

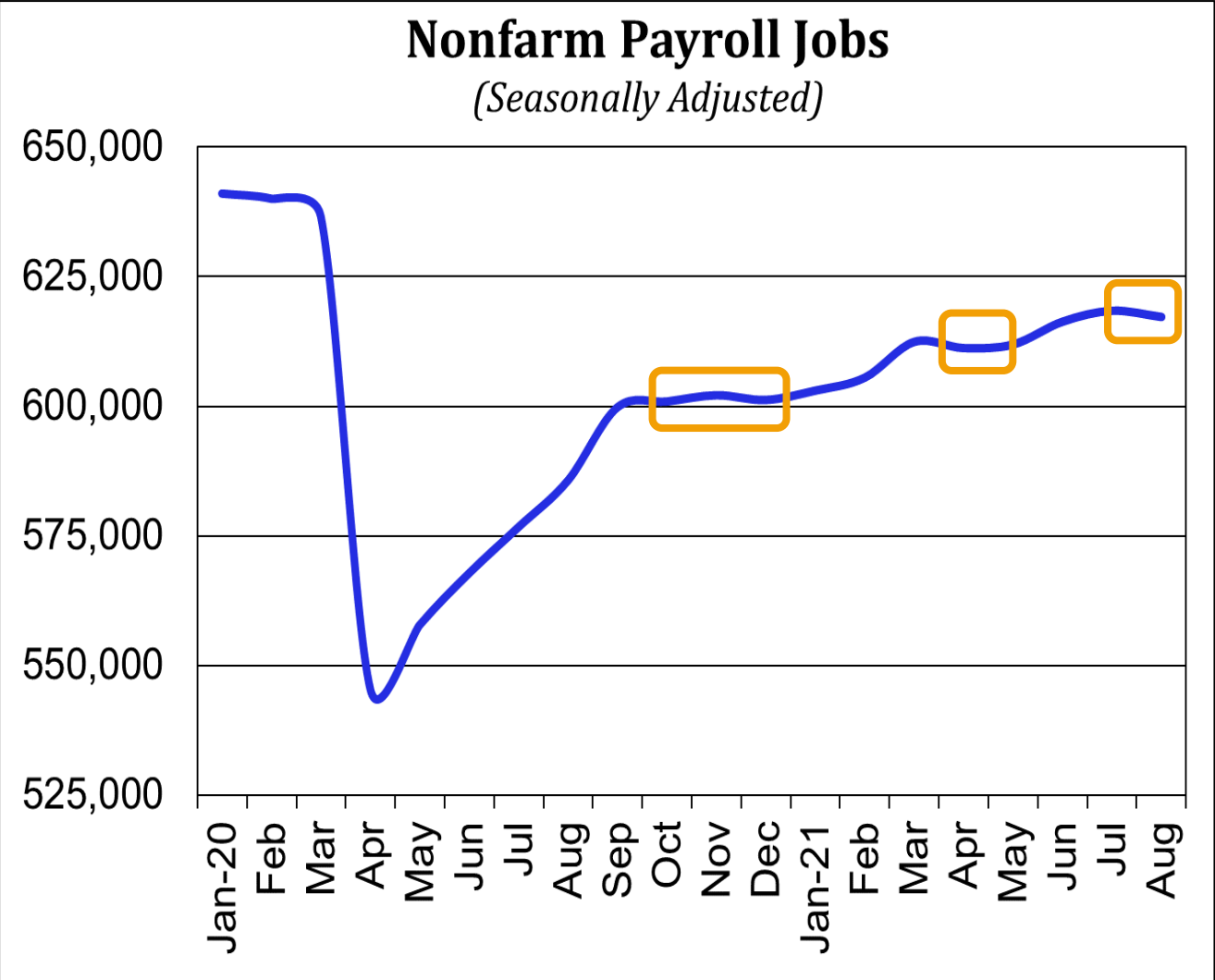


# **Workforce Conditions through August 2021**

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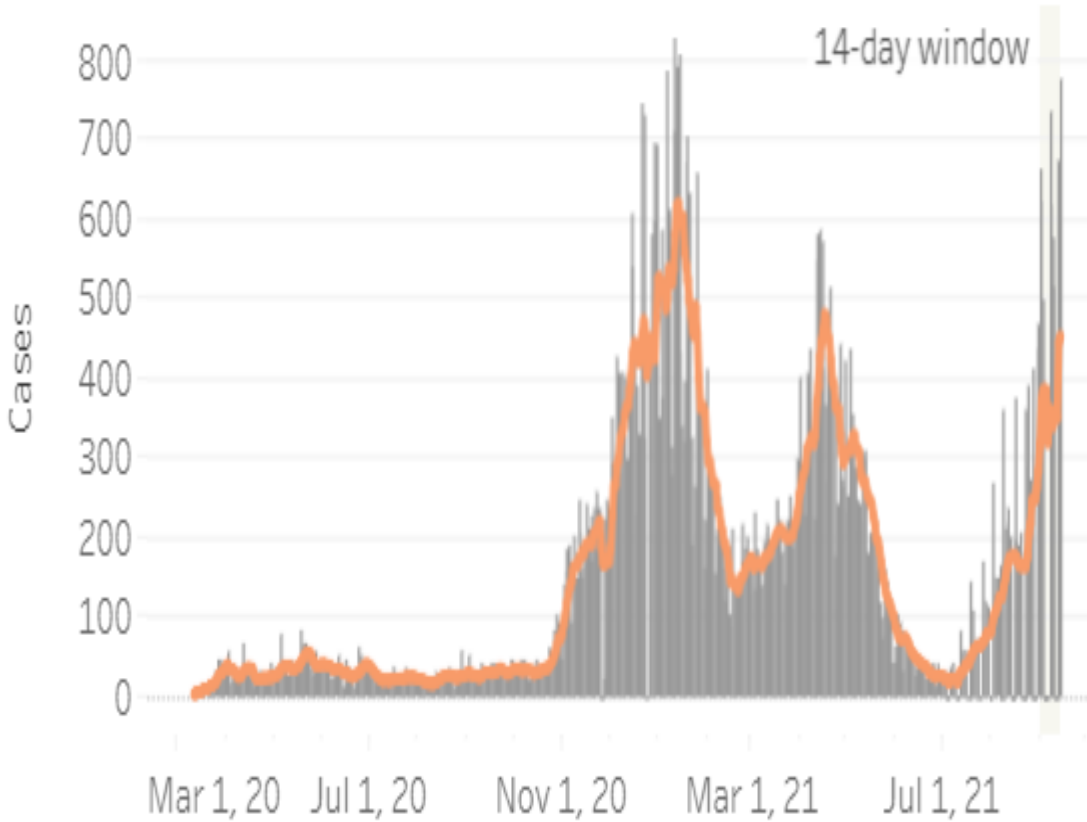
**September 17, 2021**

# The jobs recovery stalled this summer, as it did during in the previous coronavirus surges



### New cases

Purpose: Measure incidence of new COVID-19 cases

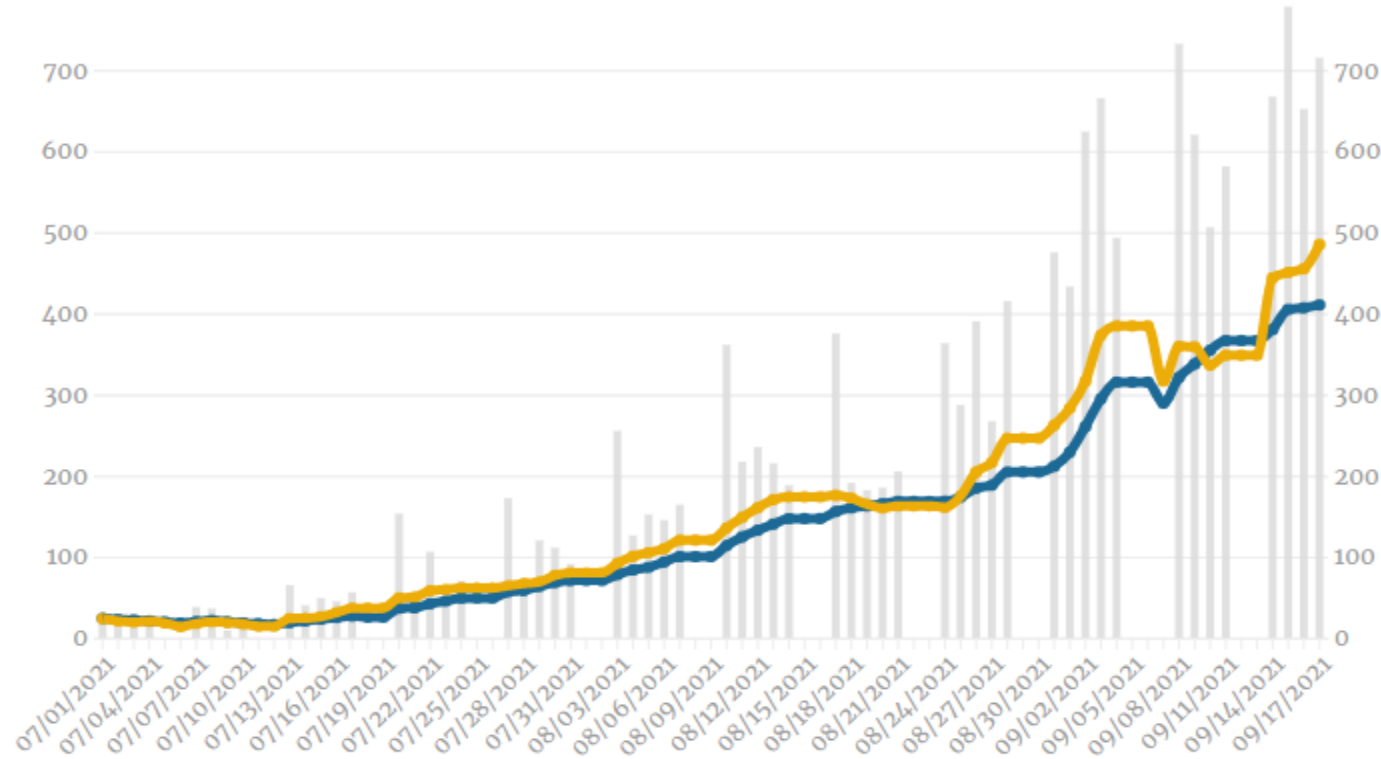


# The recent case trend may not be positive for the jobs recovery this fall

## Maine daily incremental reported COVID-19 cases

To track the spread of a virus, epidemiologists factor the daily number of new cases into a rolling 7-day average, which smooths out daily swings in case numbers and provides a clearer picture of infection trends. In this chart, each data point on the yellow line shows the average number of new cases for that day and the previous six days.

