

CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT HIGHEST SINCE 1941



California's unemployment rate skyrocketed to 11.2% in March, the highest since before World War II. The national rate was 8.5%. The Employment Development Department says 2.1 million Californians are out of work. The state lost 62,100 jobs in March; and 637,400 jobs since March 2008. Experts say the unusually high rate is related to the state's dependence on the crumbling housing market. The unemployment rate is expected to peak at 12% before it begins to decline in 2010. Unemployment is believed to have hit 25% in California during the Great Depression; the highest recorded figure is 14.7% in October 1940. Roberts said unemployment is estimated to have been as high as 25 percent during the Great Depression. The highest reliable figure in state archives is the 14.7 percent rate in October 1940.

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