

For further information:

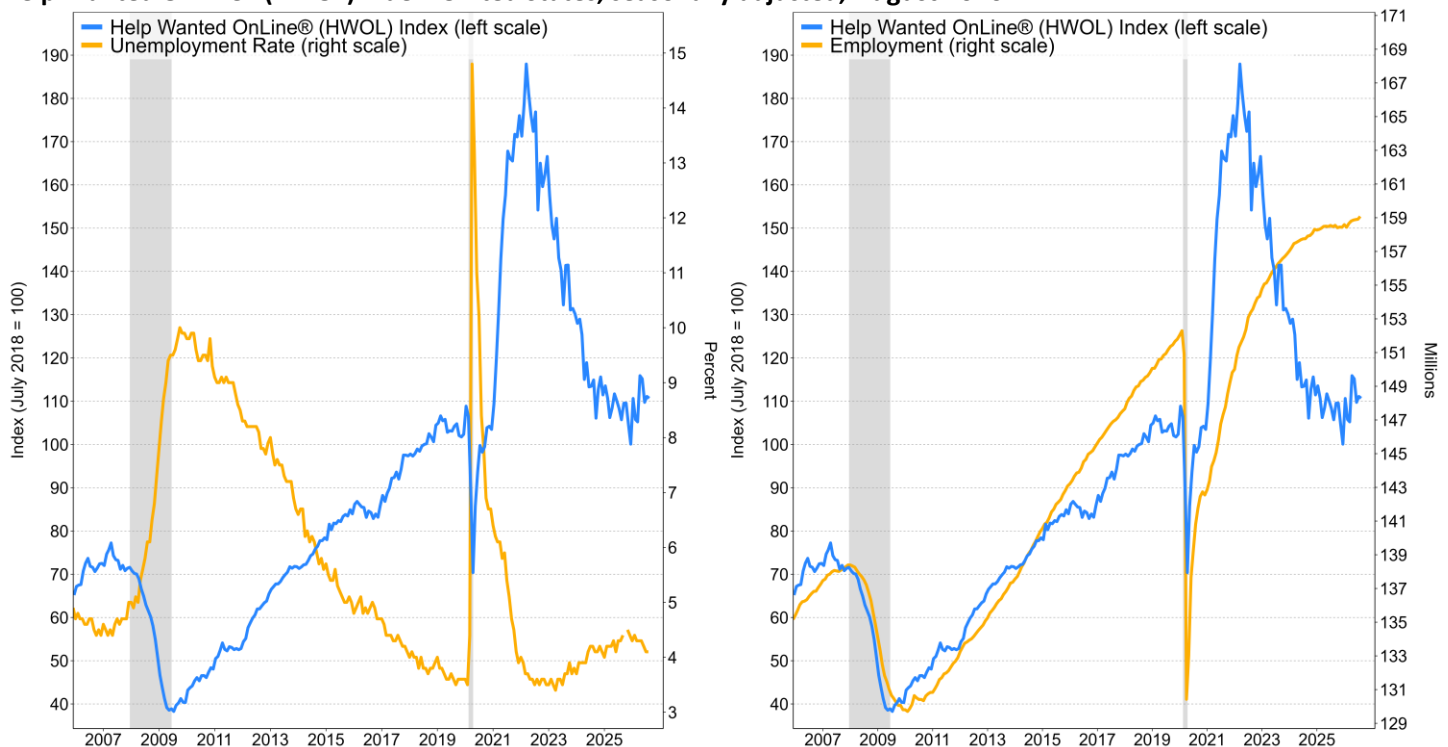
Jonathan Liu: JLiu@tcb.org

Online Labor Demand Decreased in August

NEW YORK, September 9, 2026...*The Conference Board–Lightcast Help Wanted OnLine® (HWOL) Index* decreased in August 2026 to 110.7 (July 2018=100), down from a downwardly revised 111.1 in July. The 0.4% decrease between August and July followed a 1.2% increase between July and June. Overall, the Index is up 4.7% from one year ago.

The HWOL Index measures the change in advertised online job vacancies over time, reflecting monthly trends in employment opportunities across the US. The *Help Wanted OnLine®* Index is produced in collaboration with Lightcast, the global leader in real-time labor market data and analysis. This collaboration enhances the *Help Wanted OnLine®* program by providing additional insights into important labor market trends.

Help Wanted OnLine® (HWOL) Index: United States, seasonally adjusted, August 2026



Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the NBER Business Cycle Dating Committee.
Sources: The Conference Board, Lightcast, Bureau of Labor Statistics

THE CONFERENCE BOARD 

© 2026 The Conference Board. All rights reserved.

The release schedule, national historic table and technical note are available on The Conference Board website, <http://www.conference-board.org/data/helpwantedonline.cfm>. The underlying data for The Conference Board HWOL is collected by Lightcast.