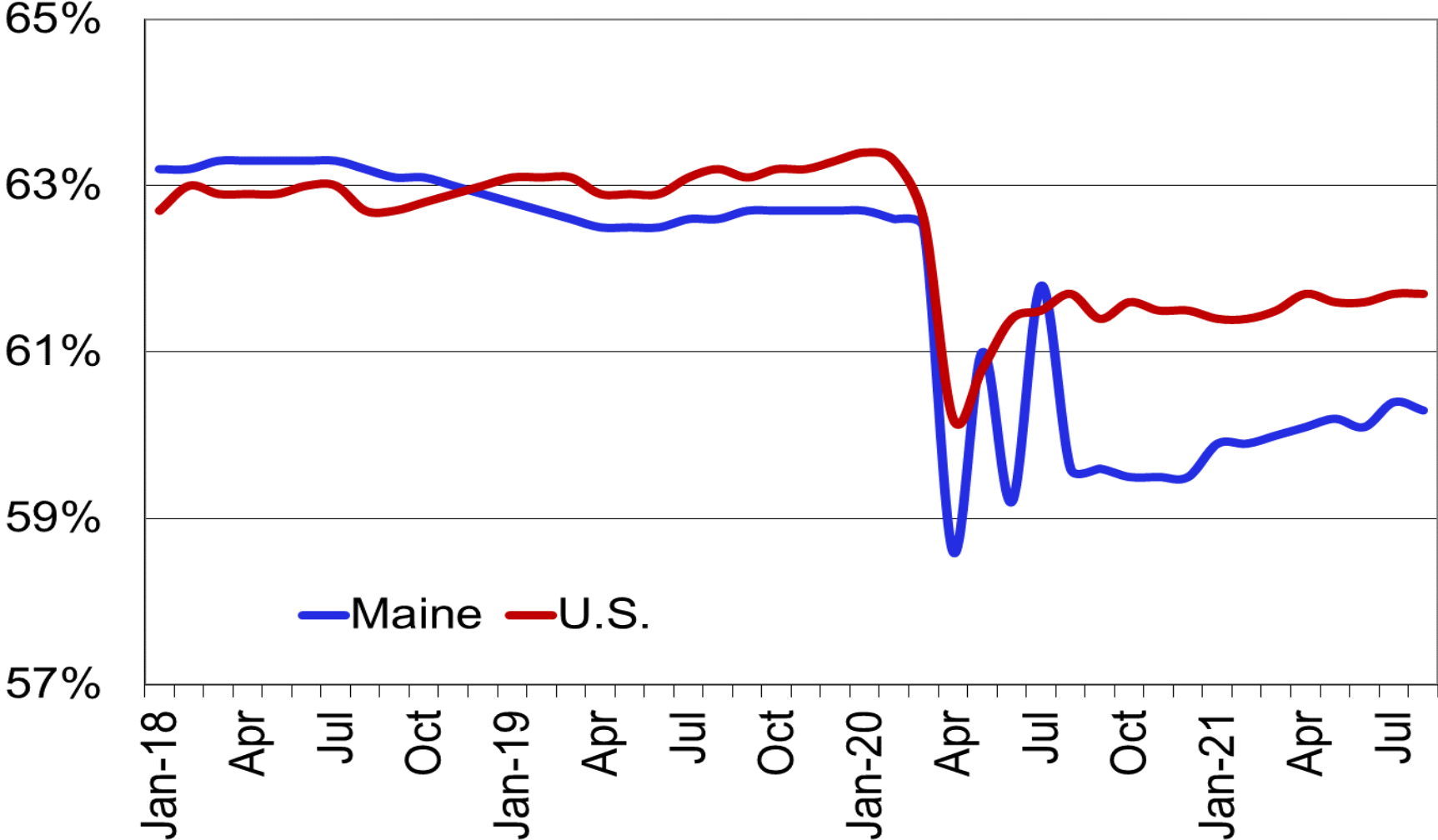
■ 14-day average ■ 7-day average ■ new cases



Source: [Maine CDC](#)

Screenshot from Portland Press Herald, September 17, 2021

# Labor force participation has gradually increased in 2021, but remains suppressed



# The return of kids to school and the end of enhanced unemployment benefits in September was expected to spur a rise in labor force participation. The covid surge may counterbalance that this fall.

BUSINESS > Posted September 2 | Updated September 3

## Thousands of Mainers set to lose federal unemployment aid as of Saturday

As many as 22,400 Maine workers could lose benefits when federal programs established in March 2020 under the federal CARES Act expire.

