

# Jefferson County Head Start Community Assessment Update

May 20, 2020

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of a Head Start Community Assessment is to “design a program that meets the community needs and builds on strengths and resources.” (Head Start Program Performance Standards 1302.11”). The Performance Standards state that a Head Start/Early Head Start agency must conduct a Community Assessment within its service area once every five years and further conduct a yearly review to determine whether there have been significant changes in the information/data that must be reconsidered.

In 2018, Jefferson County Head Start (JCHS) completed a full community assessment. This May 2020 Community Assessment Update will primarily reference the most significant change to our community ever seen, the global pandemic, COVID-19.

Before JCHS shut down both the Arvada and Wheat Ridge school site on March 16, 2020 due to the pandemic outbreak, monitoring of Jefferson County community needs identified two primarily issues that stood out as a common need in our community; housing and transportation.

A lack of affordable housing continues to be a challenge to families within Jefferson County and those enrolled in JCHS. Bussing for families to JCHS, suspended for the last 3 years, began to be of interest again as families and community elementary schools asked what partnerships could be created to meet the needs of those without consistent transportation to bring their child(ren) to JCHS. A growing community collaboration between JCHS and three elementary schools located close to the Arvada Head Start site was developing and school principals were eager to partner with JCHS concerning bussing eligible siblings of school age enrolled children.

Plans were in progress to partner with these local elementary schools to use vans to pick up any siblings of children attending one of these schools so they could attend JCHS. To date, JCHS is watching the status of the COVID-19 outbreak to determine the safety of future bussing possibilities.

Because of the pervasive impact to families from the COVID-19 outbreak, this community assessment will focus on the current economic situation in Jefferson County as reported on May 14, 2020 by the Jefferson County Colorado Business and Work Force Center.

JCHS will continue to monitor the impact on local communities that are normally served by the program; in particular, census data, TANF numbers pulled from Jefferson County Human Services, school district data related to low income families and the state of community stakeholders that have been of support to enrolled families.

The following information is important to note as we attend to the community impact of this pandemic:

## Jefferson County Business and Work Force Center:

### Key Findings

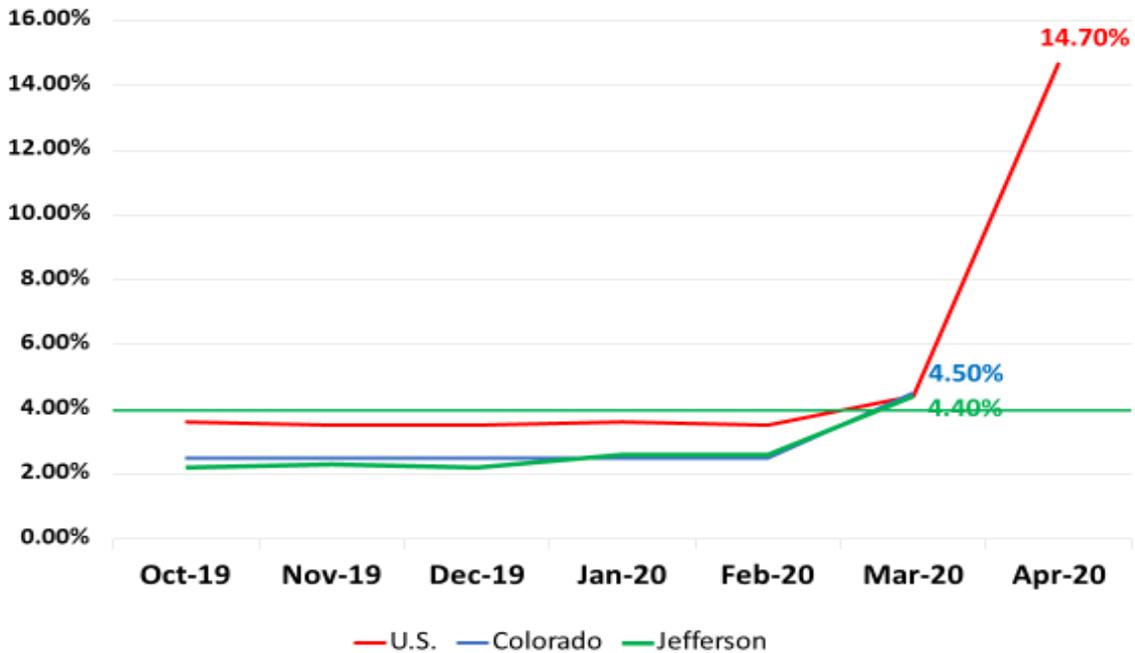
5/14/2020

The COVID-19 pandemic started to have an impact on employment, labor, and the workforce in Jefferson County, Colorado starting in January 2020.

