

Labor Market Analysis

FEBRUARY 2023 JOBS REPORT

# A Look at January's *Trends*



**ASTON CARTER®**

# Labor Market *Analysis*

The economy continued to defy recession outlooks with the addition of a staggering 517,000 total jobs in January, 443,000 of which were in the private sector — more than double compared to last month's job market. Despite recession fears, the number of quits remained largely unchanged, still elevated at 4.1M workers who quit jobs in December and 17%<sup>1</sup> higher than pre-pandemic rates. At 3.4%, the unemployment rate decreased to a 53 year low. Coinciding with low the unemployment rate, 846,000 people were added to labor force, indicating just how tight the current job market remains. Job openings once again broke the 11M mark, while unemployed workers per opening decreased, remaining around two jobs<sup>2</sup> per unemployed worker.

## January's Market Trends at a Glance

**517K**  
Jobs gained

**3.4%**  
Overall  
unemployment  
rate

**0.52**  
Unemployed  
workers per job  
opening

**4.1M**  
Workers quit  
jobs in  
Decemeber

**2%**  
Unemployment  
among degreed  
workers

**62.4%**  
Labor force  
participation  
rate

# Customer Support Market Updates

## Customer Support Demand



12%

Month-over-month



26%

Year-over-year



7%

Pre-Pandemic Change

States that are hiring customer support representatives due to Medicaid redeterminations are likely to turn to remote offerings,<sup>3</sup> which will expand the talent pool to out of state candidates and ease shortages.

Viral AI chatbots have come with a new flood of articles warning of industry displacement or even replacement, though 76%<sup>4</sup> of contact centers already leverage chatbot technologies. Of those centers surveyed, 44% say it replaces some agents and 52% explained they weren't complex enough to replace people or had no effect on their team structure. Other surveys show increased AI is used as an investment in retention and training, as 70%<sup>5</sup> of consumers want improved agents rather than improved self-help options.

## Demand Elevation Analysis

### Largest Skill Sets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

141%	Retail customer service manager
100%	Healthcare customer service representative
94%	Technical customer service representative
88%	Financial services representative
59%	Account representative (general)
51%	Registrar/Patient service representative
42%	Scheduler/Operations coordinator
40%	Automotive customer service representative
25%	Business development specialist
24%	Call center representative

### Top Skill Frequency Increase (Percentage Points)

3.0	Customer relationship management
2.8	Customer support
1.2	Customer complaint resolution
0.7	Financial services
0.6	Invoicing
0.5	Inbound calls
0.5	Billing
0.5	Workflow management
0.4	Bilingual (Spanish/English)
0.0	Salesforce

## Largest Markets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

### Missouri, Illinois 38%

St. Louis

### Kansas 33%

Wichita

### Louisiana 29%

New Orleans, Metairie

### Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana 27%

Cincinnati

### Alabama 25%

Birmingham, Hoover

### Florida 18%

Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater

### Utah 17%

Provo, Orem

### Florida 15%

Orlando, Kissimmee, Sanford

### Florida 13%

Jacksonville

### Georgia 5%

Atlanta, Sandy Springs, Alpharetta

# Accounting and Finance Market Updates

## Accounting and Finance Demand



10%

Month-over-month



18%

Year-over-year



4%

Pre-Pandemic Change

Despite strong job growth, banks are preparing for at least a mild recession this year, with some eliminating 5%<sup>6</sup> of their investment-banking division amid dealmaking uncertainty as others prepare for layoffs.

With more than 300K accountants and auditors having quit in the past two years, a growing number of firms have started seeking alternatives to certified public accountants (CPAs) — a shortage that many leaders are viewing as one of the largest hurdles for 2023. Smaller accounting firms unable to compete nationally have even started turning to international outsourcing<sup>7</sup> as we enter tax season.

