

CAREER QUARTERLY

Career Information, Job Seeking Advice, Labor Market Data, and More!



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Virginia's Economy at a Glance

Data Series	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	Jan 2021	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021
Labor Force Data						
Civilian Labor Force⁽¹⁾	(R)4,271.3	(R)4,255.1	4,254.1	4,236.6	4,238.0	(P)4,225.6
Employment⁽¹⁾	(R)4,023.1	(R)4,018.9	4,026.8	4,016.9	4,023.6	(P)4,028.3
Unemployment⁽¹⁾	(R)248.2	(R)236.2	227.2	219.7	214.4	(P)197.3
Unemployment Rate⁽²⁾	(R)5.8	(R)5.6	5.3	5.2	5.1	(P)4.7
Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment						
Total Nonfarm⁽³⁾	3,888.1	3,881.1	3,897.4	3,886.8	3,887.3	(P)3,889.7
12-month % change	-4.7	-4.9	-4.7	-5.0	-4.5	(P)7.7
Mining and Logging⁽³⁾	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	7.4	(P)7.5
12-month % change	-12.7	-11.5	-11.7	-10.5	-2.6	(P)10.3
Construction⁽³⁾	205.3	207.1	207.5	205.7	206.0	(P)204.6
12-month % change	0.4	1.0	0.0	-1.0	-0.6	(P)4.2
Manufacturing⁽³⁾	234.1	235.9	235.0	234.7	236.4	(P)237.7
12-month % change	-3.7	-2.9	-3.4	-3.6	-2.6	(P)5.7
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities⁽³⁾	649.2	649.7	655.3	655.6	654.0	(P)656.4
12-month % change	-1.5	-1.5	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	(P)11.4
Information⁽³⁾	64.2	64.5	65.2	64.4	64.5	(P)65.6
12-month % change	-6.0	-5.8	-4.3	-6.0	-6.1	(P)2.5
Financial Activities⁽³⁾	208.1	208.4	207.7	207.2	206.2	(P)205.9
12-month % change	-2.8	-2.5	-3.2	-3.3	-3.7	(P)-1.2
Professional & Business Services⁽³⁾	766.2	766.1	766.8	766.3	767.9	(P)767.2
12-month % change	-1.1	-1.1	-1.2	-1.3	-1.0	(P)3.8
Education & Health Services⁽³⁾	530.0	528.5	530.8	532.8	531.4	(P)531.2
12-month % change	-4.7	-5.2	-4.6	-4.5	-4.2	(P)7.7
Leisure & Hospitality⁽³⁾	337.0	335.6	337.7	331.8	329.8	(P)330.8
12-month % change	-19.4	-19.9	-19.9	-21.3	-19.0	(P)52.6
Other Services⁽³⁾	179.8	179.6	179.5	179.3	180.5	(P)180.6
12-month % change	-8.8	-8.7	-8.8	-8.7	-7.2	(P)13.6
Government⁽³⁾	707.3	698.8	705.1	702.2	703.2	(P)702.2
12-month % change	-4.0	-4.8	-4.3	-4.7	-4.8	(P)-1.6

Footnotes

(1) Number of persons, in thousands, seasonally adjusted.

(2) In percent, seasonally adjusted.

(3) Number of jobs, in thousands, seasonally adjusted.

(P) Preliminary

(r) Revised

Data extracted on: May 21, 2021

Labor Market Research



Unemployment rates up in 40 states and D.C. from March 2020 to March 2021

From March 2020 to March 2021, unemployment rates increased in 40 states and the District of Columbia, and were essentially unchanged in 10 states. The national unemployment rate of 6.0 percent was 1.6 percentage points higher than in March 2020.

State	March 2020 unemployment rate (Percent)	March 2021 unemployment rate (Percent)	12-month change (Percentage points)
Alabama	2.6	3.8	1.2
Alaska	5.1	6.6	1.5
Arizona	5.0	6.7	1.7
Arkansas	3.9	4.4	0.5
California	4.5	8.3	3.8
Colorado	4.7	6.4	1.7
Connecticut	3.8	8.3	4.5
Delaware	4.8	6.5	1.7
District of Columbia	5.2	7.8	2.6
Florida	4.9	4.7	-0.2
Georgia	3.6	4.5	0.9
Hawaii	2.1	9.0	6.9
Idaho	2.7	3.2	0.5
Illinois	3.7	7.1	3.4
Indiana	3.3	3.9	0.6
Iowa	2.9	3.7	0.8
Kansas	3.2	3.7	0.5
Kentucky	4.2	5.0	0.8
Louisiana	5.3	7.3	2.0
Maine	3.1	4.8	1.7
Maryland	3.5	6.2	2.7
Massachusetts	2.7	6.8	4.1
Michigan	3.7	5.1	1.4
Minnesota	3.5	4.2	0.7
Mississippi	6.0	6.3	0.3
Missouri	3.7	4.2	0.5

