**Ames**

Employment in the Ames metropolitan statistical area (MSA) decreased by 1,500 jobs (or 2.7 percent) between November and December 2020. This decline in employment is seasonal and mostly attributable to a decline in activity at the MSA’s state university and businesses reliant on the university’s student population. State government, a sector dominated by the university, trimmed payrolls by 700 employees over-the-month. Meanwhile, the private service-providing sector experienced a decline of 800 positions. Elsewhere, month-to-month employment dropped by 100 jobs in the goods-producing sector, while federal and local government were unchanged.

Employment in the MSA shrank by 400 positions (or 0.7 percent) in the last 12 months. This is the second straight month that the MSA has had fewer employees than the same month a year ago. Nearly all of the yearly decrease in employment occurred in the private service-providing sector, which lost 1,100 jobs in the time frame. The decline was subtler in the goods-producing sector, which cut 100 positions. In the government sector, local government pared 300 jobs annually, while state government added 1,100 positions. Lastly, federal government was unchanged.

**Cedar Rapids**

Employment in the Cedar Rapids metropolitan statistical area added 100 jobs in December. While small, the gain is significant when compared to the ten-year average November-to-December change of -280. Employment remains 4,400 below the March pre-Covid level and stands at 138,900.

Trade, transportation and warehousing fared best with a gain of 1,100 jobs, largely in retail trade (+500). Manufacturing is the only other industry with an employment gain, adding 200 jobs. Manufacturing cut 10.9% of employment in April as a result of the pandemic, but had regained more than 90% of the loss by May. The effect of the pandemic on durable goods manufacturing was minimal. Government trimmed 300 jobs, all in local government. Professional and business services, educational and health services and leisure and hospitality each pared 200 jobs.

Over the year, area employment is down by 7,900. Leisure and hospitality, the industry most affected by the virus, remains 4,400 jobs below one year ago with slightly more than 77% of the lost jobs in accommodation and food services. Employment in professional and business services is 2,000 below one year ago. Trade, transportation and warehousing employment is just 200 below the December 2019 value following the December gain. Manufacturing and educational and health services are the only industries that have experienced employment gains over the year, adding 800 and 200, respectively.

**Des Moines/West Des Moines**

Total nonfarm employment in the Des Moines metro decreased by 900 jobs in December, lowering the total down to 356,100 jobs. This decrease is average given this time of year as education, leisure, and construction firms all prepare for reduced activities as the holidays approach. Construction alone pared 1,200 jobs with half of this loss residing in specialty trade contractors. Both leisure and hospitality and education and health care shed 800 jobs in December, and professional and business services lost 600 jobs. This loss was fueled by declines in administrative support and waste management services.

Job gains in December were fueled by retail trade (+1,500). This gain is unusually high for December, but could be a symptom of shifting seasonality for this sector. Retail added very few jobs in the Des Moines metro in November. Smaller gains in the metro this month included wholesale trade (+500), transportation, utilities, and warehousing (+500), and financial activities (+300).

Annually, total nonfarm employment trails by 19,800 jobs (-5.3 percent). Leisure and hospitality has the most ground to make up to pull even with last year (-6,300), with full-service restaurants alone trailing by 2,200 jobs. Education and health care lags by 2,400 jobs and retail trade by 2,000 jobs. Government is down by 2,600 jobs to do layoffs at the local level.

# Dubuque

Total nonfarm employment decrease by 400 jobs in December. This loss was slightly more than expected and leaves total nonfarm employment 58,000 jobs to end the year. Goods producing industries and government each shed 200 jobs this month. Retail trade was a lone bright spot with 200 jobs gained to help offset some of the loss.

Compared to last year, total nonfarm employment still trails 3,200 jobs (-5.2 percent). Private service industries have shed the most jobs over the last twelve months (-2,800) while both goods producing industries and government have pared 200 jobs.

**Iowa City**

Employment in the Iowa City metropolitan statistical area (MSA) declined by 500 positions (or 0.5 percent) between October and November. The decline in employment was broadly represented, with losses in the goods-producing sector (-100 jobs), private service-providing sector (-200 jobs), federal government (-100 jobs), and Employment in the Iowa City metropolitan statistical area (MSA) declined by 600 positions (or 0.6 percent) between October and November. This decrease in employment was seasonal and likely due to reduced activity between semesters at the MSA’s state university. Accordingly, state government underwent the largest decline, paring 400 jobs over-the-month. Other areas to trim payrolls were the goods-producing sector (-300 jobs), accommodation and food services (-200 jobs), and local government (-100 jobs). Trade, transportation, and utilities (+600 jobs) continued its consistent monthly growth, boosted primarily by gains in retail trade (+400 jobs). Likewise, federal government (+100 jobs) steadied itself after two months of job losses.

Employment in the MSA decreased by 2,600 positions (or 5.1 percent) in the last 12 months. This decline was broadly represented across the local economy—the goods-producing and private service-providing sectors each had 900 fewer employees than a year ago, while the government sector had 800 fewer employees. In the private sector, the largest declines were in accommodation and food services (-900 jobs) and professional and business services (-300 jobs). Local and state government trimmed payrolls by 500 and 400 employees, respectively. However, the job cuts were not universal, as trade, transportation, and utilities (+500 jobs) and federal government (+100 jobs) added positions annually.

**Sioux City**

Employment in the Sioux City MSA is up 200 jobs from November, bringing total nonfarm employment to 86,800. The month’s gain is a return to the positive after a small slip in employment in November. By October, the area had reclaimed all jobs lost as a result of the pandemic, but the loss in November left employment below the March 2020 value.

Private service-providing industries enjoyed the bulk of the jobs gain, adding 700 jobs. Goods-producing industries pared 400 jobs although manufacturing added 200 jobs. Trade, transportation and warehousing added 800 jobs, with 500 of those jobs in retail trade. Leisure and hospitality pared another 200 jobs and professional and business services trimmed 100 jobs. Government shed 100 jobs, all in local government.

Overall, area employment remains down 1,700 jobs from one year ago with job losses in leisure and hospitality (-3,100), government (-600), and professional and business services (-300) being partially offset by gains in goods-producing industries (+1,100).

# Waterloo/Cedar Falls

The Waterloo/Cedar Falls metropolitan statistical area total nonfarm employment pared 800 jobs from November and stands at 87,200. The value falls 1,400 jobs short of the 88,600 realized in March, prior to the Covid-19 curtailment efforts and 3,300 below the December 2019 level.

Government employment is down 600 jobs, all in state government. Leisure and hospitality dropped 100 jobs, which is common for November to December, but the industry still struggles to regain all of the jobs lost in April. Currently, nearly 56% of those jobs have been reclaimed.

Over the year, the area remains 3,300 jobs short of the December 2019 mark. Leisure and hospitality represents 48.5% of that total (-1,600 jobs). Government is down 1,200 jobs (-8.28%) from one year ago. Professional and business services pared 300 jobs from one year ago (a -4.76% change), educational and health services trimmed 400 jobs (-2.72%) and trade, transportation and warehousing has 100 fewer jobs than one year ago (-0.56%). Manufacturing is the lone bright spot in the area, adding 1,200 jobs, with 900 of those jobs in durable goods manufacturing.