## Demand Elevation Analysis

### Largest Skill Sets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

50%	Credit manager
22%	Financial planning manager
22%	Vice president/Director of finance
15%	Strategic planner/Analyst
14%	Tax manager (general)
12%	Revenue manager
10%	Auditor (general)
10%	Investment/Portfolio management
3%	Tax accountant
3%	Internal audit manager

### Top Skill Frequency Increase (Percentage Points)

4.5	Auditing
2.0	Process improvement
1.7	Data analysis
1.4	Investments
1.4	Risk management
1.1	Workflow management
1.1	Automation
0.9	Public accounting
0.9	Generally accepted accounting principles
0.9	Project management

### Largest Markets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

#### Florida 20%

Orlando, Kissimmee, Sanford

#### Missouri, Kansas 17%

Kansas City

#### Ohio 11%

Cleveland, Elyria

#### Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana 9%

Cincinnati

#### Florida 7%

Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater

#### Florida 5%

Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Pompano Beach

#### Missouri, Illinois 4%

St. Louis

#### Connecticut 3%

Hartford, East Hartford, Middletown

#### Nebraska, Iowa 3%

Omaha, Council Bluffs

#### Florida 1%

Jacksonville

# Governance, Risk and Compliance Updates

## Governance, Risk and Compliance Demand



**15%**  
Month-over-month



**13%**  
Year-over-year



**21%**  
Pre-Pandemic Change

The Federal Reserve recently made its first move against a bank involved with Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) related fraud.<sup>8</sup> With nearly 12 million loans — worth about \$800 billion — the pandemic relief program may increase demand for fraud analysts specifically within banks. While the government has acted against individuals in cases dealing with more than eight billion in PPP fraud, this is the first act against a bank itself and may set a new precedent of investigating lender's involvement.

Insurers offering private Medicare plans may be facing increased scrutiny from a new audit targeting billing.<sup>9</sup> Not only will this impact audits moving forward, but it will also look retroactively at audits from 2018 to present-day.

### Demand Elevation Analysis

#### Largest Skill Sets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

<b>91%</b>	Banking branch manager (General)
<b>51%</b>	Fraud examiner/analyst
<b>23%</b>	Business analyst (general)
<b>23%</b>	Project manager (General)
<b>22%</b>	Financial analyst (General)
<b>21%</b>	Client service representative/associate
<b>18%</b>	Investment/Portfolio analyst
<b>16%</b>	Business/Management consultant
<b>6%</b>	Financial examiner
<b>4%</b>	Internal auditor

#### Top Skill Frequency Increase (Percentage Points)

<b>7.3</b>	Risk appetite
<b>4.4</b>	Regulatory compliance
<b>3.1</b>	Internal auditing
<b>1.6</b>	Finance
<b>0.9</b>	Internal controls
<b>0.9</b>	Financial services
<b>0.7</b>	Accounting
<b>0.5</b>	Auditing
<b>0.5</b>	Risk analysis
<b>0.2</b>	Risk management

#### Largest Markets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

##### Florida 72%

Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater

##### Florida 69%

Jacksonville

##### Ohio 59%

Columbus

##### New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania 50%

New York, Newark, Jersey City

##### Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin 37%

Chicago, Naperville, Elgin

##### Massachusetts, New Hampshire 18%

Boston, Cambridge, Newton

##### Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland 10%

Philadelphia, Camden, Wilmington

##### California 2%

Los Angeles, Long Beach, Anaheim

##### Pennsylvania 2%

Pittsburgh

##### Georgia 1%

Atlanta, Sandy Springs, Alpharetta

# Operations and Administrative Market Updates

## Operations and Administrative Demand



9%

Month-over-month



14%

Year-over-year



6%

Pre-Pandemic Change

Compensation and benefits will continue to be a driving force as human resource roles shift to retention strategies. Of those surveyed, 64% of employees listed “pay and benefits” as a critical factor in taking a new job. Despite uncertainty, 70%<sup>10</sup> of all large employers are planning for benefit enhancements in 2023. Growing trends of pay transparency<sup>11</sup> in California, New York, Illinois and Washington are expected to create an influx of pay equity related litigation.

