



A Merced County Labor Market Review

The QuickLook: Welcome to the Merced County labor market summary. The QuickLook has been developed by the Department of Workforce Investment staff for the Merced County Local Workforce Investment Board. The data and information is provided by the California Employment Development Department. Questions can be referred to the Department of Workforce Investment, 1880 W. Wardrobe Ave., Merced, CA 95340. Telephone (209) 724-2152. Email: PITD222@co.merced.ca.us

Merced County						
Data Not Adjusted for Seasonality						
	Mar 02	Jan 03	Feb 03	Mar 03		
			Revised	Prelim.		
Civilian Labor Force	87,400	92,500	93,600	93,900		
Civilian Employment	72,000	76,300	77,000	77,500	Employed Increase (DECREASE) From Previous Month	Percent Increase -DECREASE Previous Month to Current Month
Civilian Unemployment	15,500	16,100	16,600	16,400		
Civilian Unemployment Rate	17.7%	17.5%	17.8%	17.4%		
(CA Unemployment Rate)	6.8%	7.1%	7.0%	6.8%		
(U.S. Unemployment Rate)	6.1%	6.5%	6.4%	6.2%		
Total, All Industries	61,400	64,200	64,600	65,200	600	0.93%
Total Farm	8,000	8,500	8,300	8,400	100	1.20%
Total Nonfarm	53,400	55,700	56,300	56,800	500	0.89%
Total Private	39,600	42,100	42,500	42,700	200	0.47%
Goods Producing	12,100	13,200	13,500	13,500	0	
Natural Resources, Mining and Construction	2,300	2,400	2,500	2,500	0	
Manufacturing	9,800	10,800	11,000	11,000	0	
Durable Goods	1,800	1,900	1,900	1,900	0	
Nondurable Goods	8,000	8,900	9,100	9,100	0	
Food Man & Beverage & Tobacco	6,000	6,900	7,100	7,200	100	1.41%
Residual-Textile Mills	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,900	(100)	-5.00%
Service Providing	41,300	42,500	42,800	43,300	500	1.17%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	10,600	11,500	11,500	11,800	300	2.61%
Wholesale Trade	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600	100	6.67%
Retail Trade	7,000	7,500	7,500	7,600	100	1.33%
Food and Beverage Stores	1,500	1,900	1,900	1,900	0	
General Merchandise Stores	1,500	1,400	1,400	1,500	100	7.14%
Residual-Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4,000	4,200	4,200	4,200	0	
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	2,100	2,500	2,500	2,600	100	4.00%
Information	500	500	500	500	0	
Financial Activities	1,700	1,800	1,800	1,800	0	
Finance and Insurance	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	700	800	800	800	0	
Professional and Business Services	3,200	3,700	3,800	3,700	(100)	-2.63%
Educational and Health Services	5,300	5,300	5,200	5,200	0	
Leisure and Hospitality	4,500	4,300	4,400	4,400	0	
Food Services and Drinking Places	3,700	3,600	3,700	3,700	0	
Residual-Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	800	700	700	700	0	
Other Services	1,700	1,800	1,800	1,800	0	
Government	13,800	13,600	13,800	14,100	300	2.17%
Federal Government	800	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	
State and Local Government	13,000	12,600	12,800	13,100	300	2.34%
State Government	600	600	600	600	0	
Local Government	12,400	12,000	12,200	12,500	300	2.46%

The QuickLook: The County continues with one of the highest unemployment rates in the State, ranking 55th out of 58 counties. The preliminary March result is a decline of 0.4 percentage point in the unemployment rate from the revised February rate. This preliminary figure is 0.3 percentage point lower than one year ago. This result is 0.2 percentage point lower than the 20-year average unemployment rate for March.

Overall, the County saw a gain of 600 jobs from the previous month led by a 500 job-growth in employed nonfarm workers. Another 100 jobs were gained in farm related occupations.

Increases in employment came in service providing occupations, specifically trade, transportation and utilities.

Merced County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

The QuickLook At: California's unemployment rate was 6.6 percent in March, down from a revised 6.7 percent in February, the state Employment Development Department (EDD) reported today. A year ago, in March 2002, California's unemployment rate was 6.6 percent.

