

Overview of the CareerSource Heartland Region
Not Seasonally Adjusted
December 20, 2024

- The unemployment rate in the CareerSource Heartland region (DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties) was 4.7 percent in November 2024. This rate was 0.7 percentage point greater than the region's year ago rate of 4.0 percent. The region's November 2024 unemployment rate was 1.1 percentage points above the state rate of 3.6 percent. The labor force was 77,412, down 662 (-0.8 percent) over the year. There were 3,660 unemployed residents in the region.
- Okeechobee County had the lowest unemployment rate (3.8 percent) in the CareerSource Heartland region followed by DeSoto County (4.6 percent), Hardee County (5.0 percent), and Highlands County (5.1 percent).
- Employment by industry in the CareerSource Heartland region totaled 56,673 jobs in June 2024 (the latest available data). CareerSource Heartland region's employment decreased by 52 jobs (-0.1 percent) over the year.
- The Government (+9.4 percent); Other Services (+3.8 percent); Leisure and Hospitality (+1.6 percent); and Information (+1.0 percent) industries grew faster in the region than statewide over the year.
- The industries gaining jobs over the year were Government (+825 jobs); Education and Health Services (+216 jobs); Leisure and Hospitality (+101 jobs); Other Services (+49 jobs); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+42 jobs); Information (+3 jobs); and Construction (+1 job).
- The industries losing jobs over the year were Natural Resources and Mining (-921 jobs); Financial Activities (-172 jobs); Professional and Business Services (-82 jobs); and Manufacturing (-73 jobs).

Sebring Metro Area

- In November 2024, nonagricultural employment in the Sebring MSA was 29,000, an increase of 300 jobs (+1.0 percent) over the year.
- The Government (+2.3 percent) industry grew faster in the metro area than statewide over the year.
- The Government (+100 jobs) industry gained jobs over the year.

Note: All data are subject to revision.

Source: Florida Department of Commerce, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.

| Unemployment Rates (not seasonally adjusted) | Nov-24 | Oct-24 | Nov-23 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| CareerSource Heartland | 4.7% | 4.6% | 4.0% |
| DeSoto County | 4.6% | 4.4% | 3.7% |
| Hardee County | 5.0% | 4.7% | 4.1% |
| Highlands County | 5.1% | 5.1% | 4.4% |
| Okeechobee County | 3.8% | 3.7% | 3.2% |
| Florida | 3.6% | 3.5% | 3.0% |
| United States | 4.0% | 3.9% | 3.5% |

| Employment by Industry Covered by Unemployment Compensation (not seasonally adjusted) | CareerSource Heartland | | | | Florida | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | Region | | | percent change | Region | | | percent change |
| | Jun-24 | Jun-23 | change | | Jun-24 | Jun-23 | change | |
| Total Employment | 56,673 | 56,725 | -52 | -0.1 | 9,697,228 | 9,561,378 | 135,850 | 1.4 |
| Natural Resources and Mining | 4,362 | 5,283 | -921 | -17.4 | 63,071 | 64,352 | -1,281 | -2.0 |
| Construction | 3,858 | 3,857 | 1 | 0.0 | 647,775 | 628,984 | 18,791 | 3.0 |
| Manufacturing | 1,744 | 1,817 | -73 | -4.0 | 428,366 | 422,372 | 5,994 | 1.4 |
| Trade, Transportation and Utilities | 12,253 | 12,211 | 42 | 0.3 | 1,960,740 | 1,942,524 | 18,216 | 0.9 |
| Wholesale Trade | 1,396 | 1,375 | 21 | 1.5 | 394,273 | 388,983 | 5,290 | 1.4 |
| Retail Trade | 8,581 | 8,609 | -28 | -0.3 | 1,142,903 | 1,135,262 | 7,641 | 0.7 |
| Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities | 2,276 | 2,227 | 49 | 2.2 | 423,564 | 418,279 | 5,285 | 1.3 |
| Information | 300 | 297 | 3 | 1.0 | 156,062 | 158,698 | -2,636 | -1.7 |
| Financial Activities | 1,633 | 1,805 | -172 | -9.5 | 672,880 | 673,243 | -363 | -0.1 |
| Professional and Business Services | 4,825 | 4,907 | -82 | -1.7 | 1,608,680 | 1,618,039 | -9,359 | -0.6 |
| Education and Health Services | 10,103 | 9,887 | 216 | 2.2 | 1,505,998 | 1,450,744 | 55,254 | 3.8 |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 6,593 | 6,492 | 101 | 1.6 | 1,316,689 | 1,299,233 | 17,456 | 1.3 |
| Other Services | 1,350 | 1,301 | 49 | 3.8 | 296,873 | 288,765 | 8,108 | 2.8 |
| Government | 9,557 | 8,732 | 825 | 9.4 | 1,013,851 | 984,633 | 29,218 | 3.0 |

| Population | 2023 | 2022 | change | percent change |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| CareerSource Heartland | 210,780 | 206,993 | 3,787 | 1.8 |
| DeSoto County | 35,979 | 35,320 | 659 | 1.9 |
| Hardee County | 25,760 | 25,651 | 109 | 0.4 |
| Highlands County | 107,614 | 105,649 | 1,965 | 1.9 |
| Okeechobee County | 41,427 | 40,373 | 1,054 | 2.6 |
| Florida | 22,610,726 | 22,245,521 | 365,205 | 1.6 |

| Average Annual Wage | 2023 | 2022 | change | percent change |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| CareerSource Heartland | \$46,300 | \$44,058 | \$2,242 | 5.1 |
| DeSoto County | \$46,425 | \$45,419 | \$1,006 | 2.2 |
| Hardee County | \$45,345 | \$42,413 | \$2,933 | 6.9 |
| Highlands County | \$46,241 | \$43,585 | \$2,655 | 6.1 |
| Okeechobee County | \$46,921 | \$45,001 | \$1,920 | 4.3 |
| Florida | \$66,446 | \$63,783 | \$2,663 | 4.2 |

Note: All data are subject to revision.

Source: Florida Department of Commerce, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.