BY PETER MCGUIRE STAFF WRITER



95 COMMENTS



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Thousands of Mainers are set to lose unemployment pay after this week with the expiration of federal programs created at the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

Aid for those ineligible for traditional unemployment insurance, a year-long benefits extension and an added \$300-per-week payment will end permanently Saturday after being established a year and a half ago and repeatedly renewed by Congress. According to Maine Department of Labor statistics released Thursday, up to 22,400 Maine workers could lose benefits when federal programs established under the CARES Act in March 2020 expire.

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INCREASE FONT SIZE

## Maine reports 1,390 COVID-19 cases in schools in last 30 days

The numbers include dozens of schools with outbreaks of three or more cases reported during the first few weeks of the school year.

BY RACHEL OHM STAFF WRITER



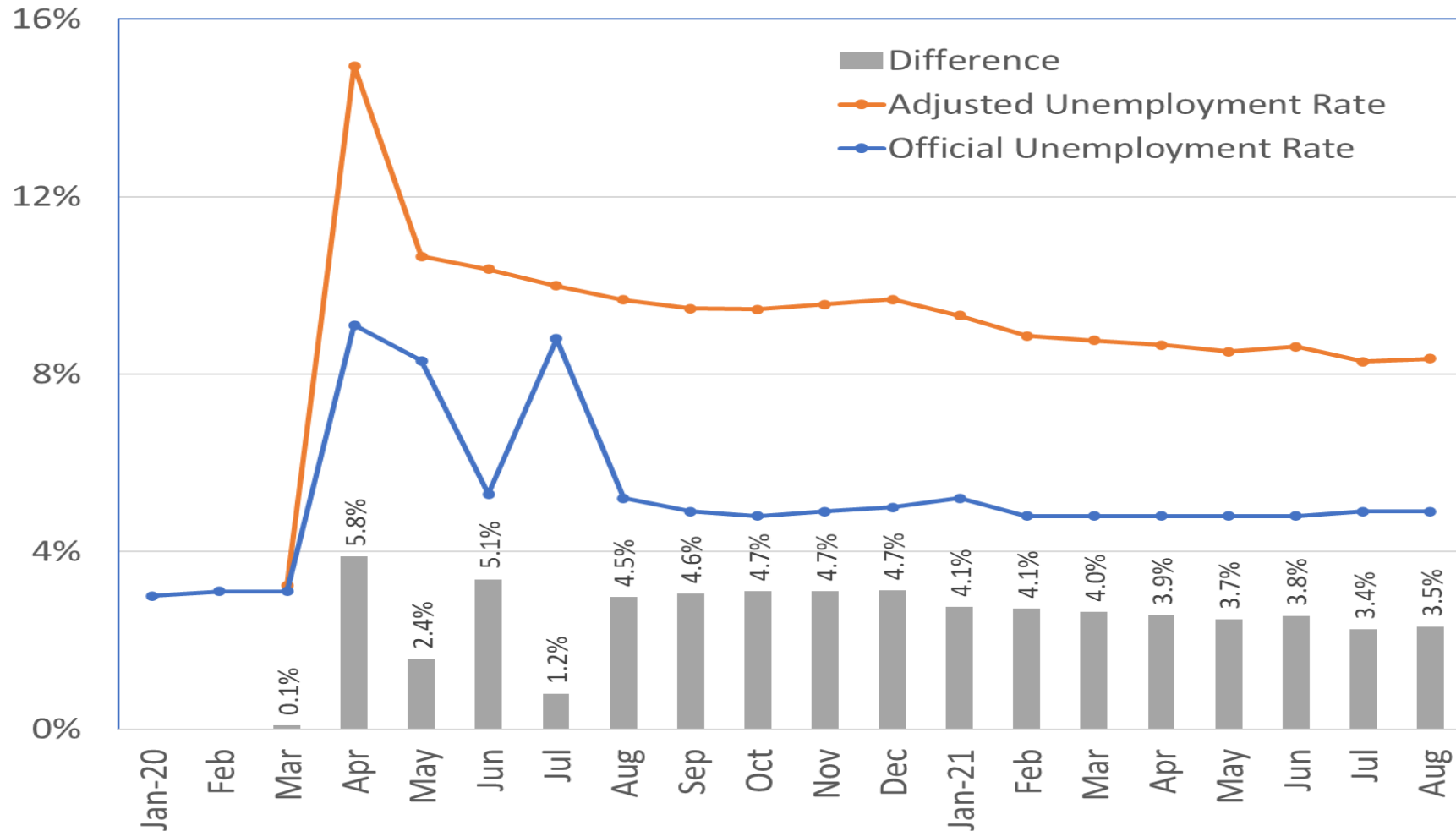
Maine schools have reported 1,390 cases of COVID-19 in the first weeks of classes, according to new database of coronavirus cases and outbreaks in schools.

The data released by the Department of Education Friday represents a change in the state's approach to reporting on COVID in schools as the delta variant has increased the prevalence of the disease. Earlier in the school year the department was posting a weekly list of school outbreaks but was not attaching case numbers to the outbreaks.