(Continued)

State	March 2020 unemployment rate (Percent)	March 2021 unemployment rate (Percent)	12-month change (Percentage points)
Montana	3.8	3.8	0.0
Nebraska	3.1	2.9	-0.2
Nevada	6.4	8.1	1.7
New Hampshire	2.7	3.0	0.3
New Jersey	3.8	7.7	3.9
New Mexico	5.4	8.3	2.9
New York	3.9	8.5	4.6
North Carolina	3.9	5.2	1.3
North Dakota	2.3	4.4	2.1
Ohio	4.9	4.7	-0.2
Oklahoma	3.2	4.2	1.0
Oregon	3.6	6.0	2.4
Pennsylvania	5.1	7.3	2.2
Rhode Island	4.0	7.1	3.1
South Carolina	3.0	5.1	2.1
South Dakota	2.9	2.9	0.0
Tennessee	4.0	5.0	1.0
Texas	4.9	6.9	2.0
Utah	2.5	2.9	0.4
Vermont	2.6	2.9	0.3
Virginia	2.6	5.1	2.5
Washington	5.3	5.4	0.1
West Virginia	5.3	5.9	0.6
Wisconsin	3.2	3.8	0.6
Wyoming	5.1	5.3	0.2

The largest unemployment rate increases from March 2020 occurred in Hawaii (+6.9 percentage points), New York (+4.6 percentage points), and Connecticut (+4.5 points), with another five states experiencing unemployment rate increases of at least 3.0 points.

Hawaii and New York had the highest unemployment rates in March 2021, at 9.0 percent and 8.5 percent, respectively. Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah, and Vermont had the lowest rates, at 2.9 percent each. In total, 27 states had unemployment rates lower than the U.S. rate of 6.0 percent, 11 states and the District of Columbia had higher rates, and 12 states had rates that were not appreciably different from that of the nation.

These data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program and are seasonally adjusted. Data for the most recent month are preliminary. To learn more, see “State Employment and Unemployment — March 2021.” Also see more charts and maps on state employment and unemployment.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, The Economics Daily, Unemployment rates up in 40 states and D.C. from March 2020 to March 2021 at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2021/unemployment-rates-up-in-40-states-and-d-c-from-march-2020-to-march-2021.htm> (visited April 27, 2021).



Job Searching



Not Sure About College? Consider a High Paying Trade Job

by VEC Staff

There has been a push over the past several decades to get high school seniors to enroll in college and pursue bachelor degrees. There is nothing wrong with this, college can be a life changing experience and college degrees can lead to good careers, but attending a four year college is not for everyone and that's okay too. Many graduating seniors are being told to get a bachelor's degree and find their passion. However, it's not always that easy and finding jobs in one's major doesn't always work out after college. The good news is that there are more options available for those who might be seeking a lesser degree, or an alternative to college, and also for those looking for a career change.

In Demand

There are many jobs in the trades that go unfilled because of lack of qualified workers to fill them. Many of these jobs also pay well. An associates degree in air traffic control can lead to a career with a median salary of \$130,420 per year in 2020. Other jobs that only need an associates degree or certification: Construction managers (\$97,180), aircraft mechanics (\$66,680), plumbers (\$56,330) and firefighters (\$52,500). And those are just the median salaries — depending on where you live, you could make more or less.

In Virginia

Here are a few samples of trade jobs in Virginia with salaries above \$40,000 annually:

Aircraft Mechanic and Service Mechanic: Diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul aircraft engines and assemblies, such as hydraulic and pneumatic systems. Education - Employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Projected growth (2018-2028) - 4%, or 210 annual job opening. Average annual wage - \$69,660.

Construction and Building Inspectors: Inspect structures using engineering skills to determine structural soundness and compliance with specifications, building codes, and other regulations. Inspections may be general in nature or may be limited to a specific area, such as electrical systems or plumbing. Education - employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Projected growth (2018-2028) - 6%, or 650 annual job opening. Average annual wage - \$61,230.

Electrician: Install, maintain, and repair electrical wiring, equipment, and fixtures. Ensure that work is in accordance with relevant codes. May install or service street lights, intercom systems, or electrical control systems. Education - training in vocational schools, related on-the-job experience, or an associate's degree. Projected growth (2018-2028) - 8%, or 2,200 annual job opening. Average annual wage - \$53,970.

Plumber: Assemble, install, alter, and repair pipelines or pipe systems that carry water, steam, air, or other liquids or gases. May install heating and cooling equipment and mechanical control systems. Includes sprinkler fitters. Education - employees in these occupations usually need one or two years of training involving both on-the-job experience and informal training with experienced workers. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Projected growth (2018-2028) - 11%, or 1,910 annual job opening. Average annual wage - \$52,540.

