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Current Employment Statistics Highlights



(NOTE: A previous version of the chart on the education and health services page erroneously showed a prior 12-month average change of -17,000 for offices of dentists. The correct value is +1,000, and the chart has been corrected and replaced.)

March 2020

Release Date: April 3, 2020

**Prepared by Analysts of the National Estimates Branch
Current Employment Statistics Survey
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**

202-691-6555

[Email CES](#)

Current Employment Statistics Summary, March 2020

Nonfarm payroll employment declined sharply by 701,000 in March, reflecting early impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) and efforts to contain the illness. Leisure and hospitality accounted for more than half of all jobs lost, although weakness was widespread. The diffusion index over a 1-month period fell to 36.0 from 57.9 in February. An index below 50 indicates that more industries lost jobs than gained them.

Average hourly earnings of all employees on private-sector payrolls rose by 11 cents or 0.4 percent in March. Over the year, hourly earnings have increased by 3.1 percent. Average weekly hours decreased by 0.2 hour in March to 34.2 hours.

The employment change for February revised up slightly from +273,000 to +275,000, and the change for January revised down from +273,000 to +214,000. On net, employment over these months is 57,000 lower than previously reported.

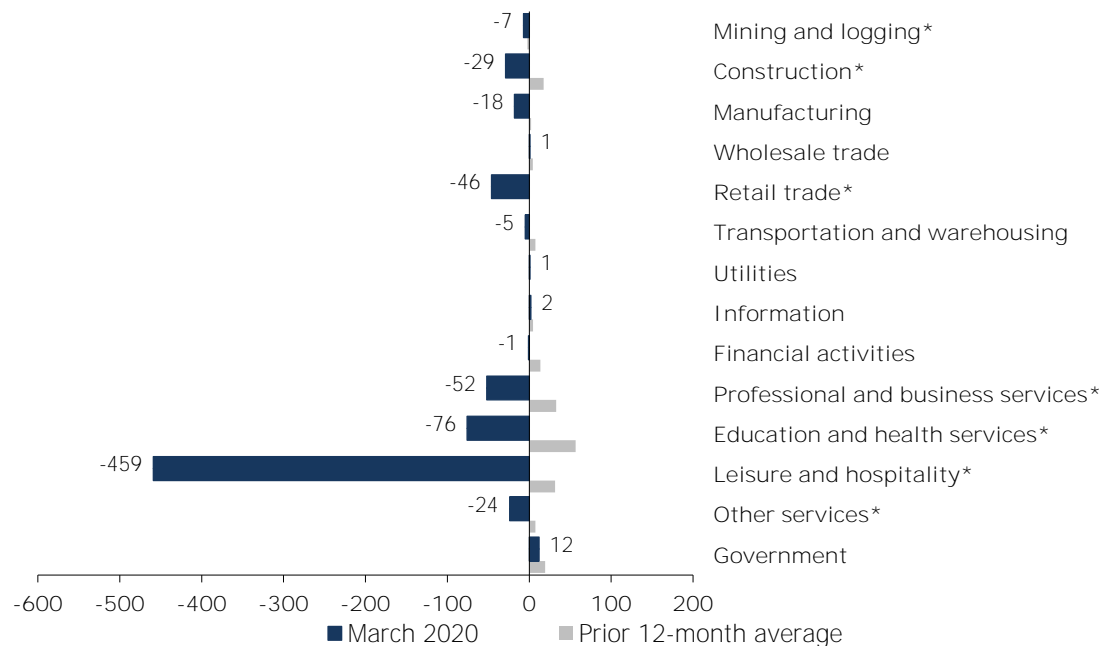
Measures from the establishment survey pertain to the pay period including March 12th, which varies by establishment. For more

Employment in total nonfarm

Over-the-month change, March 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Total nonfarm:
-701 *



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 03, 2020.
Data are preliminary.
* denotes significance

information about how the establishment survey was affected by COVID-19, see the box note in the [March 2020 Employment Situation](#) and in [frequently asked questions](#).

-459,000 Leisure and Hospitality

Employment fell sharply by 417,000 in food services and drinking places in March, nearly offsetting job gains achieved over the preceding 24 months.

Current Employment Statistics Survey Summary, March 2020

Accommodation lost 29,000 jobs in March, offsetting modest gains made over the prior 13 months.

-76,000 Education and Health Services

Employment in health care fell by 43,000 in March, driven by job losses in offices of dentists (-17,000), of physicians (-12,000), and of other health care practitioners (-7,000).

Within social assistance, child day care services reduced payroll employment by 19,000 over the month. Child day care had added an average 3,000 jobs per month over the prior 12-months.

-52,000 Professional and Business Services

Employment in temporary help services fell by 50,000 over the month, well below trend. Employment had changed little over the prior 12-month period (-20,000). In March, travel arrangement and reservation services lost 7,000 jobs. Employment changed little elsewhere in professional and business services.

-46,000 Retail Trade

Retail trade lost 46,000 jobs in March. Job losses were distributed among a number of industries, including clothing and clothing

accessories stores and furniture stores with each losing 10,000 or more jobs.

-29,000 Construction

Employment in construction fell by 29,000 over the month. Nonresidential building and heavy and civil engineering construction lost 11,000 and 10,000 jobs, respectively. Construction had added an average 40,000 jobs per month in January and February.

-24,000 Other Services

Employment in personal and laundry services decreased by 13,000 in March and has changed little over the past 12 months (+2,000).

-18,000 Manufacturing

Manufacturing employment edged down by 18,000 in March and has shown little net change over the past 12 months (+12,000).