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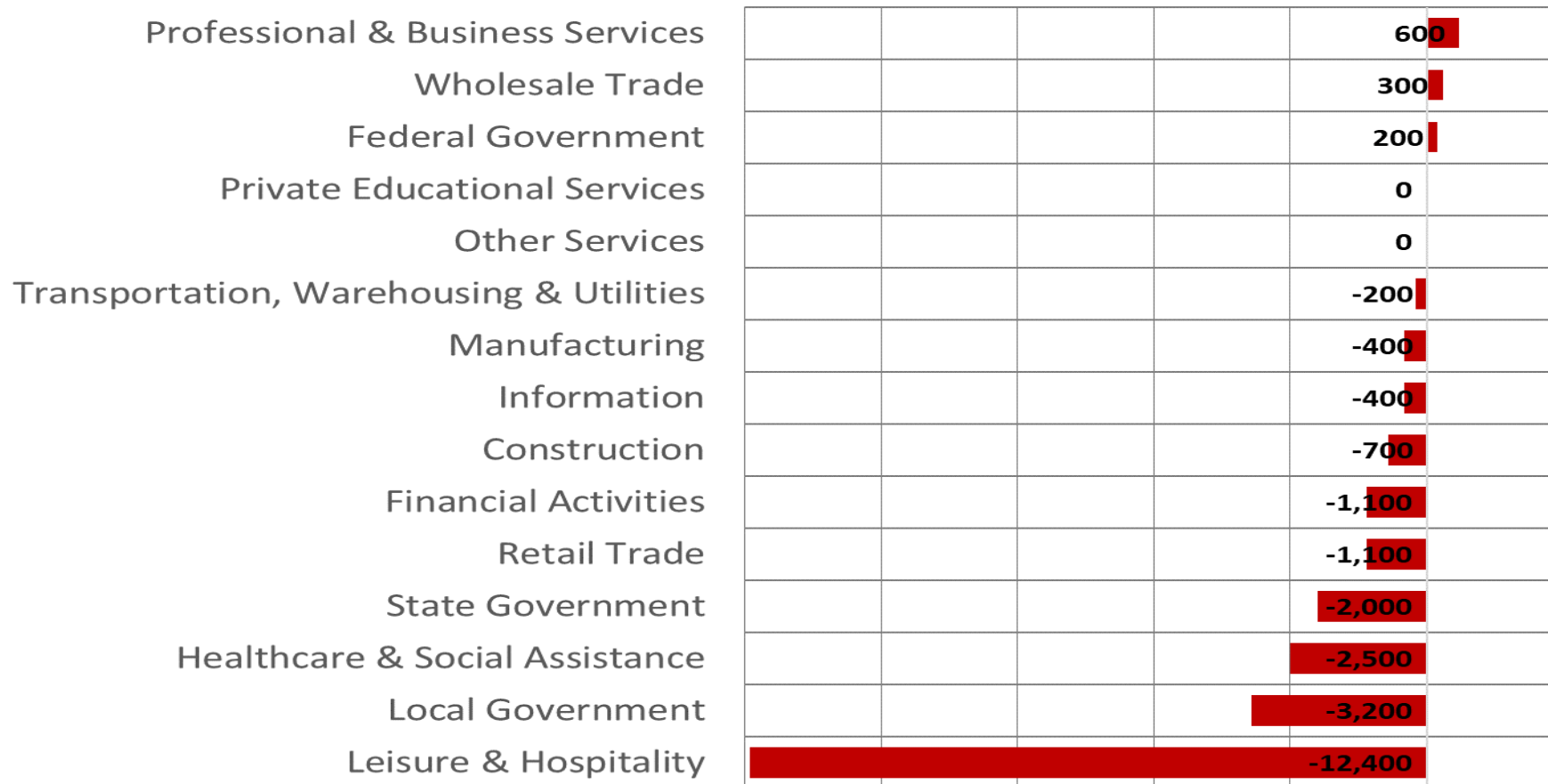
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# The 4.9% unemployment rate in August would have been 8.4% if labor force participation was as high as in February 2020, just before the pandemic impacted the labor market



**Most sectors have nearly recovered to pre-pandemic job levels. 77% of the net decrease in jobs is in hospitality and state and local governments, mostly education.**

