

This month's "Spotlight" topic:  
The Workplace in the Wake of "Me Too"

## Job Growth Slows in August Unemployment Remains at Near-Historic Low

**JOB GROWTH:** As was the case last month, fewer new jobs were created this month than in the prior month. In August, 130,000 new jobs were added, with average monthly hiring of 158,000 for 2019.

**TOP INDUSTRIES:** Growth in August was strongest across healthcare and financial activities. There was also a bump in federal government hiring of temporary workers to support the upcoming census.

**UNEMPLOYMENT:** Unchanged from the previous two months, the unemployment rate remained at its near-record low level of 3.7%.

**WAGES:** Wage growth continued its upward movement in August, with average hourly earnings for the year steady at 3.2%.

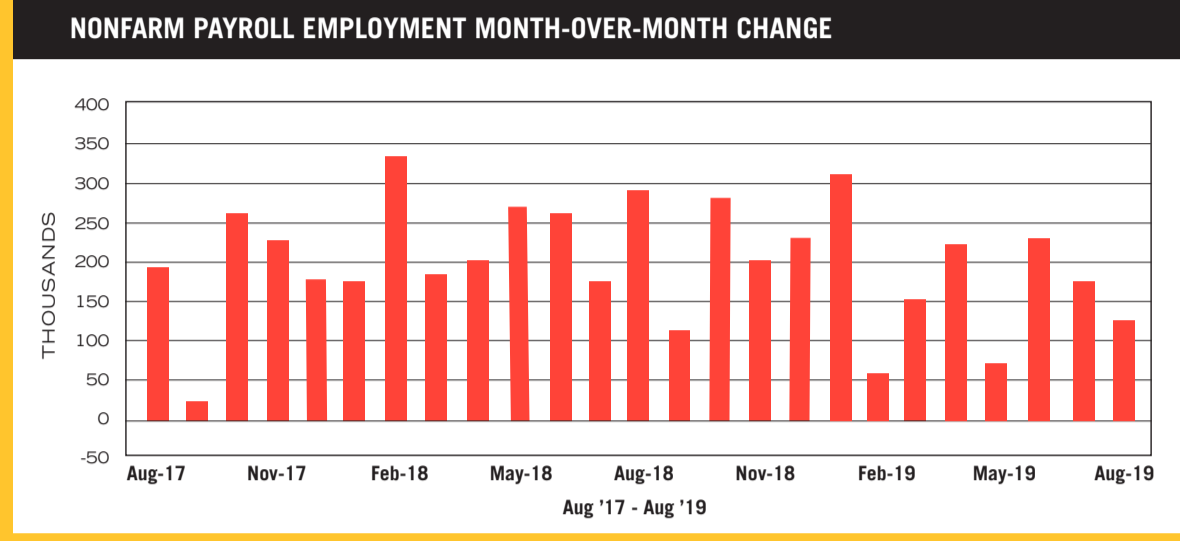
**WORK WEEK:** The work week lengthened slightly in August, with average hours moving up to 34.4.

**TEMPORARY JOB TRENDS:** The temporary help sector added a healthy 15,400 new jobs in August, but that increase followed a loss over the previous three months of 12,800.

**WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?** According to the latest labor market indicators, the economy continues to move forward, although clearly not as briskly as it did in 2018. In August, both the unemployment rate and wage growth offered positive signs of strength, despite a slower pace of hiring activity. Census hiring offered a positive, albeit temporary, bump in the numbers, but fewer new jobs in manufacturing, transportation and warehousing may reflect tariff concerns. A slowdown in hiring may also point directly to the sustained tightening of the labor market, challenging employers to find the talent needed to fill workforce gaps

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Steinberg Employment Research, CNBC, Reuters, Bloomberg, CBS, The New York Times.

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS / SOURCE: BLS



The labor market added 130,000 new jobs in August.