Roofers: Cover roofs of structures with shingles, slate, asphalt, aluminum, wood, or related materials. May spray roofs, sidings, and walls with material to bind, seal, insulate, or soundproof sections of structures. Education - Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Projected growth (2018-2028) - 9%, or 360 annual job opening. Average annual wage - \$46,880.

Carpenters: Construct, erect, install, or repair structures and fixtures made of wood and comparable materials, such as concrete forms; building frameworks, including partitions, joists, studding, and rafters; and wood stairways, window and door frames, and hardwood floors. May also install cabinets, siding, drywall, and batt or roll insulation. Includes brattice builders who build doors or brattices (ventilation walls or partitions) in underground passageways. Education - Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few months to one year of working with experienced employees. A recognized apprenticeship program may be associated with these occupations. Projected growth (2018-2028) - 13%, or 2,940 annual job opening. Average annual wage - \$44,670.

How to Start

Most trades offer apprenticeships. Employers, local trade associations and other professional groups, like unions, can connect you to training programs.

Community colleges also offer lots of great programs to catapult you into a career in the trades. Look at their job placement rates to see how well their student land jobs after they graduate.

Stay Flexible

Back in the 1950s, the thinking was that you either went to a four year college or you learned a trade and that was your lot in life. Nowadays, with so many colleges and trade schools offering flexible programs designed for working adults, one can learn a trade then pursue a bachelor's degree later down the road, or vice-versa.



Sources: "Finding Your Way To A (High-Paying) Trade Job — Without College" <https://www.npr.org/2021/04/21/989609489/finding-your-way-to-a-high-paying-trade-job-without-college>; <https://www.onetonline.org/>



5 Ways the Pandemic Has Changed Job Hunting

Hiring experts tell how looking for work will be different in 2021

by Kenneth Terrell, AARP, January 14, 2021

Looking for a job is never easy, but that process figures to be especially challenging in 2021.

With many businesses still hesitant to hire due to uncertainties about the pandemic, job opportunities can be hard to come by. And older workers — many of whom have not applied for or interviewed for a new job in more than five years — may now have to handle newer twists such as video interviews.

“Undeniably, COVID-19 has thrown a wrench into the hiring process for both job seekers and recruiters alike,” said Amanda Augustine, a career expert at TopResume. TopResume has partnered with AARP to provide Resume Advisor, a service that offers free résumé critiques and other job-search services. TopResume recently surveyed 334 recruiters, human resources professionals and hiring managers to learn more about how the pandemic has affected the hiring process.

“Our findings reveal that job seekers may be taking themselves out of the running even before — or right after — the virtual interview because they’re ignoring the key factors to which recruiters are suddenly paying attention,” Augustine said.

Here are five ways applying and interviewing for jobs could change in 2021, based on the survey results:

1. Employment gaps aren’t a problem.

Many older workers have gaps on their résumés, whether it’s because they lost a job, took time off for caregiving, experienced a health issue or another reason. But with so many workers having lost their jobs last year due to the pandemic, recruiters are now less concerned about employment gaps, regardless of when the time off may have occurred. According to the survey, 87 percent of recruiters said wouldn’t be worried by an applicant’s inconsistent work history, which means 13 percent said they might view unemployment or a lengthy employment gap as a concern.

If you have a gap in your résumé, job search experts say that rather than trying to hide it, you should briefly say what happened and explain how you used that time to build skills that will help in the job you’re applying for.

2. Cover letters mean more now.

Writing a smart cover letter that explains why you are a good fit for the job has long been encouraged, but recruiters acknowledge that many cover letters won’t get read, especially with computer software screening applications in the early rounds. But TopResume’s survey suggests that could be changing. Nearly half of recruiters (48 percent) said they are now more likely to read a cover letter than they were before the pandemic.

Before writing a cover letter, make sure you research the company so the letter can explain specifically why you are the best fit for the job. You'll also want the letter to include keywords from the job posting. That way, the company's screening software will see you as the right fit.

3. Remote work could be here to stay.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many nonessential jobs switched to remote work, at least temporarily. Many positions are likely to stay that way for at least the first part of 2021 as the effort to vaccinate millions of Americans proceeds. And some jobs may transition to work-from-home permanently, causing perhaps as many as 70 percent of companies to downsize their office space, according to a survey from KPMG.

That means that for many job openings, recruiters will be looking for candidates who can demonstrate they can be successful working remotely. That means your résumé should highlight your experience telecommuting. For example, when describing your previous job duties, specify how often you worked from home in various roles. You may also want to subtly mention which technologies you already have access to at home — reliable high-speed internet, business software, video or audio equipment.

