



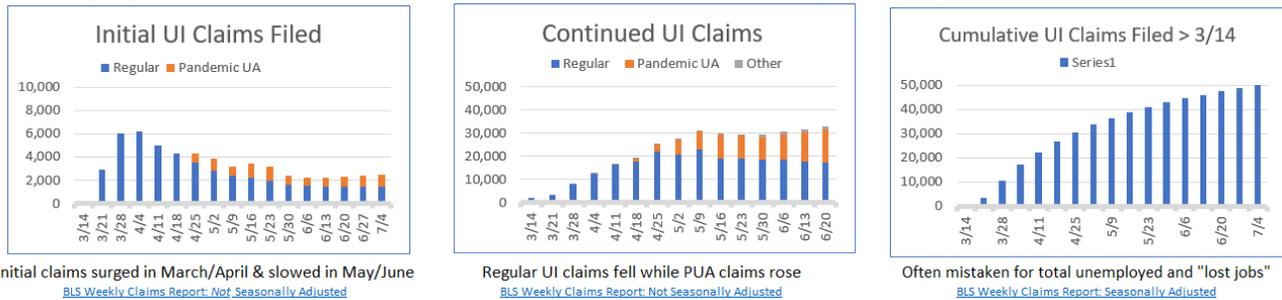
UNEMPLOYMENT RECOVERY REPORT IN NINE CHARTS

July 2020

July 9 2020
By John Courtney, President

While our economic challenges continue, the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports again offer somewhat hopeful news. Below are nine graphs presenting a multifaceted look at U.S. unemployment. Though each indicatorⁱ has limitations, taken together they provide important insights.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims Filed, Caseload & History of Filings



Initial claims surged in March/April & slowed in May/June
[BLS Weekly Claims Report, Not Seasonally Adjusted](#)

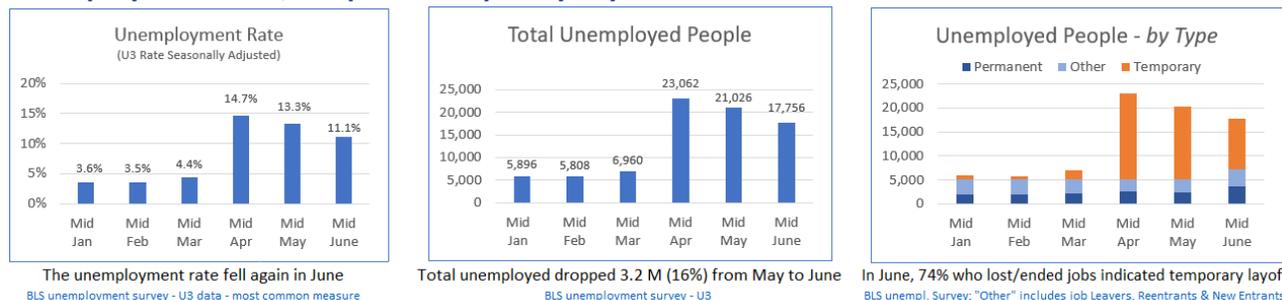
Regular UI claims fell while PUA claims rose
[BLS Weekly Claims Report, Not Seasonally Adjusted](#)

Often mistaken for total unemployed and "lost jobs"
[BLS Weekly Claims Report, Seasonally Adjusted](#)

Initial unemployment insurance claims continued to slow through the end of June. Continued regular claims fell while continued Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claims rose. Continued UI claims were again greater than the number of total unemployed people. This may be due to several unusual factors, including backlogged claims that states pay and register in a current week, fraudulent claim schemes and other unusual situations.

Finally, some media and policy makers continue to erroneously describe cumulative unemployment insurance claims filed since March 14th as "jobs lost."

Unemployment Rate, People & Temporary Layoffs



The unemployment rate fell again in June
[BLS unemployment survey - U3 data - most common measure](#)

Total unemployed dropped 3.2 M (16%) from May to June
[BLS unemployment survey - U3](#)

In June, 74% who lost/ended jobs indicated temporary layoff
[BLS unempl. Survey, "Other" includes job Leavers, Reentrants & New Entrants](#)

A more accurate measure of "jobs lost" to date is the number of "permanent" unemployed who are not on temporary layoff. This data appears in dark blue in the "Unemployed People - By Type" chart immediately above. The number includes the unemployed who are "Not on temporary layoff" and is comprised of those who permanently lost a job and those who completed temporary jobs. From mid-May through mid-June, this number increased from 2.3 million to 3.7 million; up from 2.1 million at the start of the pandemic in March.

This leaves the large majority of the 18 million unemployed still in the "temporary." **As of mid-June, of workers who lost or completed a temporary job, a full 74% said it was due to a temporary layoff.**

Job Seekers, Openings and Hires



Total "Job Seekers" grew in June

[BLS unempl. Survey](#); "Other" includes job leavers, reentrants & new entrants



Job openings remained steady in May

[BLS JOLT Survey](#)



Hire numbers were strong in May

[BLS JOLT Survey](#)

The last set of BLS charts examines trends in the number of unemployed job seekers on permanent layoff, as well as total job openings and monthly hires. In the year prior to the pandemic, job openings were higher than they've been in 20 years. From the start of the pandemic at the end of February to the end of May, openings dropped by a relatively modest 22%, to 5.3 million.

More recent data – for openings posted online – is available from Glassdoor, which tracks online job openings on its site. As of June 30th, its [data](#) suggests a positive trend – online job openings have increased 10% since late May. Total online openings at Glassdoor are now just 16% below their pandemic starting number on March 13, 2020. **By either measure, job openings appear to be at the same levels seen five years after the Great Recession.**

Total job openings will be important to watch as an indicator of opportunity, as well as a possible indicator of difficulty employers may have in convincing permanently laid-off employees to part with unemployment insurance benefits and return to work.

Job Seekers Deserve a Clear Picture of the Job Market

Confidence plays an important role in a successful job search. With that in mind, it's important that we all work to provide job seekers with an accurate picture of the job market.

John Courtney is President of the American Institute for Full Employment. Its team of consultants has worked with more than 25 states and Congress to develop evidence-based reemployment solutions in unemployment insurance, welfare and workforce programs for the past 25 years. States seeking assistance in reemployment or evidence-based RESEA programs can reach the Institute at info@fullemployment.org or visit fullemployment.org.

ⁱ Data Notes: The first three graphs use data published in the [Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\) Weekly Claims Report](#). The next four use data from the [BLS Unemployment Survey](#). The last two graphs draw on data from the [BLS Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey](#). The only data seasonally adjusted is in the Unemployment Rate graph, the Unemployed People graphs and the Cumulative UI Claims Filed graph. The Continued UI Claim data includes the following UI claim types: Regular State, Federal Employees, Newly Discharged Veterans, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, Pandemic Emergency UC, Extended Benefits, State Additional Benefits and STC/Workshare. In the Total "Job Seekers" chart, "Other" includes "Reentrants" and "New Entrants" into the job market.