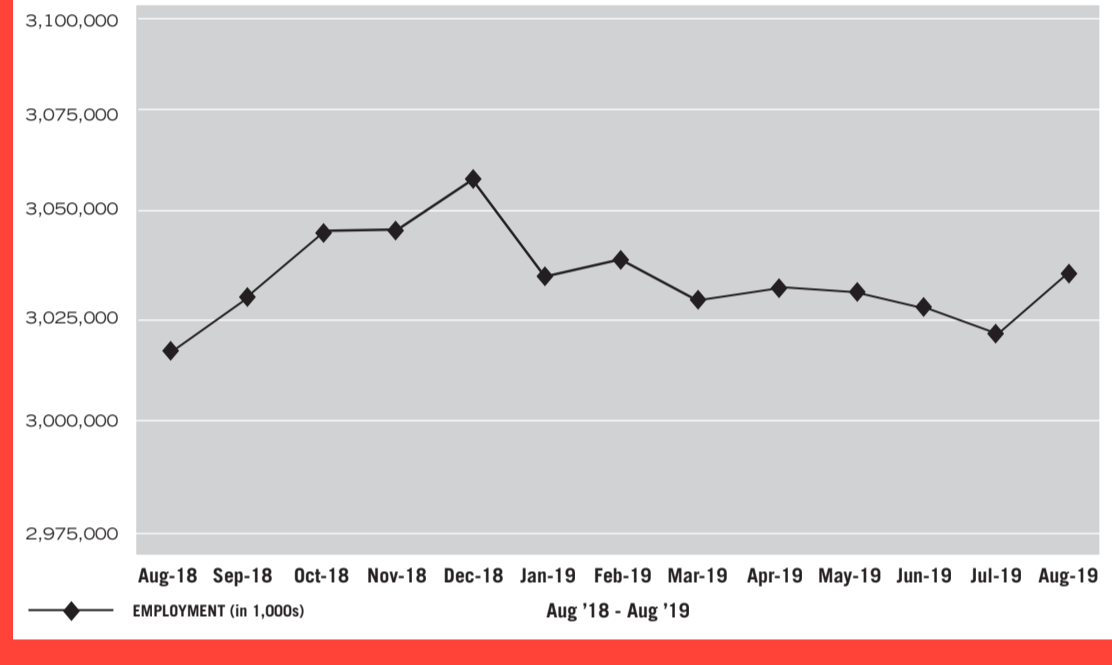
CHART 2: TOP INDUSTRIES / SOURCE: BLS

Job growth of 130,000 in August reflected slower activity in manufacturing and retail trade.



SECTOR GAINS	JOB INCREASE
Professional & Business Services	+37,000
Healthcare & Social Assistance	+36,800
Leisure & Hospitality	+12,000
Manufacturing	+3,000
SECTOR DECLINES	JOB DECREASE
Transportation & Warehousing	-500
Retail Trade	-11,000

CHART 3: TEMPORARY WORKFORCE / SOURCE: BLS & STEINBERG EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



The temporary help sector got a boost in August, adding 15,400 new jobs.



## The Workplace in the Wake of "Me Too"

Sexual harassment has become one of the most talked about issues of the past two years. The rise of the "Me Too" movement has had widespread impact on America's workplaces. In the wake of Me Too, many employers are revising policies and processes to improve the work environment and better protect themselves and safeguard their employees at work. Employees are speaking up more, calling for a more proactive corporate response to inappropriate conduct in the workplace and voicing mounting concerns about other issues of equality, such as gender pay equity and age discrimination.

The 2019 Emerging Workforce® Study, commissioned by Spherion, found:

- More than 40% of U.S. companies reported an increase in the number of HR complaints around sexual harassment and/or inappropriate behavior from bosses or co-workers since the Me Too movement began.
- In the past two years, nearly half of all companies (47%) also saw an increase in the number of complaints from employees about equal pay and/or career advancement opportunities.
- Half of companies say issues stemming from the Me Too movement have caused their company to make policy and/or process changes.

In addition to sexual harassment, the research uncovered issues of discrimination, including:

- Just over a quarter of employees report that they have faced age discrimination.
- One-in-five (20%) say they have been discriminated against due to their gender.
- Discrimination due to race, gender and/or age is significantly higher among the Millennial and Gen X workforces.

Even in a "talent desert," there is little reason for any employer to tolerate bad actors in their ranks. It simply is not worth the potential damage to the organization. Rooting out discrimination of any kind should be a priority to ensure every employee feels not only safe in their workplace but appreciated for the unique qualities they offer. The potential upside of embracing diversity and inclusion in the workforce is substantial.

CHART 4: HARASSMENT IS REAL / SOURCE: 2019 SPHERION EMERGING WORKFORCE STUDY

## Sexual harassment—by words and actions—remains an issue, especially for Millennials

My boss or co-worker...

said sexist and/or sexually inappropriate things

made inappropriate advances

MILLENNIALS

OVERALL

30%

17%

29%

14%



CHART 5: ME TOO PROMPTS POLICY CHANGE / SOURCE: 2019 SPHERION EMERGING WORKFORCE STUDY



## With complaints on the rise, employers take notice and take action

Since Me Too, we've seen increased complaints around sexual harassment and inappropriate behavior from bosses or co-workers

42%

Me Too issues have caused our company to make policy and process changes

50%

CHART 6: BEYOND ME TOO / SOURCE: 2019 SPHERION EMERGING WORKFORCE STUDY

## Discrimination still felt in the workplace, especially among Millennials

I have felt discriminated against due to my...

Age

Gender

Race

MILLENNIALS

OVERALL

34%

26%

33%

20%

28%

16%