Current human resources priorities are focused on learning and development tools, people analytics and performance management, yet about 84%<sup>12</sup> said they wouldn’t have the budget to fund those improvements.

### Demand Elevation Analysis

#### Largest Skill Sets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

50%	Medical secretary
48%	Secretary
35%	Dispatcher
30%	Human resources generalist
29%	Human resources manager
22%	Scheduler/Operations coordinator
15%	Office manager (general)
12%	Receptionist
10%	Human resources specialist
1%	Communications/Public relations specialist

#### Top Skill Frequency Increase (Percentage Points)

1.5	Merchandising
0.9	Inventory management
0.8	Workflow management
0.6	Medical records
0.5	Quality improvement
0.5	Procurement
0.5	Inventory control
0.5	Supply chain
0.4	Setting appointments
0.4	Administrative support

#### Largest Markets Above Pre-Pandemic Levels

##### Florida 29%

Orlando, Kissimmee, Sanford

##### Missouri, Illinois 24%

St. Louis

##### Missouri, Kansas 22%

Kansas City

##### Georgia 9%

Atlanta, Sandy Springs, Alpharetta

##### Florida 8%

Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater

##### Texas 7%

Houston, The Woodlands, Sugar Land

##### Florida 7%

Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Pompano Beach

##### Texas 6%

Austin, Round Rock, Georgetown

##### Massachusetts, New Hampshire 4%

Boston, Cambridge, Newton

##### Michigan 1%

Detroit, Warren, Dearborn

## Unemployment Analysis

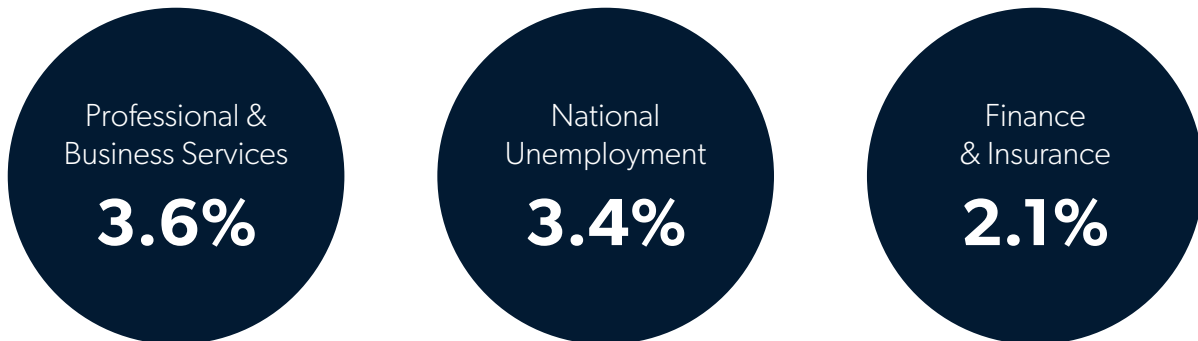
Across the professional services landscape, low unemployment within accounting and finance (business and financial), as well as average unemployment rates within the customer support and operations and administrative spaces, continues. With the ever-tightening labor market driving competition for skilled talent — especially for customer support and operations and administrative roles — hiring within these spaces will remain competitive across many industries.