Data analysis on this topic is difficult due to the following: Most data is not available in real-time. The situations regarding economic, employment, labor, and workforce factors are changing rapidly and there are no historical references for the current situation.

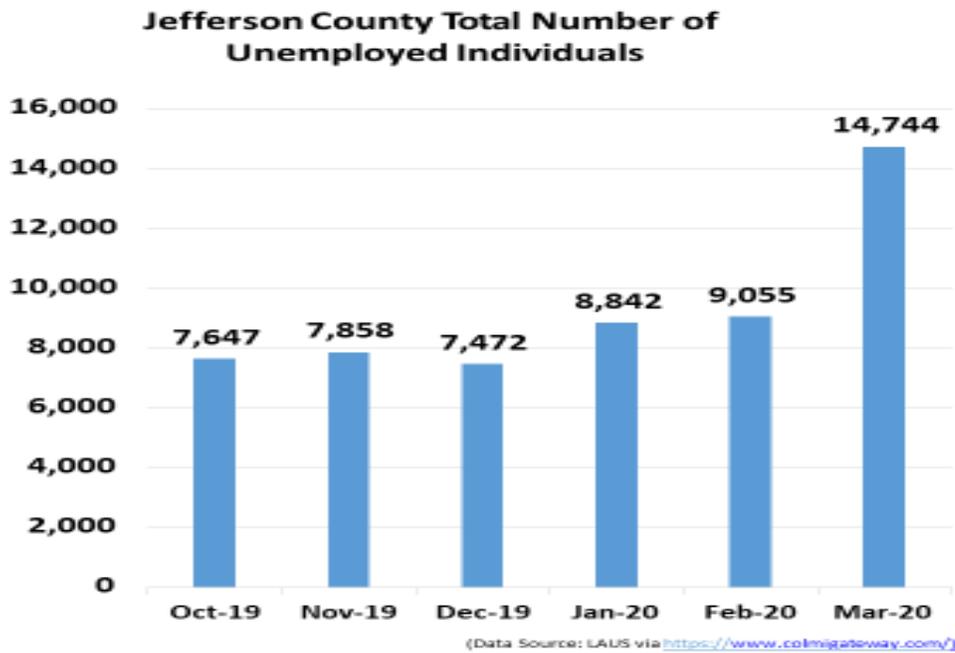
### **Graph 1: Unemployment Rate, United States, Colorado, Jefferson County**

## Unemployment Rate



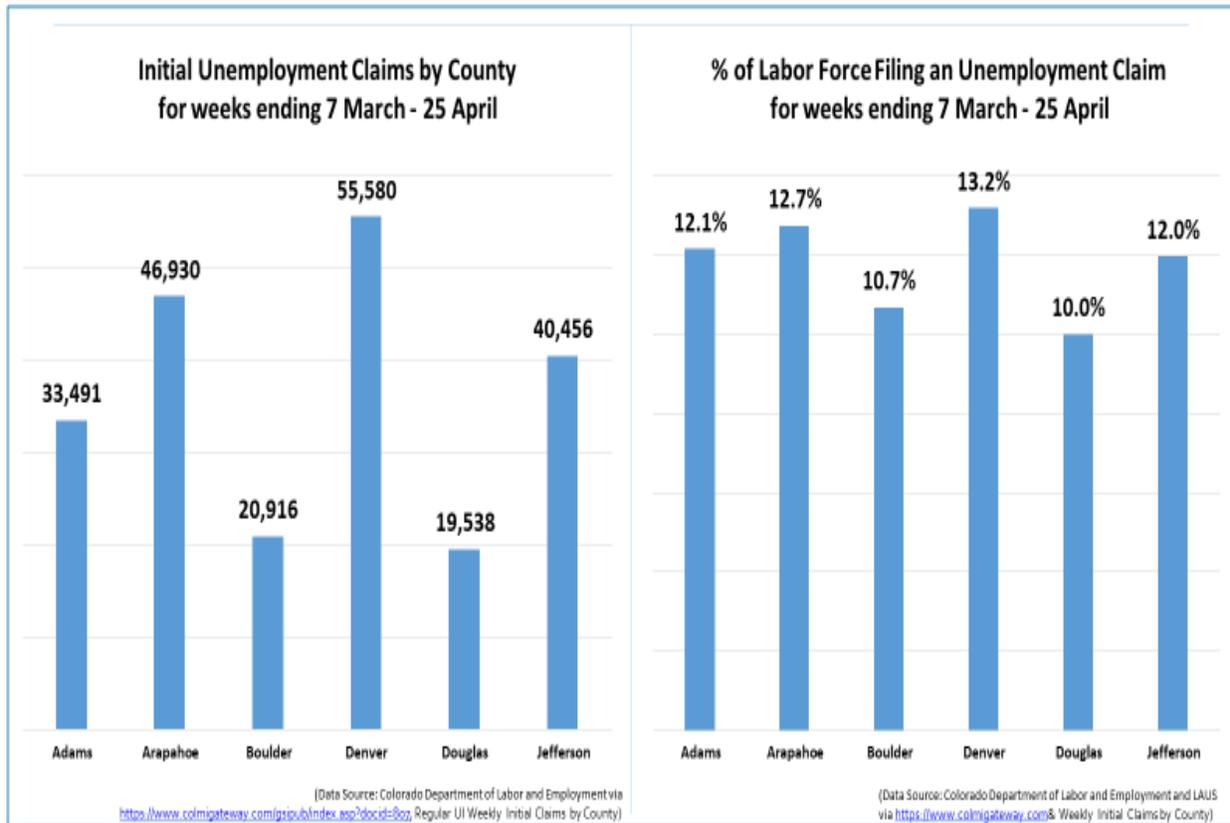
The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted unemployment across the United States. In Jefferson County, the unemployment rate increased from 2.6% in February to 4.4% in March. The official unemployment rate for Jefferson County in April is currently not known, but it is expected to trend similarly to the U.S. unemployment rate of 14.7%, give or take a few percentage points.

