

RESEARCH NOTES



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Marginally Attached Workers
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Marginally Attached Workers Peaked at 25,100 in 2012; Now at 13,000 (Current Population Survey, 12-month moving average)



- The Bureau of Labor Statistics' estimate of the number of unemployed is designed to capture those individuals without a job, but actively looking for work. "Marginally Attached" workers and "Discouraged Workers" share the characteristic of having searched for work in the last 12 months, but not in the last four weeks. The main distinction separating these two categories is the motivation behind curtailing their search. While the discouraged group believes there are no available jobs, other marginally attached workers are those who have not searched for a job for different reasons, such as school attendance, transportation problems, poor health, or family responsibilities.
- Information from the Current Population Survey (CPS) suggests that at the lowest point in late-2008, the marginally attached workers averaged about 5,400 in Nevada.
- By May 2012, this measure of labor market activity hit a peak, totaling 25,100 Nevadans. Since the height of the recession, the State has seen a substantial decline in this group, down nearly 50 percent, at roughly 13,000 in May.
- Year-over year, the number of marginally attached workers also realized significant improvement, down 20.7 percent, or 3,300 persons, from May last year.
- While not part of the official unemployment rate estimate, the BLS captures marginally attached workers in its Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization. Specifically, adding in discouraged workers and marginally attached workers into the equation adds about 1.3 percentage points to the official rate. (In technical terms, as we move from the U-3 Alternative Measure to U-5.)