-7,000 Mining and Logging

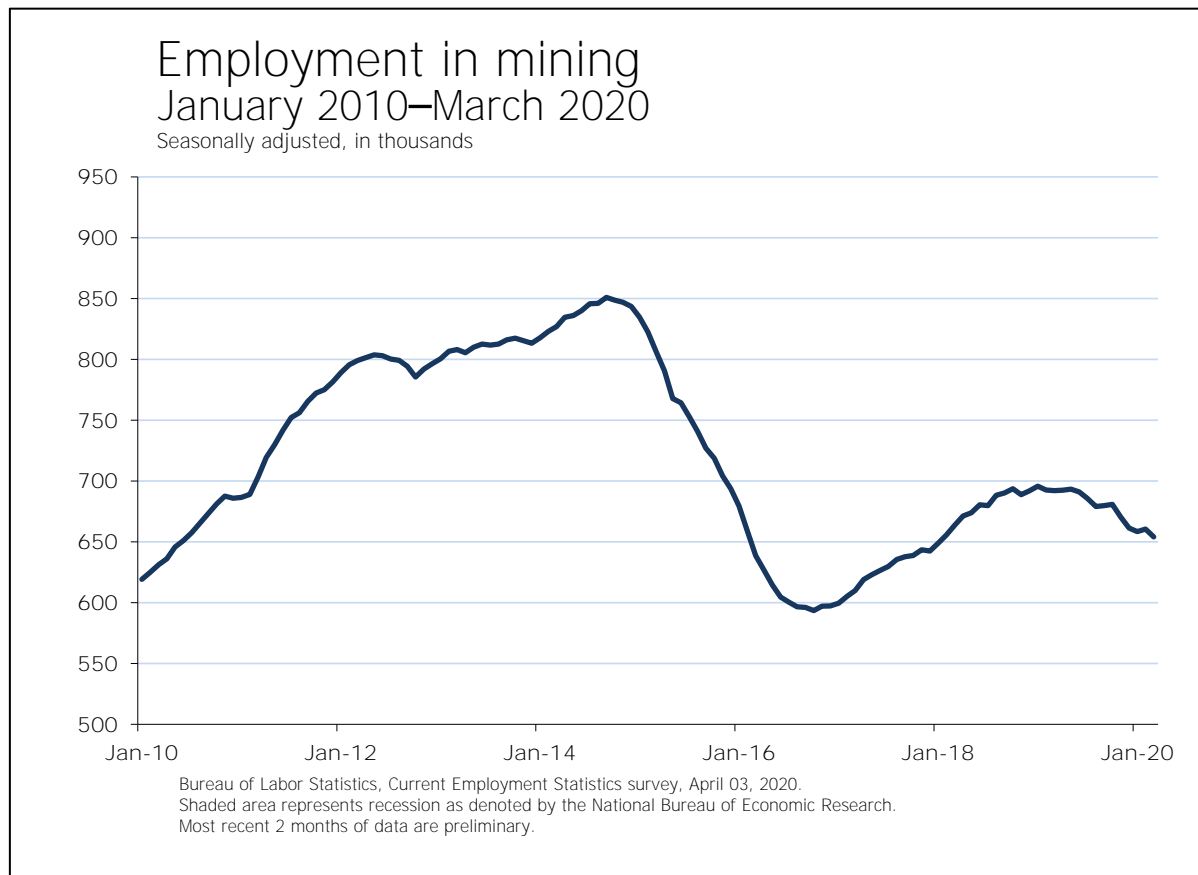
Mining employment declined by 6,000 in March. Support activities for mining accounted for most of the loss (-5,000).

+12,000 Government

Federal government employment increased by 18,000 in March, largely reflecting the hiring of 17,000 workers for the 2020 Census.

Summary	Mining & Logging	Construction	Manufacturing	Trade: Wholesale Retail	Transp., Warehousing & Utilities	Information	Financial Activities	Professional & Business Services	Private Education & Health Services	Leisure & Hospitality	Other Services	Government
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Mining and Logging



Mining employment declined by 6,000 in March. The majority of job loss came from support activities for mining (-5,000).

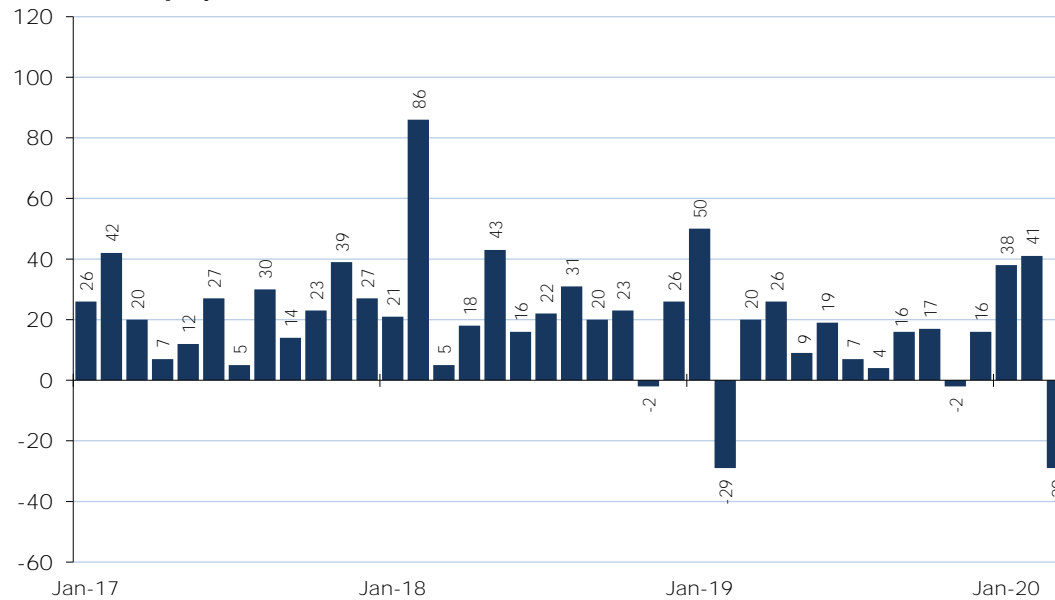
The decline in mining employment reflected weakness in March indicator data. The [North American rotary rig count](#) was essentially flat, and [West Texas Intermediate](#) oil prices declined over the month.

Construction

Employment in construction

Over-the-month change, January 2017–March 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

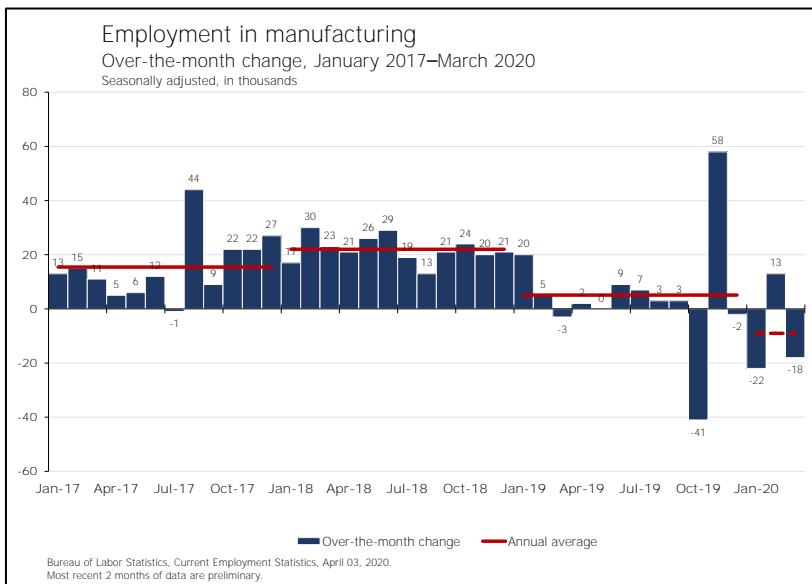


Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 03, 2020.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Construction employment decreased by 29,000 in March. Nonresidential building construction lost 11,000 jobs, heavy and civil engineering construction shed 10,000 jobs, and employment in specialty trade contractors trended down (-10,000).