**Net Change in Jobs February 2020 to August 2021**



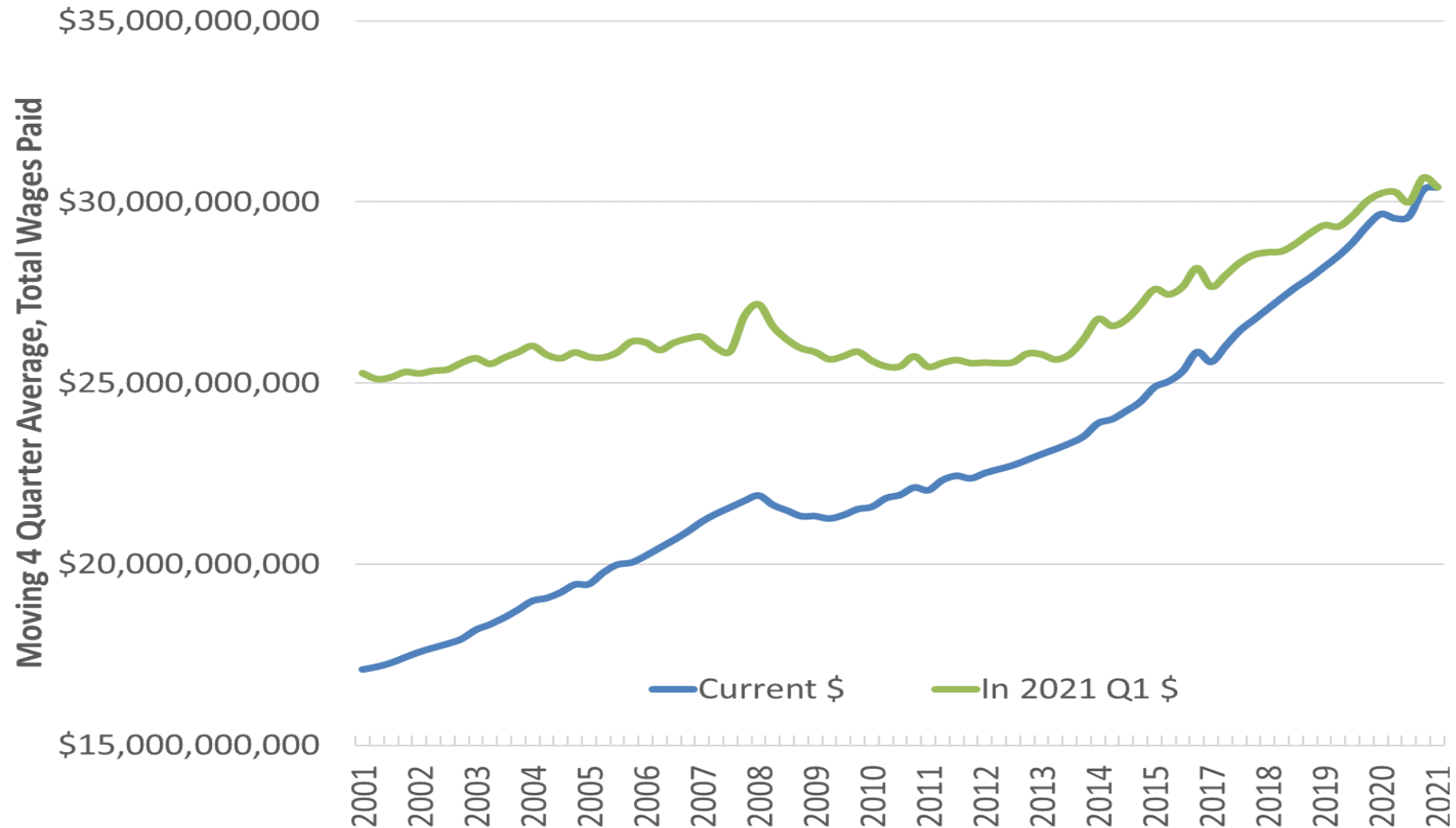
# The net decrease in jobs is mostly concentrated in sectors with low average wages

