

**Jobless Claims In Latest Week Top Expectation**

U.S. jobless claims rebounded last week to their highest level since February, painting a blurry picture of the labor market after a strong jobs report in March.

The number of people who filed for unemployment benefits was 219,000 in the week through April 4, up 16,000 from the previous week's upwardly revised level of 203,000, the Labor Department said Thursday.

Economists surveyed by The Wall Street Journal were expecting to see 210,000 new claims. Last week's jobless-claims figure was the highest since the week that ended on Feb. 7.

Continuing claims, which scale with the total size of the unemployed population, fell to 1.794 million in the week through March 28, against 1.832 million a week earlier. That marked the lowest level for insured unemployment since May 2024, the Labor Department said.

Last week, official data showed jobs numbers increasing faster than expectations in March, as unemployment crept down. But job growth has slowed. The U.S. created, on average, 15,000 jobs each month over the past half year, compared with 78,000 added each month in the same period a year prior.

—Ed Frankl

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