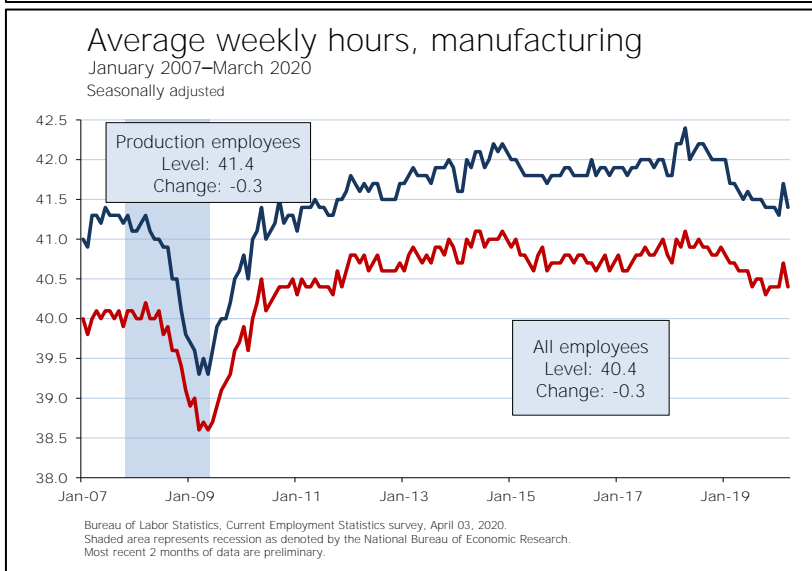
The loss in employment in March follows weakness in construction-related indicators for February, with declines in [residential building permits](#), [construction spending](#) and in [new home sales](#).

Manufacturing



Employment in manufacturing edged down in March (-18,000).

In March, the 1-month diffusion index fell 13.9 points to 36.8, indicating that more manufacturing industries are losing jobs than are adding jobs.



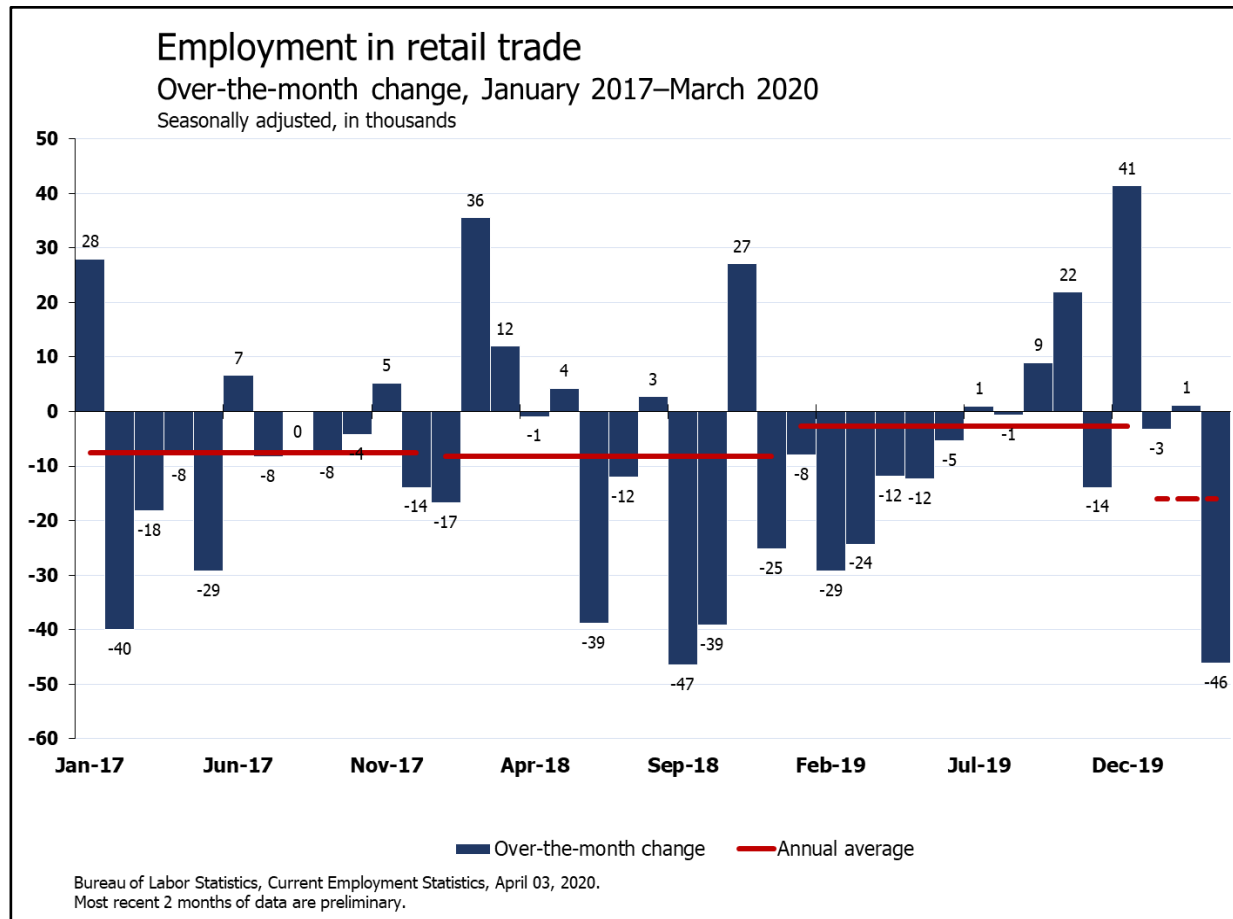
In March, average weekly hours fell by 0.3 hour for all manufacturing workers and by 0.3 hour for production employees.

Wholesale Trade



Employment in wholesale trade changed little in March (+1,000). Over the most recent 12 months, the industry’s employment has edged up by 56,000.