### Table 1: Jefferson County Total Number of Unemployed Individuals



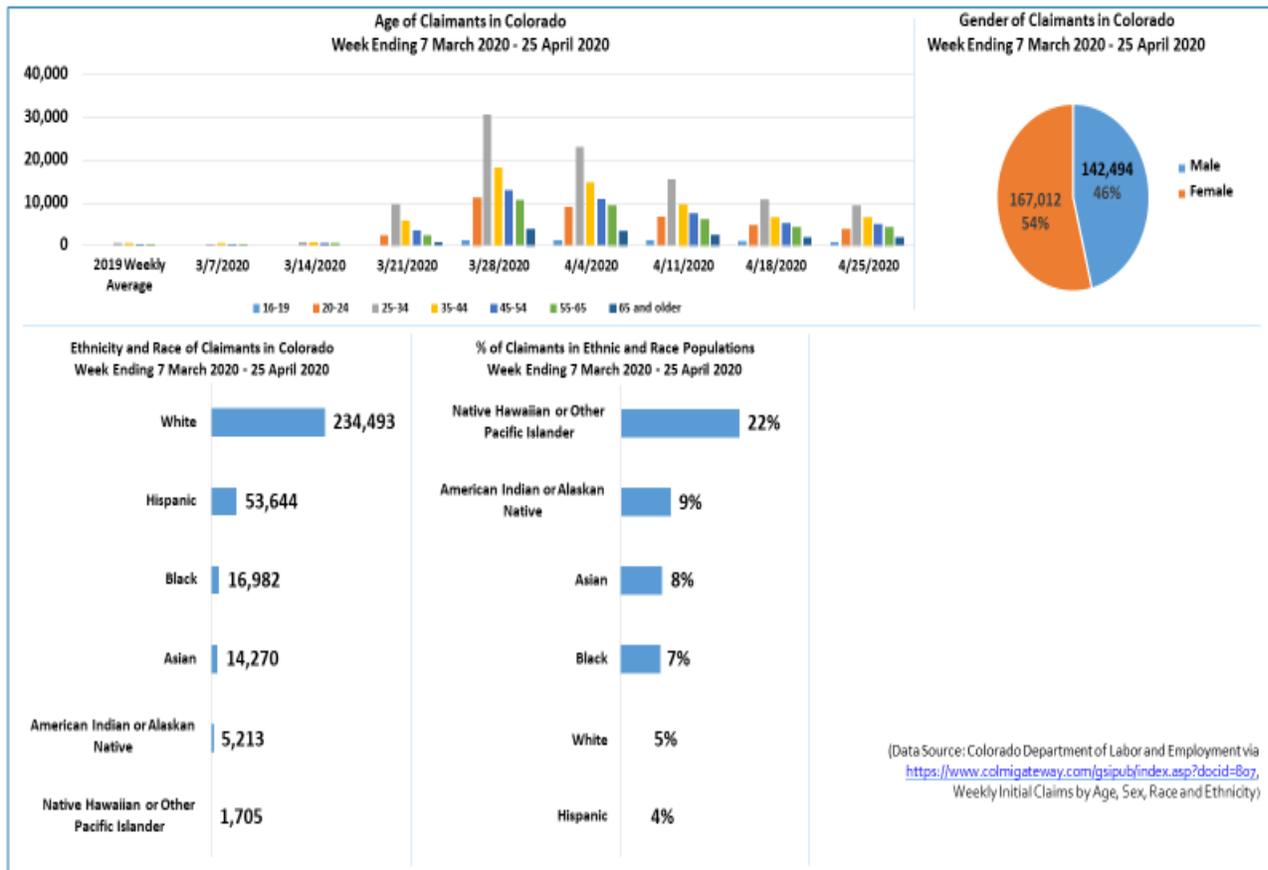
The total number of unemployed individuals in Jefferson County and Colorado increased significantly in March. The expectation is that the number will increase significantly for April as well, but those numbers have not been released. The current prediction for Jefferson County is that there were over 30,000 individuals unemployed in April, and perhaps as many as 40,000 now.

