the two conditions listed above, they should not be counted in total employment).