Retail Trade

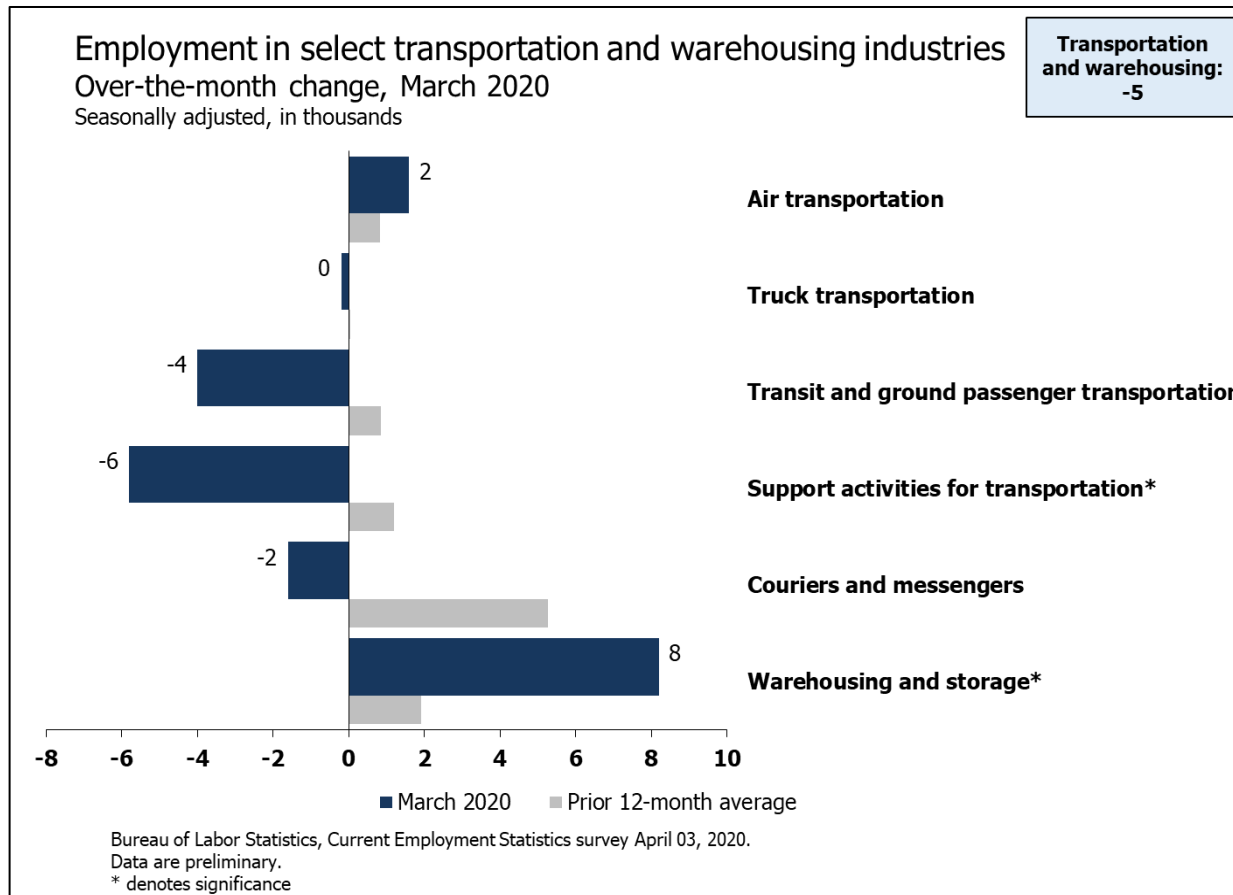


Employment in retail trade declined by 46,000 in March. Over the year, industry employment showed little net change (-19,000).

Employment declines occurred in clothing and clothing accessories stores (-16,000), furniture and home furnishing stores (-10,000), sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores (-9,000), while employment in general merchandise stores increased by 10,000.

Recent retail-related economic indicators are mostly negative. Both [Retail Sales](#) and [Auto Sales](#) declined in February. The [Consumer Confidence Index](#) declined in March.

