

Jobs are creeping back—and child poverty is too

Despite a national pandemic, poverty fell in Vermont, New England, and the nation in 2020 and 2021. Vermont's supplemental poverty rate dropped to just below 7 percent; approximately 14,000 fewer Vermonters were living in poverty in 2021 than in 2019.

The Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) [defines income and need differently](#) from the official measure—and more realistically. The SPM factors in cash income as well as non-cash benefits and variable expenses including taxes, child care, and medical care. SPM poverty thresholds

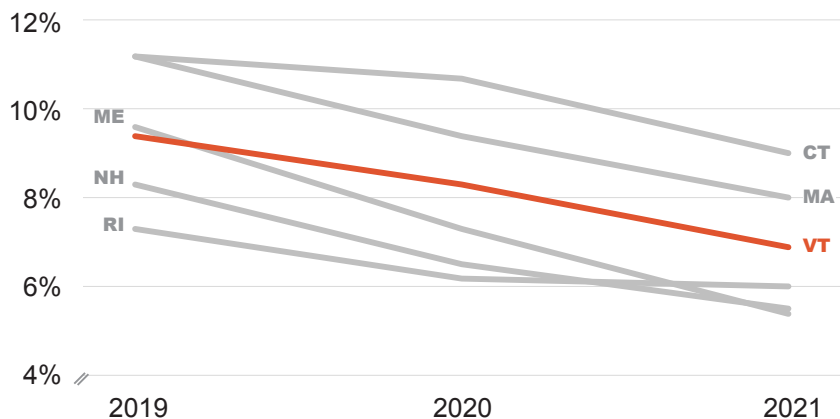
are generally higher and based on the cost of food, clothing, shelter, and utilities. The official measure counts only cash income, and need is based only on the cost of food.

Government benefits during the pandemic—stimulus payments and expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit (CTC), and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)—helped lower the supplemental poverty rate. Under the official poverty measure, those benefits weren't counted as income.

While Vermont numbers are not available, child poverty dropped nationally to a record low in 2021. Almost 3 million children were lifted out of poverty by the expanded CTC. However, Congress allowed it to lapse, and these children, including those in Vermont, are [falling back into poverty](#).

Poverty fell during the pandemic as federal aid increased

Percentage of population below the Supplemental Poverty Measure threshold, New England states, 2019-2021



Note: Due to small sample sizes, state estimates are rolling, 3-year averages. The year labels show the third year of each 3-year average.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement ©2022 Public Assets Institute

THIS MONTH

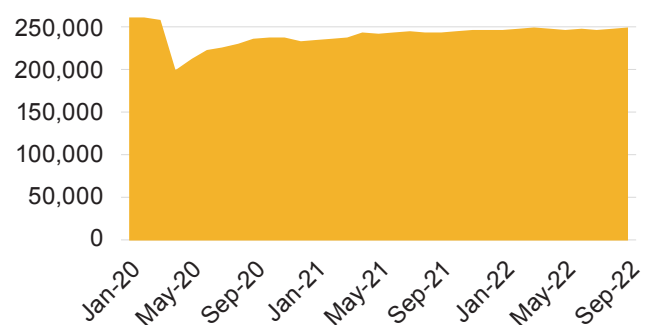
Private sector jobs edged up in September to 248,200, the highest number since April 2020 but still about 4 percent fewer than before the pandemic. Nationally, private sector jobs reached the pre-pandemic level in May of this year.

LATEST BLS DATA - OCTOBER 21, 2022			
	SEP 2022	AUG 2022	SEP 2021
Labor Force	336,538	336,176	328,358
Employment	329,330	329,181	317,942
Unemployment	7,208	6,995	10,416
Unemployment Rate	2.1%	2.1%	3.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Private sector jobs inch closer to pre-pandemic level

Private sector jobs, seasonally adjusted, by month, 2020-2022



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor ©2022 Public Assets Institute