According to EDD's survey of employers, payroll employment in California fell by 4,100 jobs over the month, for a total of 14,474,100.

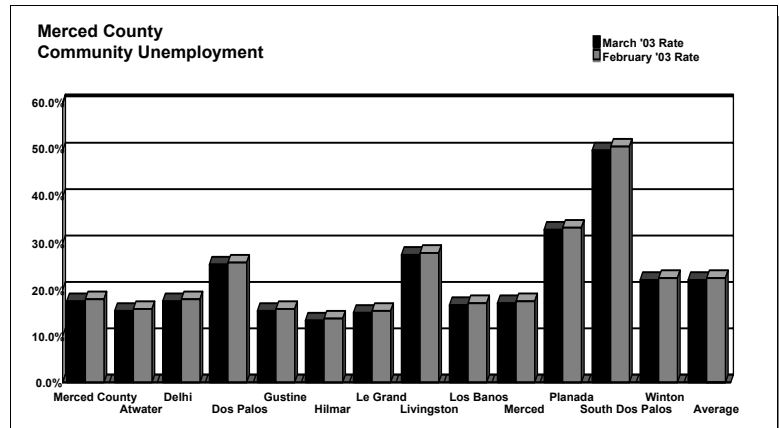
According to the separate survey of households, the number of Californians holding jobs in March was 16,448,000 – an increase of 26,000 from February and up 237,000 from the employment total in March of last year.

The number of people unemployed in California was 1,159,000 – a decrease of 20,000 over the month, but up by 13,000 compared with March of last year.

Of the unemployed, 687,000 were laid off, 65,600 left their jobs voluntarily, and the remaining were either new entrants or reentrants into the labor market.

The QuickLook At: Sub County average unemployment rates for the county, cities and municipalities saw an overall decrease of 0.37 percent this month. This decrease slightly offset the .039 percent increase last month. All communities noted decreases in unemployment, led by Dos Palos and South Dos Palos with a 0.5 percent decrease. Livingston and Winton's decrease mirrored the county's overall result of a .04 decrease.

Area Name	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	
			Number	Rate
Merced County	93,900	77,500	16,400	17.4%
Atwater - city	10,980	9,260	1,720	15.7%
Delhi - CDP	1,710	1,410	300	17.5%
Dos Palos - city	2,180	1,630	550	25.3%
Gustine - city	2,070	1,750	320	15.6%
Hilmar-Irwin - CDP	1,910	1,650	260	13.6%
Le Grand - CDP	560	470	90	15.2%
Livingston - city	4,500	3,270	1,230	27.4%
Los Banos - city	7,980	6,640	1,340	16.8%
Merced - city	28,510	23,580	4,930	17.3%
Planada - CDP	2,000	1,340	660	32.9%
South Dos Palos - CDP	640	320	320	50.0%
Winton - CDP	3,800	2,950	850	22.3%



The QuickLook At The Seven Counties: Merced County's workforce has grown over the past 20 years reflecting improvement of the County's economic well being; however, unemployment remains a consistent barrier to greater prosperity. Average Unemployment has fluctuated from a yearly low of 11.1 percent in 1988 to a yearly high of 17.1 percent in 1995. Between the years 1983 to 2002 Merced County's average unemployment was 14.3 percent.

The county remains in the top five percent of all California counties remaining 55th out of the 58 counties during the month of March with an unemployment rate of 17.4 percent, followed by Fresno at 17 percent, Madera 15.1 percent, Stanislaus 12.9 percent, San Benito County 12 percent, San Joaquin 10.9 percent and Mariposa at 7.5 percent unemployment.

All counties' unemployment rate remained unchanged from the previous month, except for San Benito County which experienced .01 percent increase in its unemployment rate.

COUNTY	RANK	LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYMENT	UNEMPLOYMENT	RATE
MERCED	55	93,900	77,500	16,400	17.4%
FRESNO	54	400,300	332,100	68,200	17.0%
MADERA	49	56,600	48,100	8,600	15.1%
STANISLAUS	44	220,000	191,500	28,500	12.9%
SAN BENITO	42	27,470	24,190	3,290	12.0%
SAN JOAQUIN	40	281,800	251,200	30,600	10.9%
MARIPOSA	26	8,560	7,920	640	7.5%