Transportation and Warehousing

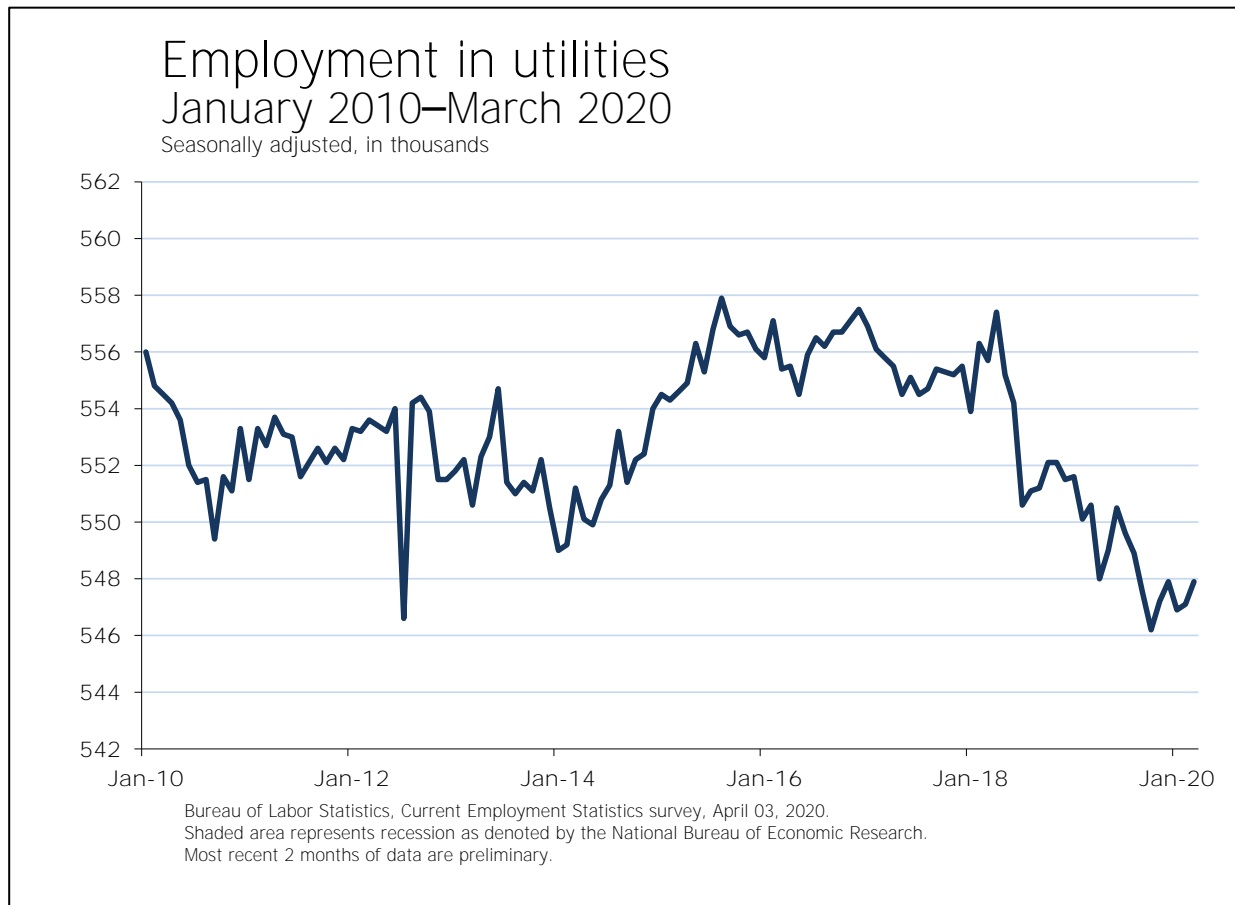


Employment in transportation and warehousing changed little in March (-5,000). Over the past 12 months, the industry's employment has risen by 81,000.

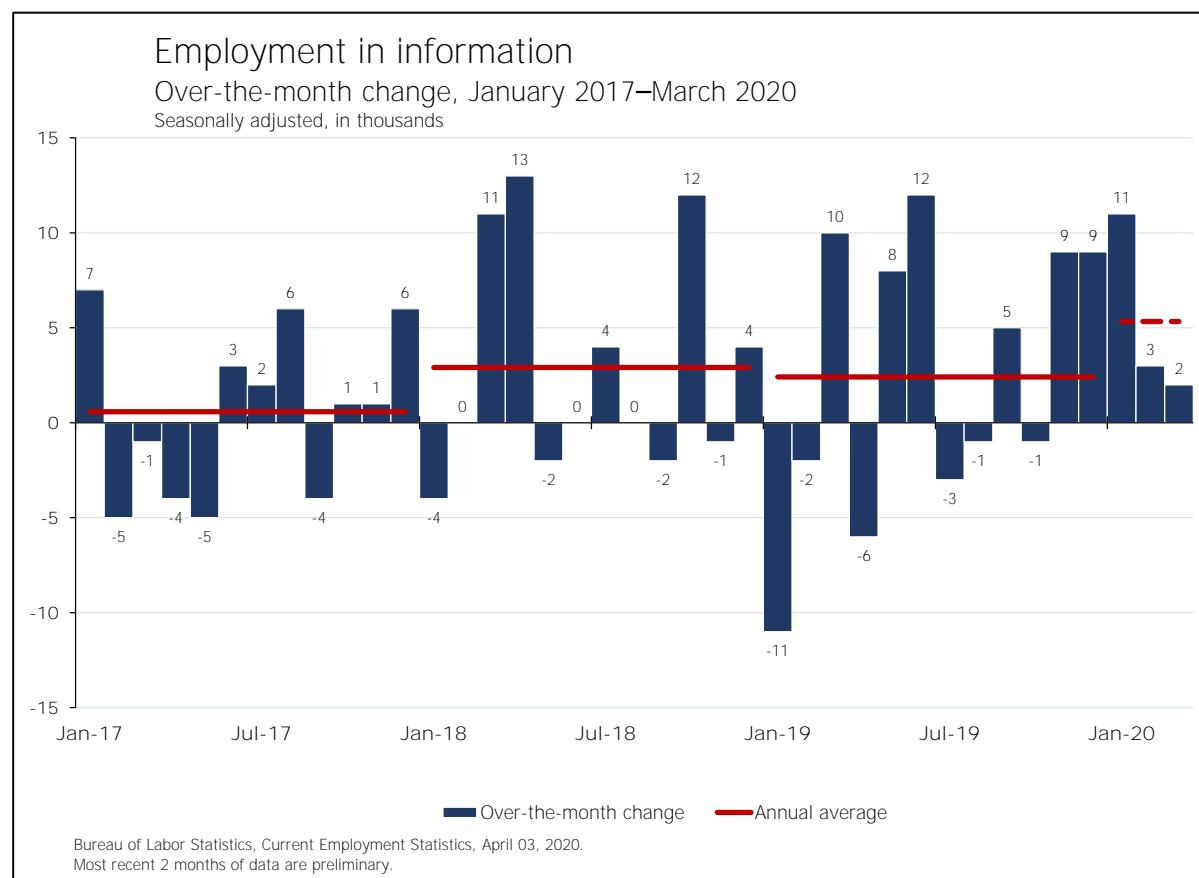
Among the component industries, support activities for transportation lost 6,000 jobs, while warehousing and storage added 8,000. So far this year, warehousing and storage has added 23,000 jobs, close to the 25,000 jobs it added in all of 2019.

Utilities

Employment in utilities was flat in March (+1,000).



