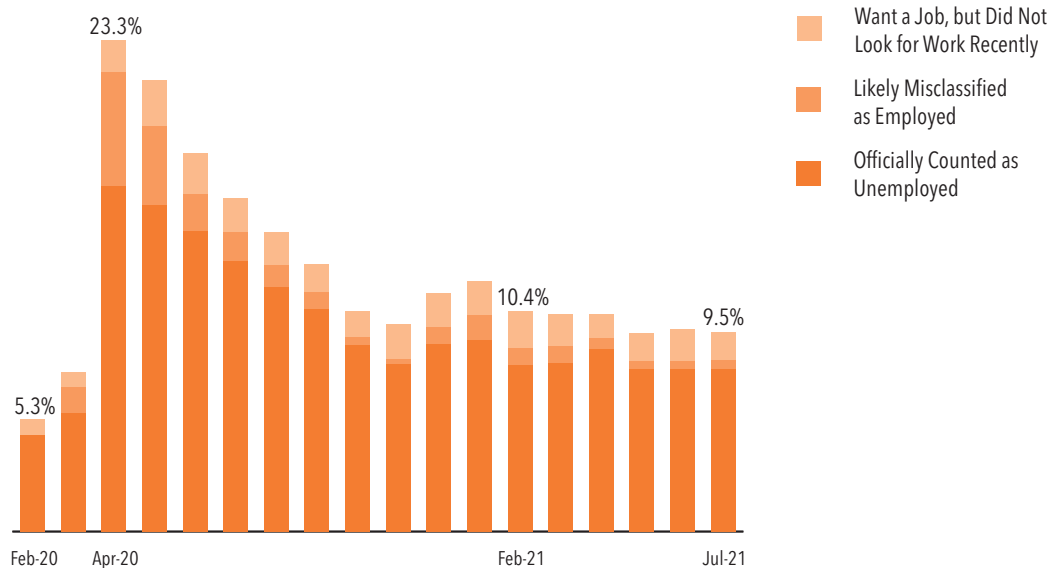




AUGUST 2021 | BY ALISSA ANDERSON

Unemployment Among Californians Has Stalled Around 10% for the Past 6 Months

Percentage of Californians in the Labor Force Who Want to Work but Have Yet to Find a Job



Note: People are officially counted as unemployed only if they looked for work in the past four weeks. This analysis counts individuals as unemployed who did not look for work in the past four weeks as long as they reported wanting a job and having looked for work within the past year. Also included are people the Bureau of Labor Statistics believes were likely unemployed but misclassified as employed.
 Source: Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, CPS data processed by Economic Policy Institute

- **Unemployment among Californians has stalled around 10% for six months.** In July 2021, 9.5% of Californians in the labor force wanted to work but had yet to find a job, only slightly down from 10.4% in February 2021. This is based on a more accurate measure than the “official” unemployment rate, which has understated the jobs crisis during the pandemic.
- Federal unemployment benefits are expiring too soon. Although millions of people still need jobs and rising COVID cases make it less safe to return to work, **federal unemployment benefits expire on Labor Day. Around 2 million Californians will lose their benefits entirely**, while nearly 500,000 will have their benefits cut by \$300 per week, making it much harder to meet basic needs.
- Families need additional support. Efforts to connect Californians to CalFresh, rental assistance, and other supports may soften the blow of losing unemployment benefits. But **longer-term reforms are needed, including permanently increasing state benefits** to cover basic living costs.