## Unemployment by Labor Category

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



## Unemployment by Industry



## Highest Unemployment Markets

**California 6.2%**

Fresno

**Nevada 5.5%**

Las Vegas, Henderson, Paradise

**Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin 4.3%**

Chicago, Naperville, Elgin

**Ohio 4.2%**

Cleveland, Elyria

**Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas 4.1%**

Memphis

**California 4.0%**

Los Angeles, Long Beach, Anaheim

**Texas 4.0%**

Houston, The Woodlands, Sugar Land

**North Carolina 4.0%**

Greensboro, High point

**California 3.9%**

Riverside, San Bernardino, Ontario

**Oregon, Washington 3.9%**

Portland, Vancouver, Hillsboro

## Lowest Unemployment Markets

**New York 2.4%**

Albany, Schenectady, Troy

**Idaho 2.4%**

Boise City

**Florida 2.4%**

Jacksonville

**Nebraska, Iowa 2.4%**

Omaha, Council Bluffs

**Alabama 2.2%**

Birmingham, Hoover

**California 2.2%**

San Jose, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara

**Florida 2.1%**

Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Pompano Beach

**Minnesota, Wisconsin 2.1%**

Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bloomington

**Utah 2.0%**

Salt Lake City

**Wisconsin 1.9%**

Madison

## Top Unemployment Declines (Percentage Points)

**New Mexico -0.4%**

Albuquerque

**Wisconsin -0.4%**

Milwaukee, Waukesha

**Arizona -0.3%**

Phoenix, Mesa, Chandler, Tucson

**Connecticut -0.3%**

Bridgeport, Stamford, Norwalk

**Ohio -0.3%**

Cleveland, Elyria

**Wisconsin -0.3%**

Madison

**Connecticut -0.2%**

Hartford, East Hartford, Middletown

**Oklahoma -0.2%**

Tulsa

**Rhode Island, Massachusetts -0.2%**

Providence, Warwick





## Conclusion

While financial conditions are improving, massive job growth and historically low layoffs indicate a booming economy which is easing hiring fears. The Federal Reserve is determined to get inflation down to the 2-3% range. While inflation has slowed for a seventh month in a row — currently 6.5%<sup>13</sup> — experts fear strong growth could be inflationary, thereby forcing the Federal Reserve to hike interest rates to a high enough level that could push the US into a recession.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> ["FRED Economic Data"](#), Economic Research.
- <sup>2</sup> ["FRED Economic Data"](#), Economic Research.
- <sup>3</sup> ["The End of Continuous Medicaid Enrollment Is Near. Are States and Their Workers Ready?"](#), Managed Healthcare Executive.
- <sup>4</sup> ["Three Out of Four Contact Centers Leverage Chatbots to Improve Performance, Botco.ai Survey Finds"](#), Martech Series.
- <sup>5</sup> ["Using Simulation Training In Contact Centers To Improve Key Metrics"](#), Forbes.
- <sup>6</sup> ["Truist Cuts 5% of Investment Bankers on Dealmaking Uncertainty"](#), Bloomberg.
- <sup>7</sup> ["Tax Season Is Coming, and These Firms Can't Find Enough Accountants in the U.S."](#), The Wall Street Journal.
- <sup>8</sup> ["Lender Popular Bank Fined Over Bad Covid Relief Loans"](#), The Wall Street Journal.
- <sup>9</sup> ["Private Medicare Plans Face Tough New Audits That Could Cost Billions"](#), The Wall Street Journal.
- <sup>10</sup> ["2023 employee benefits & workplace predictions: This year's must-have benefits"](#), Benefits Pro.
- <sup>11</sup> ["Compensation Is Hitting Its Digital Transformation Moment"](#), Forbes.
- <sup>12</sup> ["5 takeaways from HRE's What's Keeping HR Up at Night? Research"](#), HR Executive.
- <sup>13</sup> ["United States Inflation Rate"](#), Trading Economics.

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## About Aston Carter

Established in 1997, Aston Carter is a workforce solutions company delivering world-class staffing services and innovative offerings to more than 7,000 clients across the globe. Drawing on our deep recruiting expertise and commitment to the talent experience, we extend the capabilities of industry-leading companies by providing skilled professionals and solutions to address today's business challenges. Our expansive global footprint enables us to work with agility and deliver excellence when meeting the evolving needs of our clients and talent community.

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