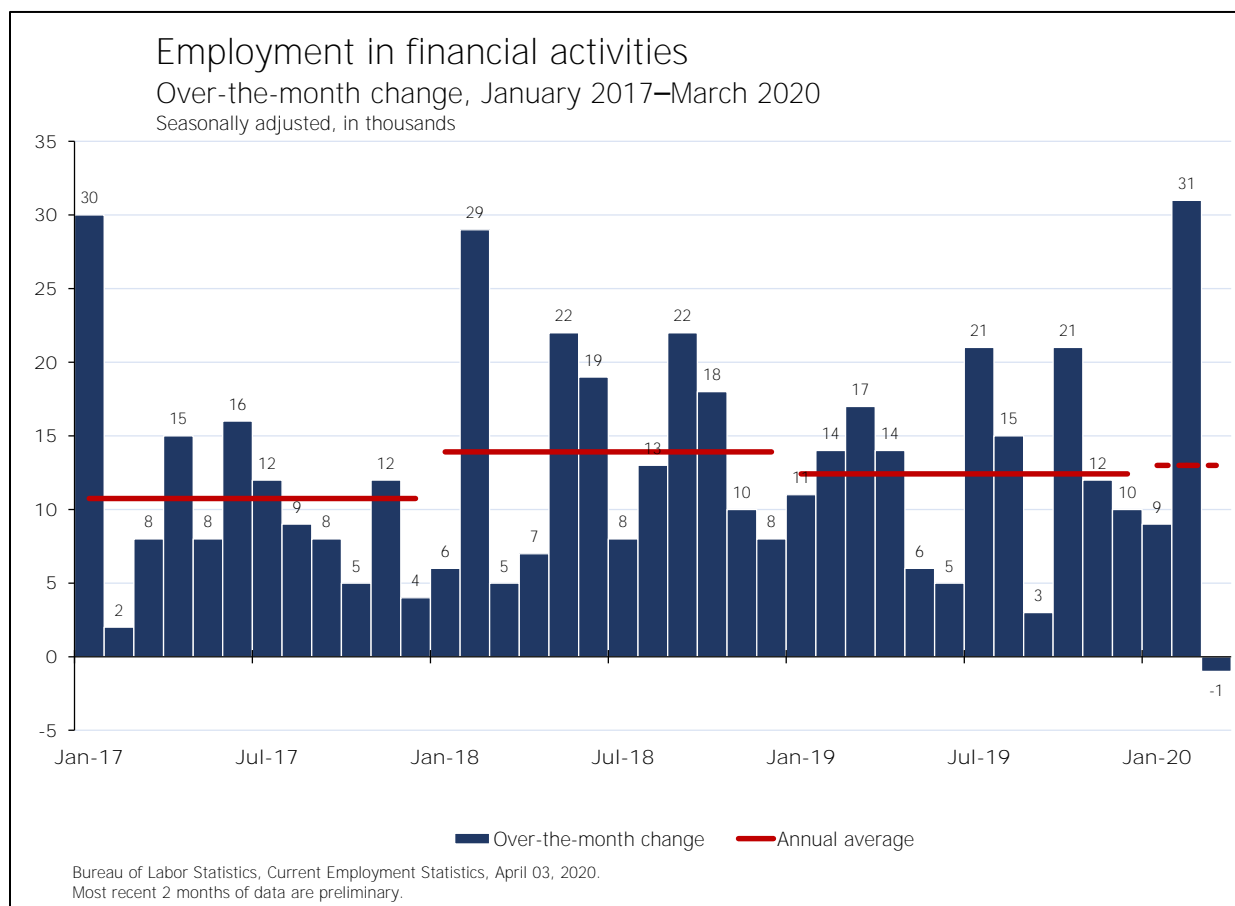
Information



Employment in information changed little in March (+2,000).

Over the past 12 months, employment in publishing industries, except internet expanded by 17,000 and other information services (such as news syndicates, libraries and archives, and internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portals) added 30,000. This growth was partially offset by job losses in telecommunications (-25,000).

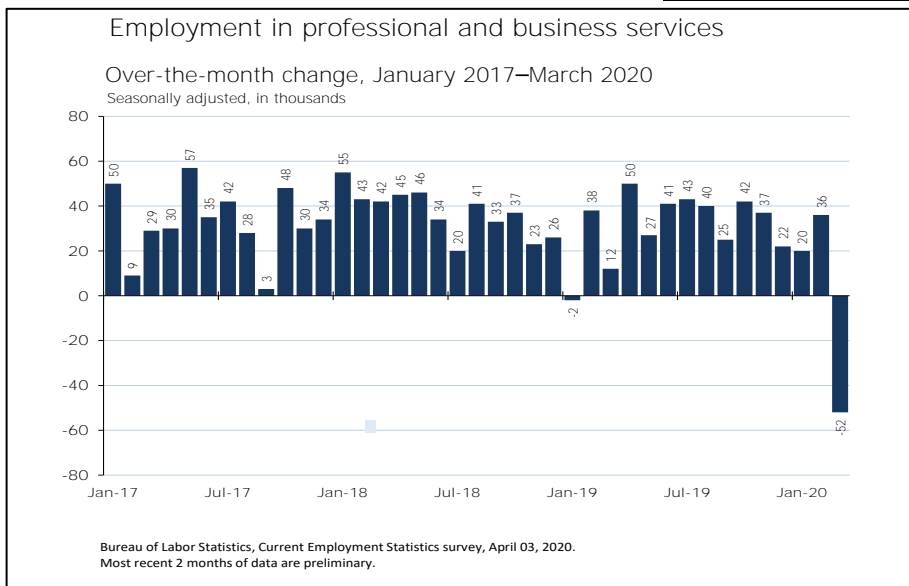
Financial Activities



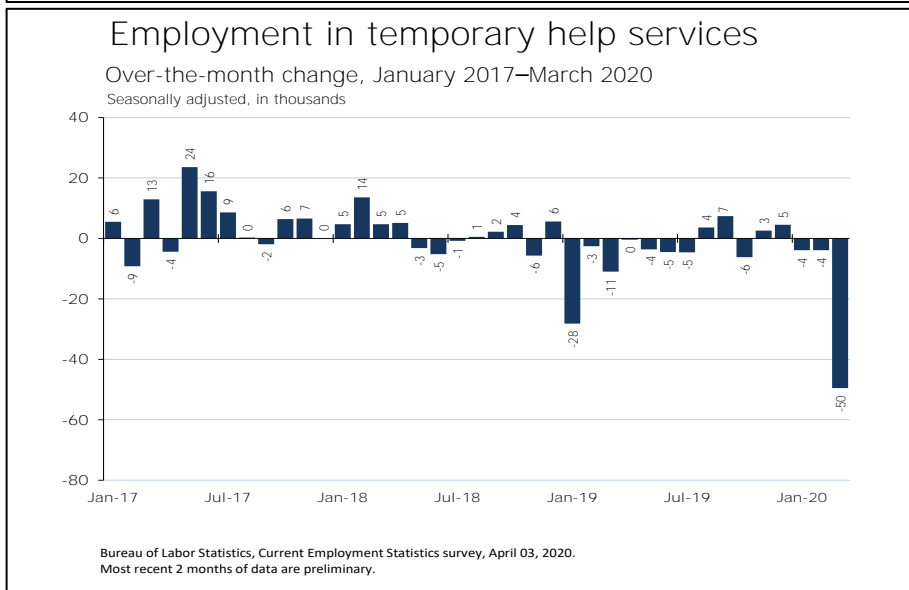
Employment in financial activities changed little in March (-1,000), following a gain of 31,000 in February. Over the most recent 12 months, the industry has added 146,000 jobs. Within credit intermediation and related activities, commercial banking (-3,000) lost jobs over the month.

While the [average 30-year fixed mortgage rate](#) remained low, the [Consumer Confidence Index](#) declined in March.

Professional and Business Services



Employment in professional and business services decreased by 52,000 in March, the largest decline since June 2009. The industry had added an average 33,000 jobs per month over the 12 months prior to March.



Within administrative and waste services, temporary help services lost 50,000 jobs in March, the largest monthly decline since April 2009. Employment in travel arrangement and reservation services decreased by 7,000 in March.

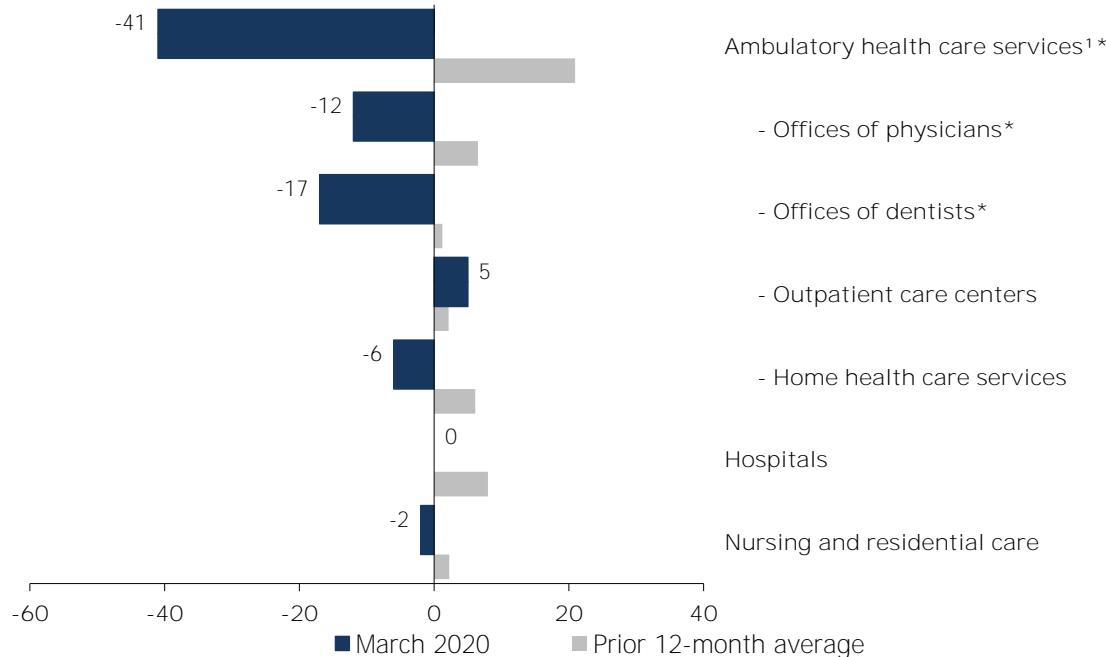
Private Education and Health Services

Employment in selected health care industries

Over-the-month change, March 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands

Health care industries:
-43*



Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 03, 2020.

Data are preliminary.

¹ Includes additional component industries not shown separately.

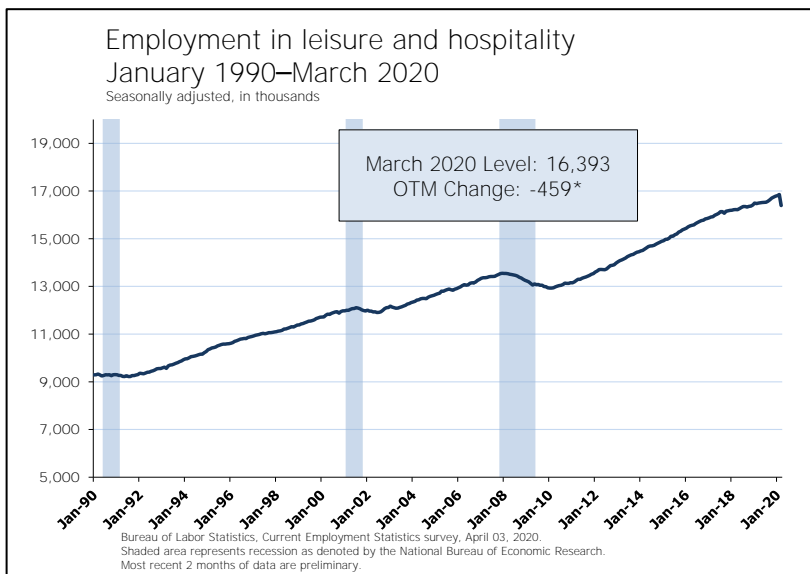
* denotes significance

Employment in health care declined by 43,000 in March. Within ambulatory health care services, offices of dentists (-17,000), offices of physicians (-12,000), and offices of other health practitioners (-7,000) lost jobs.

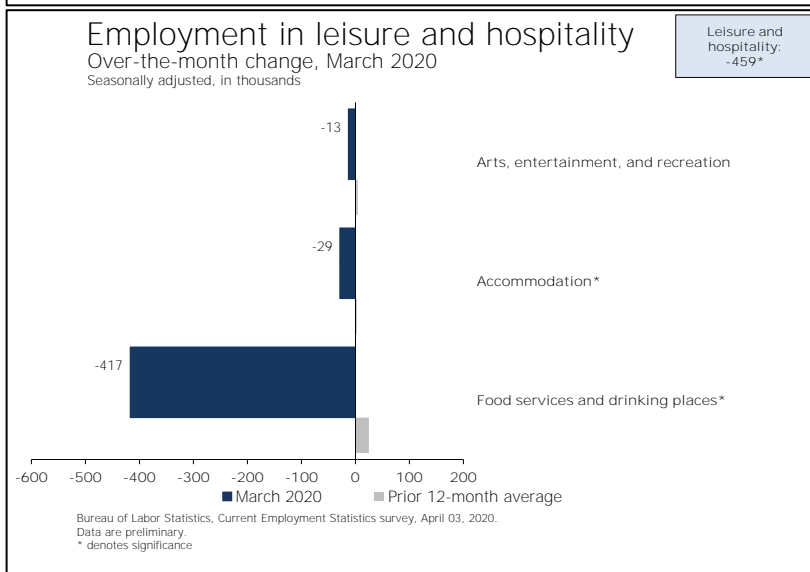
In March, social assistance lost 19,000 jobs, with child day care services accounting for all of the losses (-19,000).

(NOTE: A previous version of the chart on this page erroneously showed a prior 12-month average change of -17,000 for offices of dentists. The correct value is +1,000, and the chart has been corrected and replaced.)

Leisure and Hospitality



Leisure and hospitality lost 459,000 jobs in March, as many businesses [cut back operations](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The employment loss, the largest 1-month loss in the history of the series (since 1939) coincided with a sharp decrease in [consumer confidence](#).