4. Your next job interview might be a video chat.

Last April, 86 percent of employers switched to conducting job interviews through videoconferencing technology as one way to still see candidates when they couldn't meet face-to-face, according to a survey from Gartner Inc. With remote work continuing into 2021 for many businesses, brushing up on your video interview skills could be the key to getting hired.

Interviewing for a job can be stressful, and doing so by video can add a new set of challenges. Do you know how to use the conferencing technology? Where is a good place in your home to set up the video?



5. A little thanks goes a long way.

Whether you interviewed for the job by video or in person, be sure to send a thank-you email to the hiring manager and other key people you may have spoken with. According to the survey, 68 percent of recruiters say that a thank-you note — or lack of one — has become more significant over the past year.

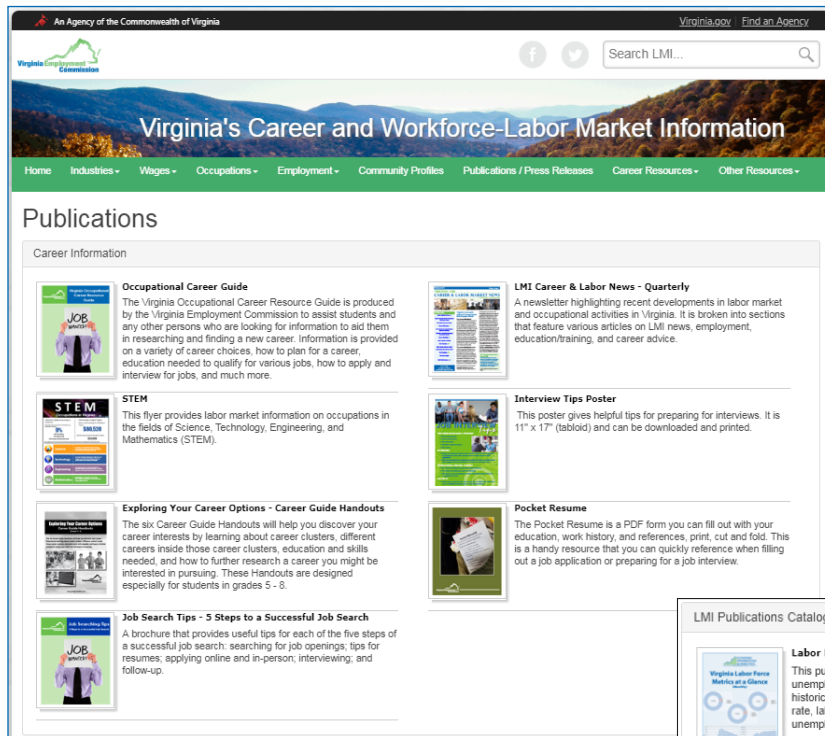
A thank-you note can be a quick way to show you're really interested in the job and explain why you would be a good fit.

Source: <https://www.aarp.org/work/job-search/info-2021/pandemic-job-hunting-changes.html>

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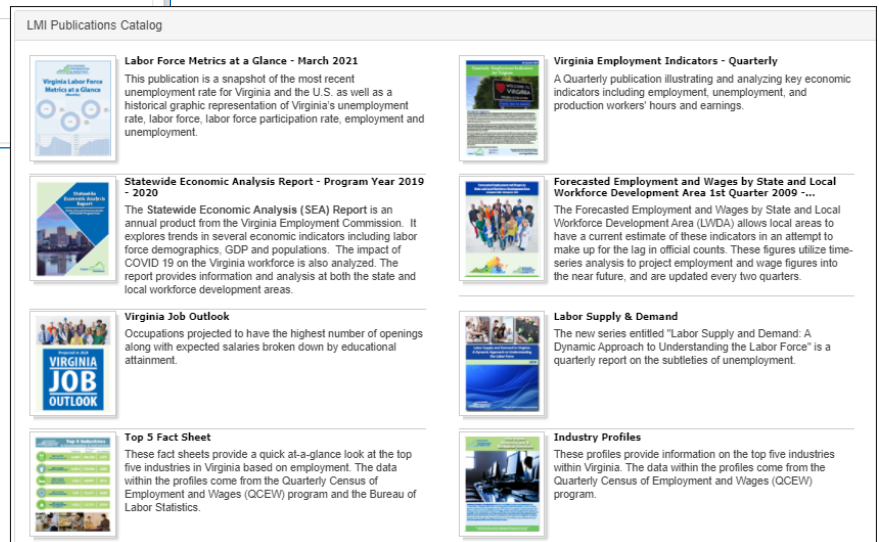
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These products provide labor market information, job tips, career planning, and more.



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