

## Widespread joblessness persists

The number of Vermonters who are working dropped by more than 2,000 in August, after recovering some over the summer. At 308,000, that's more than 20,000 below pre-pandemic levels. And while 30,000 Vermonters are still applying for unemployment benefits, many of them are not included in the official federal unemployment rate. That rate is based on a narrow definition of unemployment that does not accurately reflect people who are still unable to work or look for

LATEST BLS DATA - SEPTEMBER 18, 2020			
	AUG 2020	JUL 2020	AUG 2019
Labor Force	324,350	339,162	341,361
Employment	308,908	310,976	333,162
Unemployment	15,442	28,186	8,199
Unemployment Rate	4.8%	8.3%	2.4%

work because of the pandemic.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Falling poverty

Before the 2020 pandemic-driven recession began in February, poverty in Vermont declined for the third year in a row in 2019, reaching its lowest level of the recovery period following the Great Recession. According to new data released by the Census Bureau this week, nearly 61,000 Vermonters lived in poverty in 2019, a decline of more than 5,000 from the year before. Poverty rates in Vermont remained in the middle of the pack compared with the rest of the country and New England.

### Black households

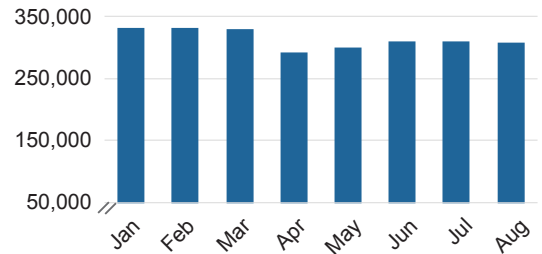
The latest Census data show that the typical Black household in Vermont had \$26,000 less income than the typical white household. Although there are large margins of errors due to the small number of households headed by Black people in Vermont, the gap has persisted over the 13 years that data have been collected. Overall Vermont median household income rose in 2019 to its highest point in the last 15 years, but it has grown far more slowly than the economy as a whole.

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### Many Vermonters still aren't back on the job

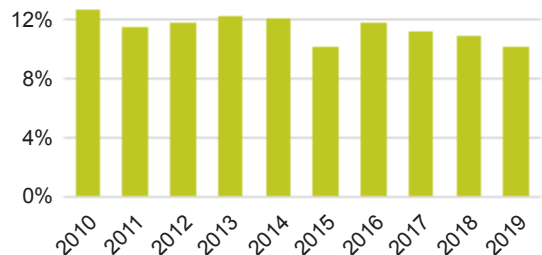
Number of employed Vermonters, seasonally adjusted, Jan-Aug 2020



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor  
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### Poverty hit a 10-year low in 2019

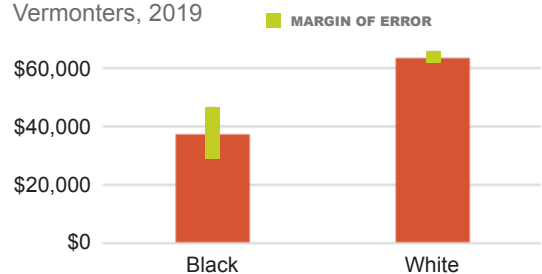
Percent of Vermonters living below the federal poverty level, 2010-2019



Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates ©2020 Public Assets Institute

### Black households had less to live on than white

Median household income for households headed by Black and white Vermonters, 2019



Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 1-year estimates ©2020 Public Assets Institute