Table 1. HWOL Data Series: Total ads by Census Division, seasonally adjusted, August 2026

Area ¹	Total Ads ² (Thousands)	Area ¹	Total Ads ² (Thousands)
United States	7,161.3	South Atlantic	1,452.1
New England	397.6	East South Central	370.4
Middle Atlantic	813.8	West South Central	815.8
East North Central	972.6	Mountain	607.2
West North Central	516.4	Pacific	966.3

Source: The Conference Board, Lightcast

1. Census Divisions defined by the U.S. Census Bureau
2. Ad levels are seasonally adjusted and may not add up to the total US count

© 2026 The Conference Board. All rights reserved.

Table 2. HWOL Data Series: Total ads by State, seasonally adjusted, August 2026

State	Total Ads ¹ (Thousands)	State	Total Ads ¹ (Thousands)
Alabama	92.7	Montana	29.1
Alaska	22.0	Nebraska	44.9
Arizona	161.4	Nevada	66.9
Arkansas	54.5	New Hampshire	45.9
California	671.0	New Jersey	182.8
Colorado	160.4	New Mexico	52.2
Connecticut	80.5	New York	355.9
Delaware	27.9	North Carolina	236.0
Florida	437.1	North Dakota	24.1
Georgia	206.3	Ohio	244.2
Hawaii	30.5	Oklahoma	74.1
Idaho	47.2	Oregon	87.6
Illinois	268.0	Pennsylvania	275.1
Indiana	138.9	Rhode Island	26.8
Iowa	71.0	South Carolina	109.0
Kansas	76.2	South Dakota	24.8
Kentucky	81.2	Tennessee	142.1
Louisiana	76.1	Texas	611.3
Maine	35.2	Utah	74.8
Maryland	141.5	Vermont	21.6
Massachusetts	186.7	Virginia	220.1
Michigan	192.5	Washington	155.5
Minnesota	136.4	West Virginia	30.1
Mississippi	55.1	Wisconsin	130.4
Missouri	139.2	Wyoming	15.9

Source: The Conference Board, Lightcast

1. Ad levels are seasonally adjusted and may not add up to the total US count

© 2026 The Conference Board. All rights reserved.

Table 3. HWOL Data Series: Total ads by selected MSAs, seasonally adjusted, August 2026

MSA ¹	Total Ads ² (Thousands)	MSA ¹	Total Ads ² (Thousands)
Birmingham, AL	24.2	Kansas City, MO	65.4
Phoenix, AZ	121.3	St. Louis, MO	61.2
Tucson, AZ	20.0	Las Vegas, NV	39.9
Los Angeles, CA	216.9	Buffalo, NY	22.3
Riverside, CA	55.6	New York, NY	352.0
Sacramento, CA	41.4	Rochester, NY	24.1
San Diego, CA	61.4	Charlotte, NC	66.9
San Francisco, CA	108.6	Cincinnati, OH	47.8
San Jose, CA	61.3	Cleveland, OH	46.8
Denver, CO	93.7	Columbus, OH	58.9
Hartford, CT	33.6	Oklahoma City, OK	33.7
Washington, DC	183.0	Portland, OR	53.9
Jacksonville, FL	35.1	Philadelphia, PA	129.0
Miami, FL	125.7	Pittsburgh, PA	60.2
Orlando, FL	57.5	Providence, RI	35.9
Tampa, FL	70.8	Memphis, TN	24.0
Atlanta, GA	127.5	Nashville, TN	59.7
Honolulu, HI	21.3	Austin, TX	75.9
Chicago, IL	194.1	Dallas, TX	206.2
Indianapolis, IN	55.0	Houston, TX	119.2
Louisville, KY	30.1	San Antonio, TX	46.7
New Orleans, LA	19.2	Salt Lake City, UT	40.1
Baltimore, MD	76.1	Richmond, VA	39.5
Boston, MA	145.5	Virginia Beach, VA	41.6
Detroit, MI	85.9	Seattle-Tacoma, WA	93.9
Minneapolis, MN	93.7	Milwaukee, WI	39.9

Source: The Conference Board, Lightcast

1. Metropolitan areas are based on 2013 OMB county-based Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) definitions
2. Ad levels are seasonally adjusted and may not add up to the total US count

© 2026 The Conference Board. All rights reserved.

PROGRAM NOTES

The June 2025 data release reflects an update to our job board coverage as a few job boards made changes to their access policy. To minimize any impact, and improve and supplement our job board coverage, we have broadened and updated our job board coverage.

Prior to 2020, The Conference Board constructed the HWOL Index based solely on online job ads over time. Using a methodology designed to reduce non-economic volatility contributed by online job sources, the HWOL Index served an effective measure of changes in labor demand over time.

