Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims for the Three-State Region

For the week ending May 23, workers filed 107,481 initial UI claims (NSA) in our three-state region — fewer than the prior week's 110,435 (revised). This was the eighth consecutive weekly decline after initial UI claims set a historic peak of 630,067 (revised) for the week ending March 28.

Compared with the prior week, initial UI claims across our three states:

- fell to 4,783 from 5,554 (revised) in Delaware;
- fell to 33,290 from 42,365 (revised) in New Jersey; and
- rose to 69,408 from 62,516 (revised) in Pennsylvania.

For the week ending May 16, continued UI claims in our three-state region fell further to 1,558,948 (NSA) — from the prior week's 1,661,666 (revised). From data extending back through 1987, the prior maximum for continued claims in the three-state region was 636,134 for the week of March 14, 2009 — 15 months into the Great Recession.

Delaware set a new record-high level of continued UI claims, but claims in New Jersey and Pennsylvania fell for a second and third consecutive week, respectively. Compared with the prior week, continued UI claims across our three states:

- rose to 59,030 from 51,010 (revised) in Delaware;
- fell to 586,650 from 601,770 (revised) in New Jersey; and
- fell to 913,268 from 1,008,886 (revised) in Pennsylvania.
Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims for the U.S.

For the week ending May 23, workers filed 1,914,958 initial UI claims (NSA) — fewer than the prior week’s 2,181,640 (revised). This was the seventh consecutive weekly decline after initial UI claims set a historic peak of 6,211,399 (revised) for the week ending April 4.

Continued UI claims for the week ending May 16 fell to 19,051,706 (NSA) from the prior week’s 22,794,138 (revised). Continued UI claims have now fallen in two of the past three weeks. The current level is nearly three times greater than the prior peak set during the Great Recession — representing 12.6 million more people. Since 1966 year-end, the three highest recession peaks of continued UI claims include:

- 6,451,690 for the week ending March 28, 2009, during the Great Recession;
- 5,112,000 for the week ending January 1, 1983, during the double-dip recession; and
- 5,229,000 for the week ending February 22, 1975, during the 1973–1975 recession.

These three prior peaks all occurred near the end of, or shortly after, their respective recession period.

Sources:

Initial and continued (UI) claims are gathered by individual states and are typically released on Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor.

https://www.dol.gov/ui/data.pdf

Useful Resource:

ASA Weekly Staffing Index

The ASA Weekly Staffing Index edged up further to 60.8 for the week ending May 17 — a third consecutive (very small) increase. This represents a record low for this particular week of the year and is about 7.5 points below the same week in 2009.

Since the week ending March 15, the spread in this index has grown from 8.0 points below its prior-year level to the current spread of 36.0 points below.

Note: This index is highly seasonal (see below). To aid visual comparisons, the upper chart depicts 52 weeks for key years.

Sources:

The ASA Staffing Index tracks weekly changes in temporary and contract employment and is typically released on Tuesday mornings. The index is generated from a survey of U.S. staffing firms by the American Staffing Association.

americanstaffing.net/staffing-index
americanstaffing.net/index