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Jobs Report Today: Unemployment Rate Lands at 4.4%

Follow news and analysis of the December employment data.

Last Updated: Jan. 9, 2026 at 11:00 AM ET

Unemployment inched down in December.

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The Data Are Out

The Bureau of Labor Statistics released the December jobs report on Friday morning.

Here is what to know:

- **Payrolls:** [+50,000](#), compared with the +55,000 economists expected
- **Unemployment rate:** [4.4%](#), versus expectations for 4.5%
- **The Fed angle:** [Odds of a rate cut](#) in January fell to nearly 0% after the data release.
- **Markets:** [Stocks](#) ticked higher.

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• 37 min ago

2025 Job Growth Was Grim. Why the Fed Won't Rush to Cut Rates.

By [Megan Leonhardt](#)

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Last year's U.S. job growth was far from the robust hiring that many Americans have come to expect in the years since the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, 2025 marked the worst year on record since 2003, outside of a recession.

But employers likely did just enough in December to allay Fed officials' concerns about the deterioration within the labor market. A drop in the unemployment rate last month indicates policymakers likely won't lower interest rates when they meet Jan. 27-28.

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Employers added just 50,000 jobs in December, which was in line with the prevailing average monthly rate throughout the year. In fact, overall, the U.S. labor market only added about half a million jobs last year—making 2025 the worst year for hiring since 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in an annual loss.