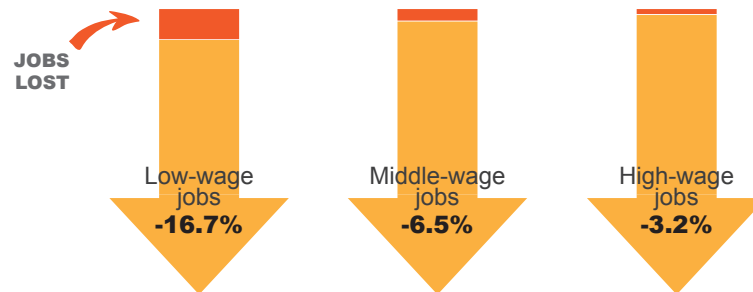


Jobs return post-COVID, but are they good enough?

As the Vermont economy reopens, there's a lot of talk about jobs going unfilled. In fact, we don't have good state-level data on how many jobs are open, what they are, or how much they pay. We know Vermont lost more low-wage than high-wage jobs last year, so it's likely that many of the jobs returning now are at the low end of the scale.

Vermont lost mostly low-wage jobs in the pandemic

Change in jobs from 2019 to 2020, by wage group



Note: Job categories—low-, middle-, and high-wage—were created by ranking Vermont's 5-digit NAICS sector jobs in 2019 by average annual wage and dividing them into three equal-size groups.

Data source: Vermont Department of Labor
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But the scale could change.

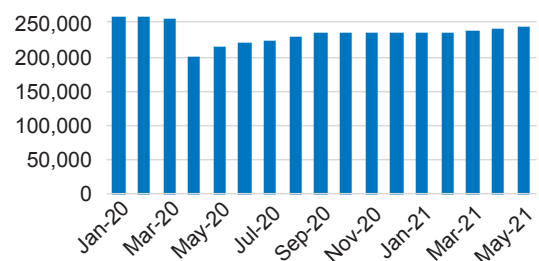
Nationally, according to the [New York Times](#) and the [Washington Post](#), the pandemic increased the risks and stresses of many lower-wage jobs. Workers quit and are holding out for better jobs. That has forced some employers to offer higher pay and left those that haven't in the lurch.

There are other barriers to work, too, including continued COVID risk and scarce affordable child care. Vaccinations will mitigate the former. And parents may get relief with the monthly child tax credit starting in July and school openings and vaccinations for younger children in the fall.

Private-sector jobs increased by 2,000 last month, to 242,800. That means those employers have restored or replaced more than 70 percent of the net jobs lost during the pandemic.

Employers have restored 44,000 positions

Private-sector, nonfarm payroll jobs, seasonally adjusted, Jan 2020 - May 2021



Data source: U.S. Department of Labor
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LATEST BLS DATA - JUNE 23, 2021

	MAY 2021	APR 2021	MAY 2020
Labor Force	313,168	312,790	332,962
Employment	305,135	303,839	301,923
Unemployment	8,033	8,951	31,039
Unemployment Rate*	2.6%	2.9%	9.3%

* The unemployment rate does not capture all out-of-work Vermonters. [Details here.](#)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics