Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims for the Three-State Region

For the week ending March 28, initial UI claims repeated their historic rise. In our three-state region, workers filed 727,417 initial claims (SA) – higher than the prior week’s 567,849, when Pennsylvania led all states with record-high claims. Continued claims for the week ending March 21 rose to 270,110 (SA) from the prior week’s 199,281.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims for the U.S.

As more states shut down business activity, initial UI claims surged once more in the nation. For the week ending March 28, workers filed 6,648,307 initial UI claims (SA) – significantly higher than the prior week’s 3,307,089. Continued claims for the week ending March 21 rose to 3,028,990 (SA) from the prior week’s 1,783,952.
ASA Weekly Staffing Index

The ASA Weekly Staffing Index fell to 81.8 for the week ending March 22. On this particular week of the year, the index has only been lower twice – during the Great Recession in 2009 and in its immediate aftermath in 2010.

This index is highly seasonal (see lower chart). To aid visual comparisons, the upper chart depicts 52 weeks for key years. Although the spread between 2019 and 2018 levels became progressively negative throughout the year, that trend might be explained by the hiring challenges posed by an extremely tight labor market. However, the spread widened sharply with the latest reading – 12.2 percent below the same week in 2019.

Sources:

Initial and continued (UI) claims are gathered by individual states and are typically released on Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor.

https://www.dol.gov/ui/data.pdf

The ASA Staffing Index tracks weekly changes in temporary and contract employment and is typically released on Tuesday mornings. The index is generated from a survey of U.S. staffing firms by the American Staffing Association.

https://americanstaffing.net/staffing-research-data/asa-staffing-industry-data/staffing-index/
https://americanstaffing.net/staffing-research-data/asa-data-dashboard/asa-staffing-index