Table 2: Unemployment Claims by Counties in Denver Metro Area



12.0% of Jefferson County’s civilian labor force filed an initial unemployment claim from 1 March – 25 April, and other local counties have experienced similar trends. The number of claims in Jefferson County from 1 March - 25 April (40,456) is now much higher than the reported number of individuals unemployed in March (14,744).

**Graph 2: Age of Claimants in Colorado**



The number of initial UI claims submitted in the state of Colorado show that the loss of jobs has impacted women and minorities at higher rates. 54% of the claimants in Colorado since 1 March have been women. A higher percentage of all racial and ethnic groups, except for those who identify as Hispanic, filed claims more often than those who identify as white.

Table 3: Aspiring Occupations

Aspiring Occupations (Employment Services Registrants)

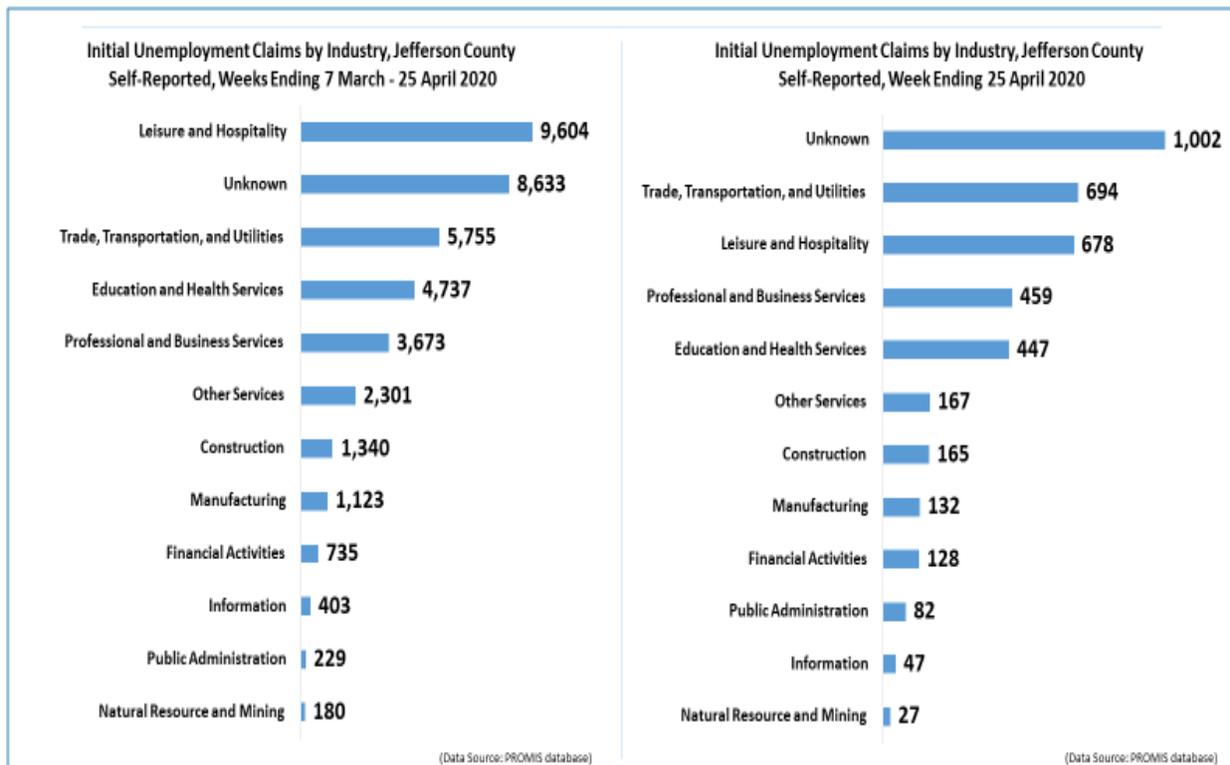
Sales Representatives	340
Waiters and Waitresses	255
Retail Salespersons	242
Bartenders	231
Cashiers	196
Sales Managers	162
Customer Service Representativ	157
Cooks	157
Managers	134
Hairdressers	131
Office and Administrative Supp	120
Sales and Related Workers	117
General and Operations Manager	115
Food Service Managers	88
Marketing Managers	85
Healthcare Support Workers	85
Chefs and Head Cooks	79
First-Line Supervisors/Manager	77
Business Operations Specialist	76
Accountants	75
Receptionists and Information	70
Registered Nurses	64
Graphic Designers	62
Bookkeeping	61
Hosts and Hostesses	59
Office Clerks	57
Dental Hygienists	52