## Net Change in Jobs February 2020 to August 2021

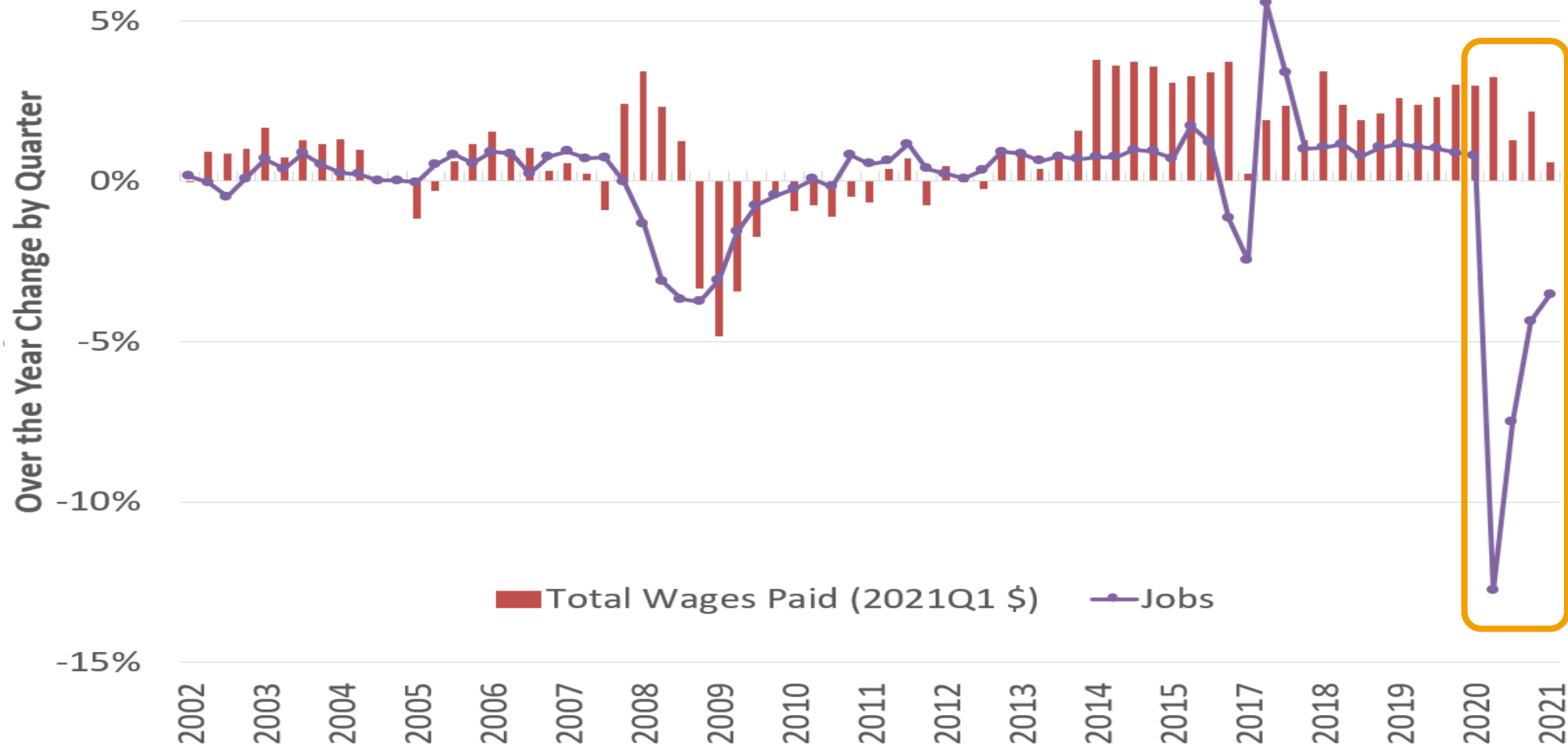
	Net Change in Jobs February 2020 to August 2021				Average Weekly Wage	
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2019	2020
Professional & Business Services				600	\$1,180	\$1,270
Wholesale Trade				300	\$1,320	\$1,400
Federal Government				200	\$1,480	\$1,490
Private Educational Services				0	\$890	\$970
Other Services				0	\$680	\$760
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities				-200	\$840	\$910
Manufacturing				-400	\$1,100	\$1,190
Information				-400	\$1,100	\$1,230
Construction				-700	\$990	\$1,070
Financial Activities				-1,100	\$1,150	\$1,460
Retail Trade				-1,100	\$580	\$650
State Government				-2,000	\$960	\$1,010
Healthcare & Social Assistance				-2,500	\$960	\$1,040
Local Government				-3,200	\$800	\$870
Leisure & Hospitality				-12,400	\$450	\$480



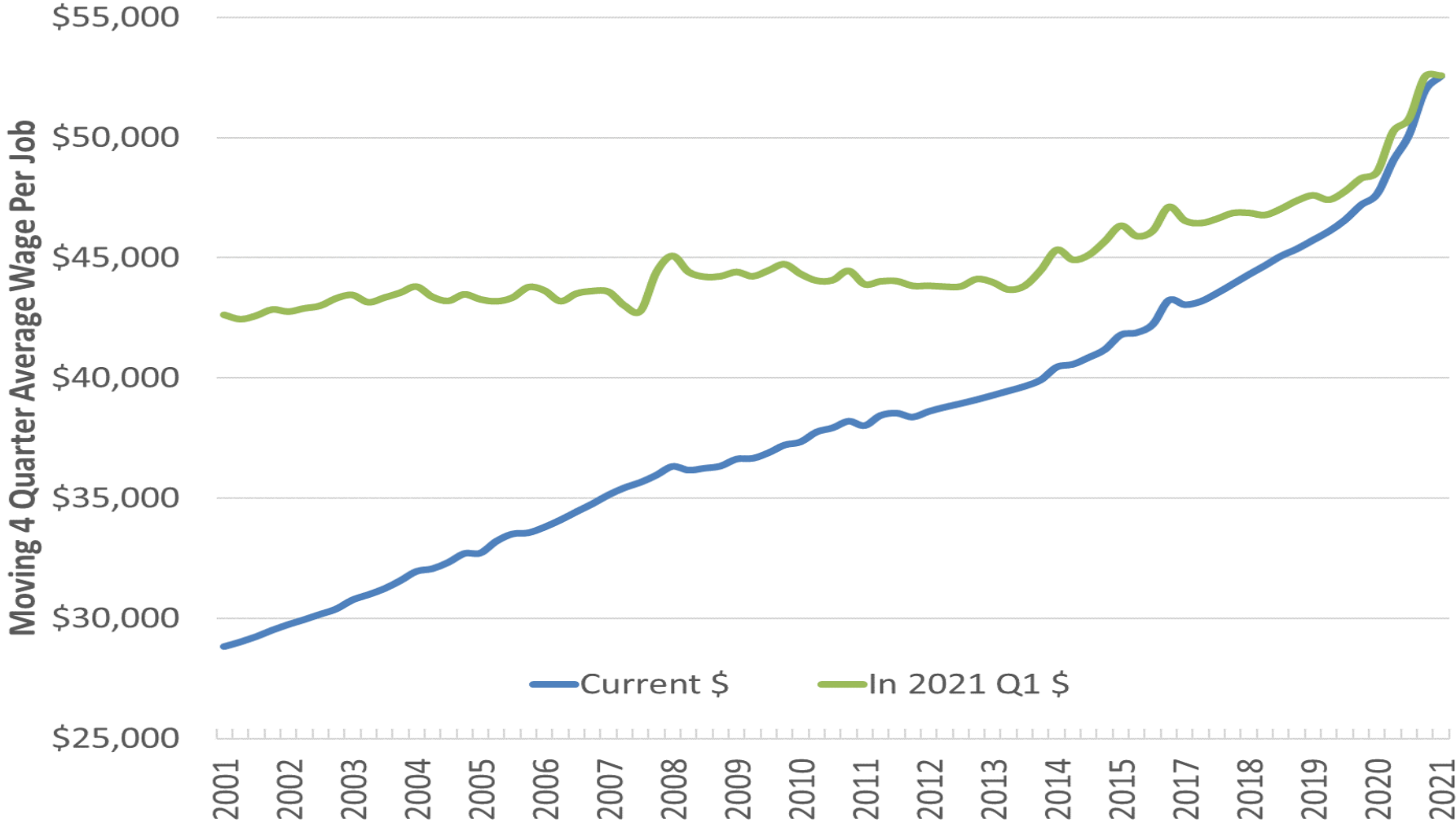
# Total wages paid reached \$30.4 billion during the first four quarters after the pandemic hit (2020Q2 to 2021Q1), the highest on record



