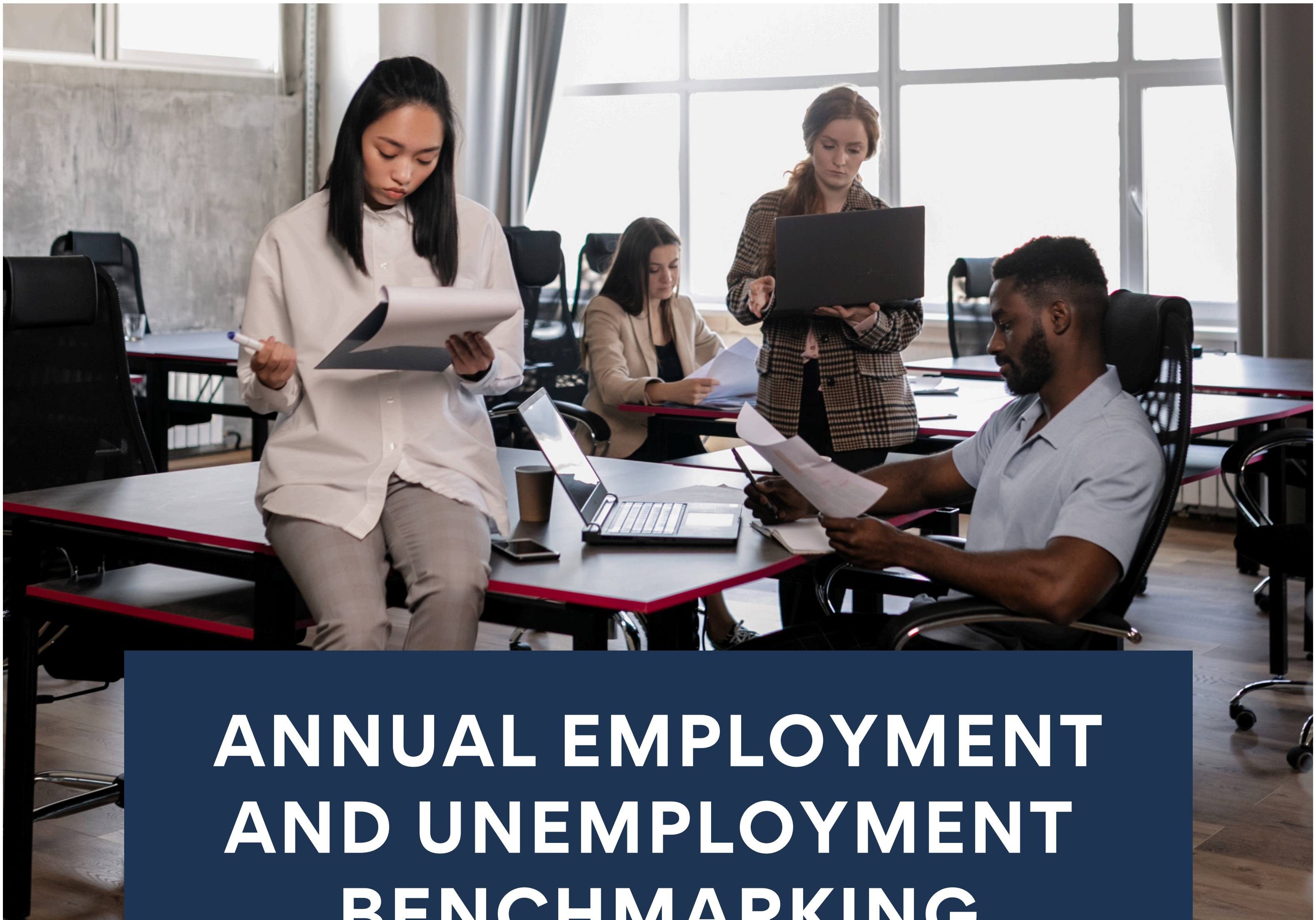

ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT BENCHMARKING

The Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) programs conduct annual benchmarking to ensure employment and unemployment estimates are accurate and consistent with the latest population and payroll data. CES benchmarking is done each year to align employment survey estimates with employment counts of employees covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI). All employers covered by UI laws are required to report employment and wage information, which is tabulated and published through the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. Roughly ninety-seven percent of total nonfarm employment within the scope of the establishment survey are covered by UI and is available to the CES program via QCEW records. The remaining three percent is constructed from other sources, such as the Railroad Retirement Board and U.S. Census Bureau data from County Business Patterns. This three percent is referred to as non-covered employment. The combination of QCEW and non-covered employment data makes up the benchmark level. The benchmark employment level replaces the sample-based estimate.[1]

[1] US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Establishment Survey National Estimates Revised to Incorporate March 2025 Benchmarks. *https://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cesbmart.pdf*

The LAUS program, whose estimates are partly based on the household survey, adjusts its employment and unemployment estimates using updated population totals and demographic controls from the Census Bureau and other administrative sources. This annual benchmarking corrects for sampling variability and other sources of error, ensuring that reported employment, unemployment, and labor force trends for Delaware reflect both survey data and official population counts.

Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Establishment Survey

The 2025 benchmark revisions updated prior year total nonfarm employment estimates, including estimates for 2024 and 2025. Revisions to the seasonally adjusted annual average total number of jobs resulted in a combined average net increase of roughly 2,100 jobs, indicating that employment levels in both 2024 and 2025 were higher than originally estimated.

The table below compares the original seasonally adjusted employment estimates with the benchmarked revisions for statewide, total nonfarm employment in 2024 and 2025. The largest benchmark revisions occurred during the fourth quarter of 2024 during the months of October (6,300), November (5,400), and December (4,300).

Total Nonfarm Employment: Original Monthly Estimates vs. 2025 Benchmark Revisions
(2024–2025, Seasonally Adjusted)

Year	Month	Original Estimate	2025 Benchmark	Change
2024	January	486,400	486,800	400
	February	486,400	487,200	800
	March	489,100	489,200	100
	April	488,900	490,000	1,100
	May	489,100	490,200	1,100
	June	488,600	490,400	1,800
	July	489,000	491,000	2,000
	August	490,300	492,300	2,000
	September	491,300	494,300	3,000
	October	488,000	494,300	6,300
	November	490,400	495,800	5,400
	December	490,800	495,100	4,300
	Annual Avg.	**489,000**	**491,400**	**2,400**
2025	January	491,200	495,700	4,500
	February	492,600	495,700	3,100
	March	493,000	495,300	2,300
	April	494,100	496,300	2,200
	May	493,500	497,100	3,600
	June	492,600	496,400	3,800
	July	493,000	496,200	3,200
	August	493,600	496,000	2,400
	September	493,900	494,500	600
	October	493,300	492,800	-500
	November	494,300	492,700	-1,600
	December	496,100	494,800	-1,300
	Annual Avg.	**493,400**	**495,300**	**1,900**

Benchmark revisions impacted several industries, including *Private Education and Health Services* and *Government*, which led revisions in employment. For the *Private Education and Health Services* sector, combined seasonally adjusted employment for 2024 and 2025 was revised upward by 3,800 jobs from the original estimates. The *Government* sector recorded the second-largest upward revision, with employment increasing by 1,000 jobs over the two-year period. The *Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities* super sector had the third-largest revision, with employment levels increasing by 800 jobs compared with earlier estimates. The largest downward revision occurred in the *Retail Trade* sector, where employment was revised downward by 1,200 jobs from the original estimates.

The table below compares the original annual average **seasonally adjusted** employment estimates with the 2025 benchmarked employment levels for each industry in 2024 and 2025.

Change in Annual Average Employment from 2025 Benchmarking
(2024–2025, Seasonally Adjusted)

INDUSTRY	2024 Total Annual Average Change	2025 Total Annual Average Change	Total Change
Private Education and Health Services	1,500	2,300	3,800
Government	0	1,000	1,000
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	200	600	800
Wholesale Trade	200	300	500
Financial Activities	200	100	300
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	200	0	200
Non-Durable Goods	-100	300	200
Manufacturing	-100	200	100
Goods Producing	0	0	0
Information	0	0	0
Durable Goods	0	-100	-100
Mining, Logging and Construction	100	-200	-100
Professional and Business Services	200	-400	-200
Other Services	0	-200	-200
Leisure and Hospitality	300	-700	-400
Retail Trade	-200	-1,000	-1,200

Upward revisions to employment in the *Private Education and Health Services* industry were primarily driven by *Hospital, Ambulatory Health Care Services*, and *Nursing and Residential Care Facilities.*

Local Area Employment Statistics (LAUS)

Revisions to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) have led to updates in previously published estimates of labor force, employment, unemployment, and labor force participation rates. For 2022 and 2023, these revisions were minimal and resulted in only slight changes to earlier estimates. Revisions to 2024 and 2025 data produced more noticeable changes in the total number of unemployed individuals, the overall unemployment rate, the size of the labor force, and the labor force participation rate.

For 2024, the seasonally adjusted annual average number of unemployed workers was revised higher by 1,300 workers or 7.0 percent, growing from 18,700 to 20,000. The benchmark adjustment for unemployment for 2025 grew from an estimated 21,300 total annual unemployed workers to 24,400, an increase of 3,100 or 14.6 percent. The adjustments to unemployment totals impacted annual seasonally adjusted unemployment rates. Benchmarked unemployment rates grew from 3.7 percent to 3.9 percent in 2024, and from 4.2 percent to 4.7 percent in 2025.

The chart below compares Delaware's seasonally adjusted unemployment original estimate to the 2025 benchmark revisions for calendar years 2024 and 2025. As the chart illustrates, the gap between original monthly estimates and benchmark revisions grew the most during the third quarter of 2025.

Monthly Unemployment: Original Estimates vs. 2025 Benchmark Revisions
(2024–2025, Seasonally Adjusted)