

## Virgin Islands Private Sector Lost 496 Jobs in First Quarter of 2025, BLS Reports

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the USVI recorded 1,735 gross private-sector job losses and 1,239 job gains from December 2024 to March 2025, resulting in a net loss of 496 jobs; the release was delayed over six weeks by a shutdown.

Economy / **Published On January 07, 2026 01:34 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **January 07, 2026**

Image not found or type unknown



Aerial shot of Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas USVI. By. GETTY IMAGES, V.I. CONSORTIUM.

The U.S. Virgin Islands recorded a net loss of private-sector jobs during the first quarter of 2025, as business closures and workforce reductions continued to outpace new hiring, according to data released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

From December 2024 through March 2025, private-sector establishments in the territory shed a total of 1,735 jobs, while 1,239 jobs were added through business openings and expansions. The difference between those figures resulted in a net employment loss of 496 jobs for the quarter. Acting Regional Commissioner Michael G. Phinney noted that while losses continued to exceed gains, the net decline was smaller than in the previous quarter, when job losses surpassed gains by 1,296 positions.

Business Employment Dynamics data track changes in employment by measuring job gains and losses at private-sector establishments from the third month of one quarter to the third month of the next. The net change reflects the balance between jobs created through new or expanding businesses and jobs eliminated through contractions or closures.

During the first quarter of 2025, gross job losses accounted for 7.6 percent of private-sector employment in the U.S. Virgin Islands, compared with 5.4 percent nationally. These losses stemmed from both contracting businesses and establishments that closed entirely. Contracting establishments in the territory lost 780 jobs, a decrease of 250 jobs from the prior quarter. Closing establishments accounted for 955 lost jobs, which was 549 fewer than in the previous quarter.

At the same time, gross job gains represented 5.4 percent of private-sector employment in the territory, slightly below the national figure of 5.6 percent. Expanding establishments added 685 jobs, reflecting a decrease of 172 jobs compared with the previous quarter. In contrast, opening establishments contributed 554 new jobs, an increase of 173 jobs from the prior quarter, indicating stronger activity among newly established businesses.

Over the five quarters shown in the data, private-sector job gains in the U.S. Virgin Islands fluctuated between 1,162 and 1,606, while job losses ranged from 1,338 to 2,534. The first quarter of 2025 marked an improvement from the fourth quarter of 2024, when job losses peaked and the territory experienced its largest net employment decline in the period.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics noted that the data in this release include annual revisions made under standard procedures. These revisions cover the previous four quarters of not seasonally adjusted data and five years of seasonally adjusted data, ensuring consistency across reporting periods.

Publication of the first-quarter 2025 data was delayed by more than six weeks due to a lapse in federal appropriations. The agency said data collection for the underlying Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages was completed on schedule prior to the federal government shutdown, even though the release itself was postponed.

The Business Employment Dynamics series provides job gain and loss data by industry subsector and employer size for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. State-level comparisons show that while the Virgin Islands experienced higher job loss rates than the national average in the first quarter of 2025, job gains remained broadly in line with national trends.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the Business Employment Dynamics data for the second quarter of 2025 are scheduled for release on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 10 a.m. Eastern Time.