# The previously strong connection between the change in jobs and total wages paid was broken during the pandemic period



# Higher total wages spread across fewer jobs drove the average wage per job up sharply in the pandemic era

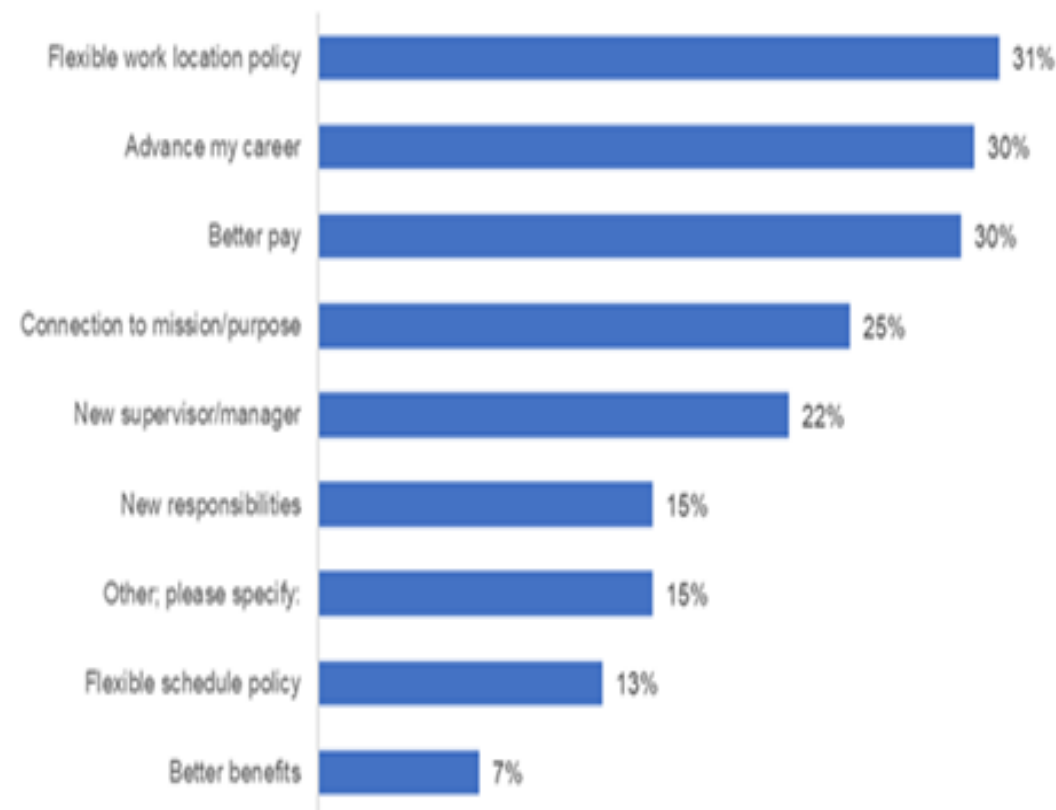


## US Workers Are Looking for Flexible Work Arrangements

More than one third of workers may leave their jobs within the next six months, according to a new survey by The Conference Board. The driving factor: a desire for flexible work arrangements. A flexible work location was ranked as the most desired aspect of a new job, prioritized slightly over better pay and career advancement, the two traditional drivers of job changes.

**Why It Matters** “The long-term effect of extended remote working arrangements has left its mark. Employees are much less willing to embrace the rigid, conventional work policies of the past about how and where work gets done,” said **Rebecca Ray**, Executive Vice President of Human Capital at The Conference Board. “Especially for women, to whom the bulk of caretaking and household responsibilities still unfortunately fall, the flexibility to choose what works best for them is critically important. We are starting to see companies with flexible work arrangements successfully attracting the top talent of their competitors who have adopted a more rigid stance. The challenge of attracting and retaining talent in a tightening labor market is only going to become more difficult.”

What are the most desired aspects of a new job (select top 2)



n=177

Source: The Conference Board