

JOBS PROSPECTS LOOKING BETTER IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY



The odds are good that unless you live the state of California you probably do not know a lot about the San Joaquin Valley, and you probably do not know that they have an unemployment rate that is well over the national average. As a matter of fact some experts estimate that it is more than double the U.S. average of joblessness. That is, bad news for anyone who has to live, or more accurately work, in the San Joaquin Valley, but things may be getting better for them. While the unemployment rate is still high the number of mass layoffs have been going down for some time now, since about 2009. Some of you will, undoubtedly remember what a mass layoff is, but for those of you who do know remember here is the **official definition**: "...mass layoff actions that result in workers being separated from their jobs. Monthly mass layoff numbers are from establishments which have at least 50 initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI) filed against them during a 5-week period. Extended mass layoff numbers (issued quarterly) are from a subset of such establishments—where private sector nonfarm employers indicate that 50 or more workers were separated from their jobs for at least 31 days." The mass layoffs have tapered off, but not stopped completely, according to the official data. The mass layoffs were down to about 150, which is a solid number when you compare it to the 400-plus actions in 2009. That having been said the number of new jobs added are still smaller than the overall job cuts, meaning that there are a significant number of people who are out of a job, and have been looking for a significant amount of time. For those of you who are curious, or confused, San Joaquin Valley is not the iconic Silicon Valley that is home to many of the largest technology companies in the nation. The area is, in fact, heavy in manufacturing jobs. So the news of slowed decline, and a very modest growth is actually in line with the overall manufacturing jobs data released for the nation. For those of you who missed our earlier report on that data [here in an excerpt](#): "It looks like the economic outlook for 2012 may be better than the last couple of years have been. Some of the good news that was released in the last couple of weeks includes:

- A lower number of people were seeking unemployment benefits. According to data released by the Labor Department on Thursday, the numbers are near the lowest in the last four years, with only 352,000 applications.
 - A drop in the four-week average, of numbers of people seeking unemployment insurance.
 - The amount of manufacturing jobs in the Northeast have gone up significantly, according to survey's that have been put out by the Federal Reserve banks of New York and Philadelphia. This is part of a larger, but less pronounced change all over the nation in December of this year.
 - The recent rapid rise in inflation seems to have peaked, at least for the time being."
- So who knows, maybe the situation for the workers in the valley will change soon.