

Private payroll data shows consecutive month job losses for first time since onset of COVID-19 pandemic

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For the first time since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, private employers in the United States laid off more workers than they hired in back-to-back months, according to payrolls processor ADP (Automatic Data Processing).

The unofficial data, which Wall Street investors are relying on since the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) job report is unlikely to come out this Friday due to the government shutdown, revealed that private employment decreased in the US by 32,000 jobs in September, staggering economists who had previously estimated gains of as many as 50,000 jobs.

ADP also revised its August 2025 report, which initially reported 54,000 private sector job gains to -3,000. This is the third month this year ADP has reported negative monthly job growth; in June 2025 ADP reported -33,000 private sector job losses, the first monthly decline since March 2023.

President Donald Trump's claims that the US economy has entered a "golden age" were bluntly rebutted by the report, which noted the "trend was unchanged; job creation continued to lose momentum across most sectors." Industries seeing declines in hiring included construction, manufacturing, leisure and hospitality, trade, transportation and utilities, as well as professional and business services. The few sectors that saw any growth were mining, education and healthcare services.

The ADP report is based on surveys and analysis covering more than 26 million US workers. Unlike the ADP report which only tracks private job growth, the BLS report tracks both government and private business.

ADP's figures are in line with other private sector analyses. On September 4, global outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas found US-based employers had announced nearly 86,000 job cuts in August, up 39 percent from the 62,075 job cuts announced in July. August

job cuts were the highest recorded for the month since August 2020, when over 115,000 jobs were slashed.

The US economy is teetering on the brink of recession with workers in white- and blue-collar industries finding it increasingly impossible to find work. In their September report, Challenger, Gray & Christmas observed that so far this year, private companies in the US have announced "892,362 job cuts the highest year to date since 2020," when companies laid off nearly 2 million workers. This year's figures represent a 66 percent increase compared to the first 8 months of last year and 17 percent more job losses than in all of 2024 (761,358).

Coffee chain Starbucks recently announced it was closing 1 percent of its stores in North America and laying off 900 white-collar workers on top of 1,100 job cuts earlier this year. Exxon Mobil Corporation, one of the most profitable companies in the world on a yearly basis, announced on September 30 it planned to cut 2,000 jobs globally as part of what CEO Darren Woods characterized in a memo as an "ongoing efficiency drive."

Citing gains in artificial intelligence and uncertainty surrounding Trump's illegal tariff regime, major companies are refusing to hire recent college graduates. The *Financial Times* recently reported that job opening advertisements focused on college graduates have "plummeted" in the last three years in both the UK and the United States. In the US, job listings for college graduates are down over 40 percent compared to 3 years ago, while it is over 60 percent in the UK.

In the US the official joblessness rate for recent college graduates is *higher* than the official unemployment rate. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, as of August 2025, the unemployment rate for US college graduates aged 20 to 24 was 9.3 percent, nearly double the official unemployment rate.

There is no question more private sector job cuts and layoffs are on the immediate horizon. *Newsweek* citing data

from WARNTracker.com found over 50 major companies are planning hundreds of layoffs in October. WARN, or the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act of 1988, requires private employers with 100 or more workers to provide 60 calendar days' notice of plant closings or mass layoffs.

Among the employers planning layoffs are corporations spanning tech, media, healthcare, logistics, manufacturing and finance. These include:

- **Tech / Telecom:** Cisco, Microsoft, Oracle America, T-Mobile

- **Media / Entertainment:** CNN/Warner Bros., Warner Music Group, Anaheim Arena Management

- **Health and Pharma:** Adventist Health, Enloe Health, Providence Health & Services, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Gilead Sciences, Catalent, TriLink Biotechnologie, CooperVision Inc.

- **Financial Services:** Farmers Insurance Group, Wells Fargo, Navient Solutions, Dandelion Payments, Inc.

- **Logistics and Transportation:** Air Wisconsin Airlines, FedEx, GXO Logistics, J.B. Hunt Transport, Burlington Trailways

- **Retail and Consumer:** Fred Meyer, Jack in the Box, Car Toys, Inc., Vistar Green Rabbit

- **Manufacturing / Industrial:** Owens Corning, Smurfit WestRock, Silgan Containers, Winnebago Industries, Zeco Systems, Inc., Zumtobel Lighting Inc., PL Developments, Pactiv Corporation

The scale of these layoffs underscores that the labor market contraction is not limited to small firms or isolated industries. It spans from Silicon Valley giants to Wall Street banks, airlines, hospitals and household-name retailers.

In addition to private sector layoffs, the US government under the Trump administration continues to purge virtually all government employees except those that are directly involved in suppressing, oppressing or extracting wealth from the working class. *Reuters* reported that as of this week more than “150,000 federal employees will leave the US government payroll” after previously accepting “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE)-induced buyouts.

Many of those who had accepted the buyouts have not been working in government offices recently but were still getting a paycheck after accepting the “fork in the road” offer advanced by world’s richest fascist Elon Musk. For a brief moment on Wednesday, Musk became the first person on the planet to be “worth” \$500 billion due to a jump in the price of Tesla stock.

Reuters reported that nearly 200 workers at the National Weather Service accepted the buyout, “causing a loss of technical staff who maintain forecasting equipment and many experienced meteorologists.”

Tom Fahy, legislative director of the National Weather Service Employees Organization, told the outlet, “It has caused massive disruption in offices throughout the country.”

Nearly 4,000 workers at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) took buyouts, according to Matt Biggs, president of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, a union which purports to represent 8,000 NASA workers. Biggs told *Reuters*, “The agency is losing some of the most brilliant engineers and aeronautic scientists in the world, and they are not being replaced.”

The wide-scale job destruction being undertaken by corporate America and the US government has not prompted any action from the trade union bureaucracies that allege to represent workers. None of the government trade unions have proposed strike action, while virtually all of the major private sector trade unions, including the Teamsters, United Auto Workers and International Longshoremen’s Association have backed Trump’s tariff regime.

On its homepage, the AFL-CIO, the largest labor federation in the United States with a membership over 12.5 million, is urging its members to “call Congress” and urge Republicans to pass an extension of the Democrats’ proposed Affordable Care Act tax credits. Not surprisingly, the AFL-CIO is silent on Trump’s plans to militarily occupy major American cities as part of his growing dictatorship and the war on the “enemy within.”

Conclusions must be drawn. The capitalist system is incapable of providing job security or protecting the democratic rights of the working class. The fascistic Trump administration on behalf of the financial oligarchy is initiating a counterrevolution against all the gains previously won by the working class in the last 100 years.

The fight against this fascist counterrevolution cannot be left up to the nationalist trade unions or Democratic Party, the latter of which defends the capitalist system and the staggering levels of inequality and war it produces no less than the Republican Party. The struggle for democracy, equality and freedom is a struggle against the capitalist system and all its defenders.



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