

# Maryland MSA Unemployment During the Pandemic

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The recent pandemic has caused an immense amount of economic upheaval. Business closures and reduced economic output have led to major layoffs, resulting in a spike of unemployment rates. Fortunately, unemployment rates in Maryland's Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) increased substantially less than the national rate following the onset of the pandemic.

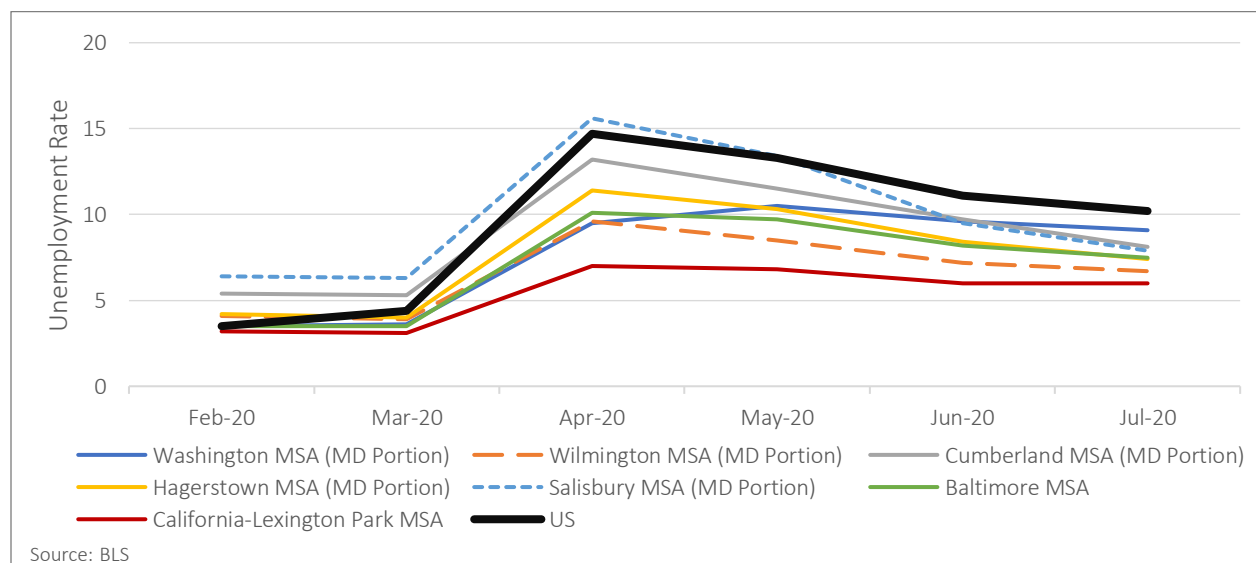
The U.S. unemployment rate increased from 4.4 percent in March 2020 to 14.7 percent in April (Figure 1 and Table 1). Since the April peak, the U.S. unemployment rate declined steadily to 10.2 percent in July as the nation learned to live with the coronavirus.

The unemployment rates for Maryland's MSAs have been lower than the national rate throughout the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> While the unemployment rate for Salisbury MSA did exceed the national rate, this only lasted for April and May. The unemployment rate for every MSA in Maryland was lower than the national rate in June and July. Furthermore, five of the seven MSAs examined had an unemployment rate lower than 8 percent in July, only Maryland's portion of the Washington MSA had an unemployment rate greater than 9 percent.

Among MSAs in Maryland, California-Lexington Park performed the best throughout 2020. The unemployment rate of California-Lexington Park increased from 3.1 percent in March to just 7 percent in April, less than half the national unemployment rate in April. Following the April peak, the unemployment rate in California-Lexington Park declined to 6 percent in July.

While there is a lot of upheaval in the world, the unemployment rates in Maryland have been stable relative to the nation thus far. This stability is likely to result in Maryland MSAs being well-positioned for economic growth as we come out of the pandemic.

**Table 1. Maryland MSA Unemployment**



**Table 2. Maryland MSA Unemployment**

MSA	BLS Series ID	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20
Washington MSA (MD Portion)	LAUID244789400000003	3.6	3.5	3.6	9.5	10.5	9.6	9.1
Wilmington MSA (MD Portion)	LAUID244886400000003	4	4.1	3.9	9.6	8.5	7.2	6.7
Cumberland MSA (MD Portion)	LAUIM241906000000003	5.6	5.4	5.3	13.2	11.5	9.7	8.1
Hagerstown MSA (MD Portion)	LAUIM242518000000003	4	4.2	4	11.4	10.3	8.4	7.4
Salisbury MSA (MD Portion)	LAUIM244154000000003	7.1	6.4	6.3	15.6	13.4	9.5	7.9
Baltimore MSA	LAUMT241258000000003	3.5	3.5	3.5	10.1	9.7	8.2	7.5
California-Lexington Park MSA	LAUMT241568000000003	3.2	3.2	3.1	7	6.8	6	6
US	LNS14000000	3.6	3.5	4.4	14.7	13.3	11.1	10.2

Source: BLS

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<sup>i</sup> MSAs refer only to the MD portion of the Metropolitan Statistical Areas.