Data Source: Connecting Colorado

This list of primary aspiring occupations indicated by Tri-County Employment Service registrants from 15 March 2020 – 25 April 2020 shows sales-related and service occupations (especially in food and beverage) at the top of the list.

While these do not directly indicate the occupation the registrant was laid off from, it is a good approximation, as this is the occupation the participant indicated through previous experience and skills as the occupation most likely to be their occupation of re-employment.

**Graph 3: Initial Unemployment Claims by Industry in Jefferson County**



The impact on unemployment, by industry, from 1 March – 25 April 2020, is self-reported by individuals when they complete a UI claim. Leisure and Hospitality, Trade and Transportation, and Education and Health Services are cited most often as the occupation of dislocation.

### **Total estimated low-income jobs lost**

Jefferson County Co 17718 total jobs lost.

The Urban Institute uses US Bureau of Labor Statistics data to track the loss of low-income jobs at the state, county, MSA, and census tract levels, to provide insight as to where recovery efforts might be best focused.

Most low wage job losses have occurred in the Accommodation and Food Service, Retail, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation occupations. This data was last updated on 8 May 2020.

## **Conclusions from the Jefferson County Business and Work Force Center Data Analysis**

### **Report:**

#### **Negatives**

- Unemployment: it continues to rise (could go 20% or higher) and likely includes ~40,000 individuals in the county (with only 15,245 job postings, the years-long talent deficit in the county is officially over).
- Inequality: women, racial minorities, and low-income individuals have been most negatively impacted.
- Job Postings: 40% reduction in job postings since 21 January.
- Industry: Job losses and reduced hiring has the greatest impact in Leisure, Hospitality, Customer Service, Trade, Transportation, Education, Accommodation, Food Service, Retail, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation.
- Economic Vulnerability: According to the Chmura COVID-19 Economic Vulnerability Index, Jefferson County is economically more vulnerable than the average U.S. county, with a ranking of 539 out of 3,141 among all counties for economic vulnerability (due to the types of occupations and industries in the county).

#### **Positives**

- New Unemployment: The number of new initial UI claims are starting to decrease (even with the recent addition of PUA claims), indicating that people are not becoming unemployed at the same rate as they were during the earlier stages of the pandemic.
  - Weekly UI payment amounts are starting to level off, indicating that some people are becoming re-employed.
  - New ES registrations are declining.
- Job Postings: The decline in the number of job postings is levelling off.
- Industry: The most resilient jobs, and best opportunities for re-employment include the Sciences, Communications, Media, Networking, Management/Leadership, Nursing, Psychology, Public Administration, and Finance.

In conclusion, JCHS will need to maintain close monitoring of the Jefferson County communities typically served. Responses to potential changes in programming and communication with families within local communities will also need to be amended as situations warrant. Stimulus dollars are set to end in July for most families and the possibility of jobs with adequate pay is questionable.

To date, fall classroom sizes and family services are not known and CDC guidelines remain clear about social distancing and expected future COVID-19 outbreaks. JCHS is working to be proactive in the need to maintain virus free and low risk buildings by installing touchless faucets, paper towel holders, soap dispensers and toilets. The Health and Safety Specialist has been identified as the program COVID Coordinator and maintains constant communication with the local Jefferson County Health Department.

The Office of Head Start continues to display flexibility in expectations concerning the use of CARES dollars. The needs of the families, identified by parent questionnaires, staff surveys, newly release data such as the aforementioned Jefferson County Business and Work Force Center Data Analysis, Colorado Kids Count Data and other timely information resources are critical in supporting decision making when reporting to the Policy Council an Board.