

The data referenced in this report is obtained from the Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

Unemployment rates improve in August, overall employment levels remain down from 2008.

The overall unadjusted unemployment rate on the Mississippi Gulf Coast for August was 7.9%, compared to 8.7% in July. This reduction in unemployment rate is consistent with prior Augusts, as seasonal factors such as schools reconvening influence reported unemployment rates. The number of total establishment jobs reported on the Mississippi Gulf Coast remained relatively stable at 156,010 compared to 156,310 prior month. Table 1 below compares establishment jobs to prior year and to prior month.

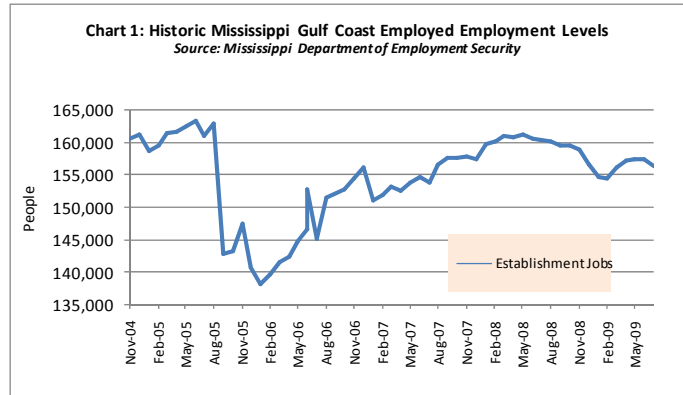


Table 1: Mississippi Gulf Coast Establishment Jobs
Comparing Historical Levels in August

Source: Mississippi Department of Employment Security

	August '09	August '08	Change	% Change	Jul '09
Manufacturing	20,860	21,000	(140)	-0.7%	20,680
Agri., Forestry, Mining, Utilities	1,620	1,880	(260)	-13.8%	1,650
Construction	10,030	11,530	(1,500)	-13.0%	10,120
Wholesale Trade	2,490	2,360	130	5.5%	2,520
Retail Trade	17,250	18,410	(1,160)	-6.3%	17,440
Transportation and Warehousing	3,590	3,360	230	6.8%	3,500
Information	2,390	2,450	(60)	-2.4%	2,440
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate	6,100	5,600	500	8.9%	6,080
Professional Services	6,070	6,440	(370)	-5.7%	6,060
Management of Companies	810	1,140	(330)	-28.9%	810
Waste Mgt.	10,800	10,350	450	4.3%	10,770
Educational Services	610	570	40	7.0%	590
Health Care	10,480	10,550	(70)	-0.7%	10,200
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	290	300	(10)	-3.3%	310
Leisure & Hospitality	26,450	28,150	(1,700)	-6.0%	26,820
Other Services and Government	3,200	3,140	60	1.9%	3,170
Government and Education	32,970	32,990	(20)	-0.1%	33,150
Total Establishment jobs	156,010	160,220	(4,210)	-2.6%	156,310

Compared to August 2008, Construction, Retail, and Leisure & Hospitality continue to be the job sectors that have been hit hardest by the economic slowdown. The Finance & Insurance and the Waste Mgt sectors have fared the best. Notably, the gap between total establishment jobs reported each month in 2009 to those reported in 2008 has stabilized somewhat in recent months at levels near 4,000 jobs, after peaking at 5,670 jobs in February 2009. At the county level, Hancock is the only county that is

consistently reporting more establishment jobs relative to prior year, while Harrison and Jackson counties have been down about 3%. Tables 2 and 3 contain historical employment statistics for the month of August on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Table 2: August 2009 Unemployment Rates (unadjusted)

	MS Coast	Hancock	Harrison	Jackson	Mississippi	U.S. Average
Labor Force	159,050	17,640	82,960	58,450	1,278,900	154,897,000
Employed	146,470	16,250	76,630	53,590	1,157,600	140,074,000
Unemployed	12,580	1,390	6,330	4,860	121,300	14,823,000
Rate	7.9%	7.9%	7.6%	8.3%	9.5%	9.6%
<i>Prior Month Rate</i>	8.7%	8.6%	8.4%	9.1%	10.5%	10.5%
Establishment Jobs	156,010	13,950	89,430	52,630	1,108,000	NA
<i>Prior YR Establishment Jobs</i>	160,220	13,640	92,340	54,240	1,140,900	NA

Table 3: Historic August Employment levels for combined three coastal counties

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Labor Force	159,050	167,740	165,100	161,430	176,640	174,100
Employed	146,470	157,030	156,830	149,140	166,290	164,740
Unemployed	12,580	10,710	8,270	12,290	10,350	9,360
Rate	7.9%	6.4%	5.0%	7.6%	5.9%	5.4%
Establishment Jobs	156,010	160,220	156,580	151,540	162,840	160,870

At the end of this month the Gulf Coast Business Council will partner with area Chambers of Commerce to conduct a CEO & Business Owner Confidence Survey. Results will be available in early October.

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