Beginning January 2020, the HWOL Index was refined as an estimate of change in job openings (based on BLS JOLTS), using a series of econometric models which incorporate job ads with other macroeconomic indicators such as employment and aggregate hours worked. By adopting a modeled approach which combines other data sources with data on online job ads, the HWOL Index more accurately tracks important movements in the labor market.

HWOL Annual Revision. With the April 2025 press release, the HWOL program has incorporated its annual revision, which helps ensure the accuracy and consistency of the HWOL Data Series. This year's annual revision includes updates to the Occupational coding and the Geographical coding for the HWOL Data Series from January 2015-forward. The HWOL Index has also been updated from January 2020-forward.

The Conference Board-Lightcast Help Wanted OnLine® (HWOL) Index measures changes over time in advertised online job vacancies, reflecting monthly trends in employment opportunities across the US. The HWOL Data Series aggregates the total number of ads available by month from the HWOL universe of online job ads. Ads in the HWOL universe are collected in real-time from over 50,000 online job domains including traditional job boards, corporate boards, social media sites, and smaller job sites that serve niche markets and smaller geographic areas.

Like The Conference Board's long-running Help Wanted Advertising Index of print ads (which was published for over 55 years and discontinued in July 2008), **Help Wanted OnLine®** measures help wanted advertising—i.e. labor demand. The HWOL Data Series began in May 2005 and was revised in December 2018. With the December 2018 revision, The Conference Board released the HWOL Index, improving upon the HWOL Data Series' ability to assess local labor market trends by reducing volatility and non-economic noise and improving correlation with local labor market conditions.

In 2019, Lightcast (formerly Emsi Burning Glass) joined the **Help Wanted OnLine®** program as the new sole provider of online job ad data for HWOL. With this partnership, the HWOL Data Series has been revised historically to reflect a new universe and methodology of online job advertisements and therefore cannot be used in conjunction with the pre-revised HWOL Data Series. The HWOL Data Series begins in January 2015 and the HWOL Index begins in December 2005. HWOL Index values prior to 2020 are based on job ads collected by CEB, Inc.

Those using this data are urged to review the information on the database and methodology available on The Conference Board website and contact us with questions and comments. Background information and technical note and discussion of revisions to the series are available at: <http://www.conference-board.org/data/helpwantedonline.cfm>.

About The Conference Board

The Conference Board is the member-driven think tank that delivers Trusted Insights for What's Ahead™. Founded in 1916, we are a non-partisan, not-for-profit entity holding 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status in the United States. www.ConferenceBoard.org.

About Lightcast

As the global leader in labor market analytics, Lightcast illuminates the future of work with data-driven talent strategies. Formerly Emsi Burning Glass, Lightcast finds purpose in sharing the insights that build communities, educators, and companies, and takes pride in knowing our work helps others find fulfillment, too. Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Moscow, Idaho, Lightcast is active in more than 30 countries and has offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and India. Lightcast is backed by global private equity leader KKR. <https://lightcast.io/>

Help Wanted OnLine® Publication Schedule

Data for the Month

September 2026

October 2026

November 2026

Release Date

October 7, 2026

November 12, 2026

December 9, 2026

© The Conference Board 2026. All data contained in this press release are protected by United States and international copyright laws. The data displayed are provided for informational purposes only and may only be accessed, reviewed, and/or used in accordance with, and the permission of, The Conference Board consistent with a subscriber or license agreement and the Terms of Use displayed on our website at www.conference-board.org. The data and analysis contained herein may not be used, redistributed, published, or posted by any means without express written permission from The Conference Board.

COPYRIGHT TERMS OF USE. All material in this press release and on Our Sites is protected by United States and international copyright laws. You must abide by all copyright notices and restrictions contained in Our Sites. You may not reproduce, distribute (in any form including over any local area or other network or service), display, perform, create derivative works of, sell, license, extract for use in a database, or otherwise use any materials (including computer programs and other code) in this press release or on Our Sites (collectively, "Site Material"), except that you may download Site Material in the form of one machine-readable copy that you will use only for personal, noncommercial purposes, and only if you do not alter Site Material or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice displayed on the Site Material. If you are a subscriber to any of the services offered on Our Sites, you may be permitted to use Site Material, according to the terms of your subscription agreement.

TRADEMARKS. "THE CONFERENCE BOARD", the TORCH LOGO, "THE CONFERENCE BOARD HELP WANTED ONLINE", and any other logos, indicia and trademarks featured in this press release or on Our Sites are trademarks owned by The Conference Board, Inc. in the United States and other countries ("Our Trademarks"). You may not use Our Trademarks in connection with any product or service that does not belong to us nor in any manner that is likely to cause confusion among users about whether The Conference Board is the source, sponsor, or endorser of the product or service, nor in any manner that disparages or discredits us.

Violators of these rights will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Nothing herein shall restrict the use of the information by news journalists using the information in a legitimate news publication or periodical.