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## BAY STATE LOST 16,800 JOBS IN DECEMBER

Massachusetts' unemployment rate soared a full point to 6.9% in December, as the economic meltdown continued to impact the state's professional and financial services industries. The unemployment rate was 5.9% at the end of November, according to the state. Some 16,800 Bay State workers lost their jobs in December, after 22,300 were laid off in November. Nearly half of the state's December job losses were in the professional, scientific and business services category. Financial services employment was off 900 jobs, and the trade, transportation & utilities sector lost 3,400 jobs. The state's unemployment rate is below the national unemployment rate of 7.2%.

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