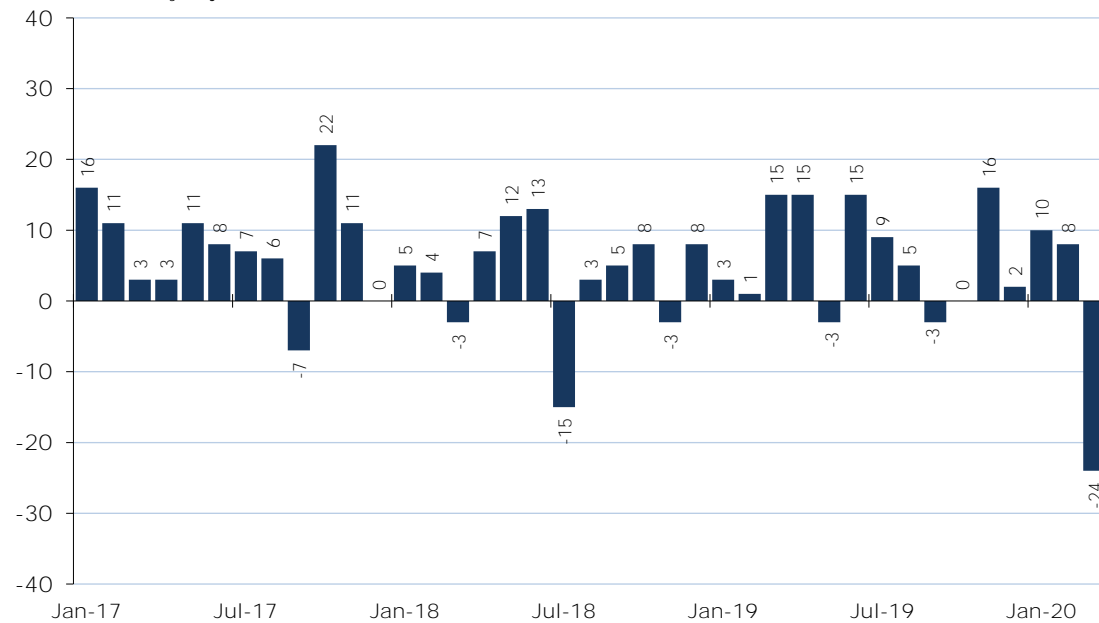
The March decline was concentrated in food services and drinking places, which lost 417,000 jobs, also the largest 1-month loss in the history of the series (since 1990). [Sales](#) for this industry began to weaken in February. Accommodation employment also contracted in March (-29,000).

Other Services

Employment in other services

Over-the-month change, January 2017–March 2020

Seasonally adjusted, in thousands



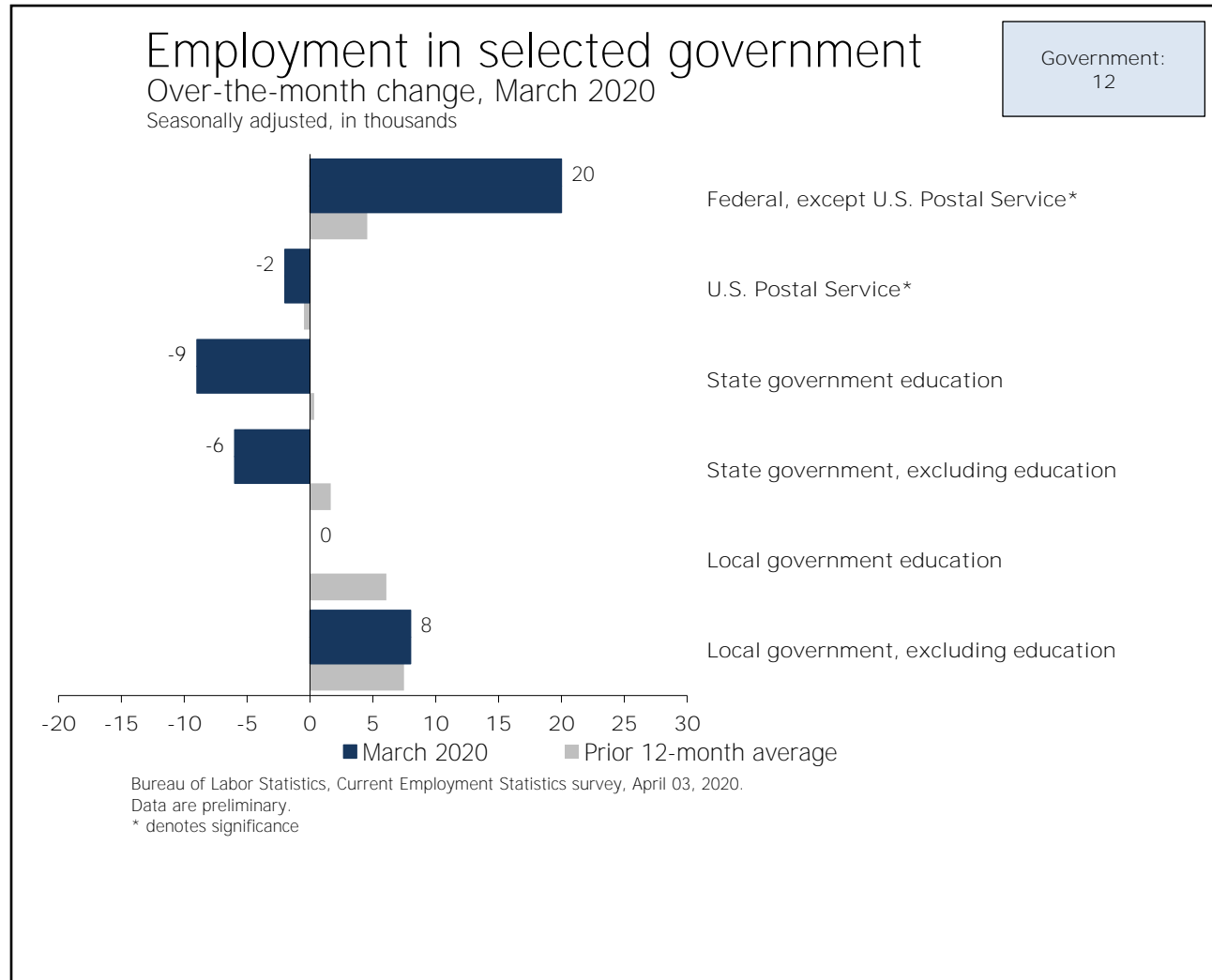
Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics survey, April 03, 2020.
Most recent 2 months of data are preliminary.

Employment in other services decreased by 24,000 in March. This is the industry’s largest monthly decline since March 2009.

In March, personal and laundry services lost 13,000 jobs. In response to the coronavirus, several states have [ordered](#) the closure of personal care businesses—such as barbershops, beauty salons, and nail salons. Although most of these closure orders came after the CES reference period, many business [reported](#) weakened demand early in March.

Government

Within government, hiring for Census 2020 accounted for 17,000 of the increase in federal government employment.





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