

# THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF VETERANS | SEPTEMBER 2020

## OVERVIEW

Today, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that employment rose by 661,000 in September, and the unemployment rate declined to 7.9 percent. In September, notable job gains occurred in leisure and hospitality, in retail trade, in health care and social assistance, and in professional and business services. Employment in government declined over the month, mainly in state and local government.<sup>1</sup> For veterans, unemployment remained unchanged at 6.4 percent in September. Post-9/11 veteran unemployment increased from 7.0 percent to 7.5 percent in September. Of the total 568,000 unemployed veterans ages 18 and over, 23 percent have been unemployed for less than five weeks and 77 percent have been unemployed for five weeks or more. The average length of unemployment is 23.8 weeks (the median is 17.4 weeks). The

overall unemployment trend varies by different veteran demographic factors, however, some more than others.

With respect to age, younger post-9/11 veterans' (ages 25-34) unemployment rate decreased from 11.7 percent to 9.4 percent in September. Yet, during this period, this group of post-9/11 veterans (ages 25-34) were unemployed at a higher rate than their nonveteran peers of the same age group. Older veterans' (ages 55-64) unemployment rate increased from 7.0 percent to 7.3 percent in September. Similarly, during this period, veterans (ages 55-64) were unemployed at a higher rate than their nonveteran peers of the same age group.

Female post-9/11 veterans experienced an increase in unemployment, from 4.5 percent to 5.7 percent in September. However, the overall unemployment rate for female veterans (all cohorts) decreased to 6.5 percent. By comparison, female nonveterans have a higher unemployment rate (8.0 percent). Total male

veteran unemployment (6.4 percent) is the same as the national veteran rate. However, post-9/11 male veteran unemployment increased to 7.8 percent in September.

Black or African American post-9/11 veterans saw a monthly increase in unemployment to 7.3 percent. This rate is lower than the 11.7 percent unemployment rate of their nonveteran counterparts. Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Origin post-9/11 veterans experienced a monthly decrease in unemployment to 6.8 percent. This rate is lower than the 9.9 percent unemployment rate of their nonveteran counterparts. Asian or Asian American post-9/11 veterans experienced a monthly decrease in unemployment to 2.1 percent. This rate is lower than the 9.0 percent unemployment rate of their nonveteran counterparts. Readers should be cautioned, however, that data on specific veteran subgroups can vary widely from month to month.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>

## DEMOGRAPHICS & TRENDS

The following tables summarize the employment situation of veterans in America based on BLS data released on October 2, 2020. These are unpublished data from the Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted, and represent the period ending September 2020.



UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	August 2020	September 2020	Change (+/-)	Annual Averages 2019
All Americans (18 and over)	8.5	7.6	-0.9	3.5
All Veterans	6.4	6.4	0.0	3.1
Post-9/11 Veterans	7.0	7.5	+0.5	3.5
Gulf-War I Era Veterans	4.7	6.1	+1.4	2.6
WWII, Korean War and Vietnam Era	6.2	4.4	-1.8	2.8
All Nonveterans	8.6	7.6	-1.0	3.6

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR VETERANS

Demographic Category	August 2020	September 2020	Change (+/-)	Annual Averages 2019
18-24	2.8	4.6	+1.8	7.4
25-34	11.7	9.4	-2.3	3.3
35-44	4.2	5.3	+1.1	3.4
45-54	4.9	6.7	+1.8	2.7
55-64	7.0	7.3	+0.3	2.9
65 and older	6.1	3.7	-2.4	2.8
Male	6.1	6.4	+0.3	3.0
Female	8.2	6.5	-1.7	3.7
White, Anglo, Caucasian	6.0	6.2	+0.2	2.8
Black or African American	6.2	7.8	+1.6	4.9
Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Origin	6.5	5.7	-0.8	2.4
Asian or Asian American	10.6	1.3	-9.3	3.6

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR POST-9/11 VETERANS

Demographic Category	August 2020	September 2020	Change (+/-)	Annual Averages 2019
18-24	2.8	4.6	+1.8	7.4
25-34	11.7	9.4	-2.3	3.3
35-44	4.9	5.8	+0.9	3.8
45-54	3.5	7.8	+4.3	2.8
55-64	7.5	7.7	+0.2	2.5
65 and older	-	-	-	2.1
Male	7.4	7.8	+0.4	3.4
Female	4.5	5.7	+1.2	4.7
White, Anglo, Caucasian	6.6	7.5	+0.9	3.0
Black or African American	5.4	7.3	+1.9	6.8
Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Origin	7.0	6.8	-0.2	3.2
Asian or Asian American	14.0	2.1	-11.9	3.9

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR NONVETERANS

Demographic Category	August 2020	September 2020	Change (+/-)	Annual Averages 2019
18-24	14.6	13.4	-1.2	7.8
25-34	9.7	8.4	-1.3	3.7
35-44	6.6	6.1	-0.5	2.7
45-54	6.5	6.2	-0.3	2.7
55-64	7.6	6.3	-1.3	2.6
65 and older	8.8	7.4	-1.4	3.0
Male	8.2	7.3	-0.9	3.7
Female	9.0	8.0	-1.0	3.5
White, Anglo, Caucasian	7.5	6.8	-0.7	3.2
Black or African American	13.4	11.7	-1.7	5.9
Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish Origin	10.6	9.9	-0.7	4.2
Asian or Asian American	10.7	9.0	-1.7	2.6

**NOTE:** Although the BLS reports the national average for those 16 and over, the tables above include only those that are 18 and over to make a more accurate comparison to the veteran population. Post-9/11 are of the Gulf War Era II (September 2001-present). Other periods of service include Gulf War Era I (August 1990-August 2001), Vietnam Era (August 1964-April 1975), Korean War (July 1950-January 1955), World War II (December 1941-December 1946). Veterans who served in more than one wartime period are classified only in the most recent one. Veterans who served during one of the selected wartime periods and another peacetime period are classified only in the wartime period. The minority-by-gender unemployment rates are not displayed due to small sample size and are more appropriately displayed as annual averages.