

# READY FOR WORK AFTER COVID-19:

## How Can Our Workforce Development Systems Prepare Coloradans for a Post-COVID Economy?

June 17, 2021

**Presented by:**

Laura Ware and Charlie Brennan  
*Colorado Center on Law and Policy*

**Special Comments by:**

Katherine Keegan  
*Office of the Future of Work,  
Department of Labor and Employment*

Clarke Becker  
*Colorado Workforce System Rural Consortium,  
Department of Labor and Employment*

# WELCOME!

- Introduction with Katherine Keegan
- Project Overview
- Comments on Rural Colorado with Clarke Becker
- Colorado Before and During COVID-19
- Opportunities of Interest
- Promising Practices
- Recommendations
- Next Steps

**Feel free to add questions/comments to the Q&A/chat at any time!**

# INTRODUCTION OF PROJECT

**KATHERINE KEEGAN**

Director, Office of the Future of Work



**CO L O R A D O**

Department of  
Labor and Employment

# OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

- Focused on reasons for long-term unemployment and efforts related to unemployment caused and affected by COVID-19
- Significant research into how different training and credential options have been pursued, by which unemployed workers, and in which regions
- Diverse conversations had with policy-makers, legislators, community organizations and impacted Coloradans about potential opportunities being developed
- Groups of unemployed workers impacted by the pandemic were also interviewed

# OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

- Results and recommendations will be presented to stakeholders in June, comments incorporated into final report
- Final report completed by mid-July

# PARTNERS

## ▪ **Colorado Department of Labor and Employment**

- **Office of the Future of Work:** focused on work opportunities and dynamics that will impact Colorado workers of many types
- **Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium:** includes network of 10 workforce sub-areas, representing 51 rural counties across the state
- **Adult Employment Services and Workforce Areas:** oversees workforce programs, including Rural Consortium and 8 additional workforce areas

## ▪ **Skills 2 Compete Coalition**

- Colorado branch of National Skills Coalition; diverse membership ultimately advocates for skills training of all types needed by adults
- **Support Services Committee:** comprised of organizations, agencies, advocates, and interested citizens who are concerned about supportive services that lead to achievement of vocational goals

# REGIONS

## NORTHWEST

Population 25 to 54: **40.8%**  
 Share Non-White: **12.1%**  
 Share HS or Less: **33.6%**  
 Limited English HHs: **1.2%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **65.1%**

## RURAL RESORT

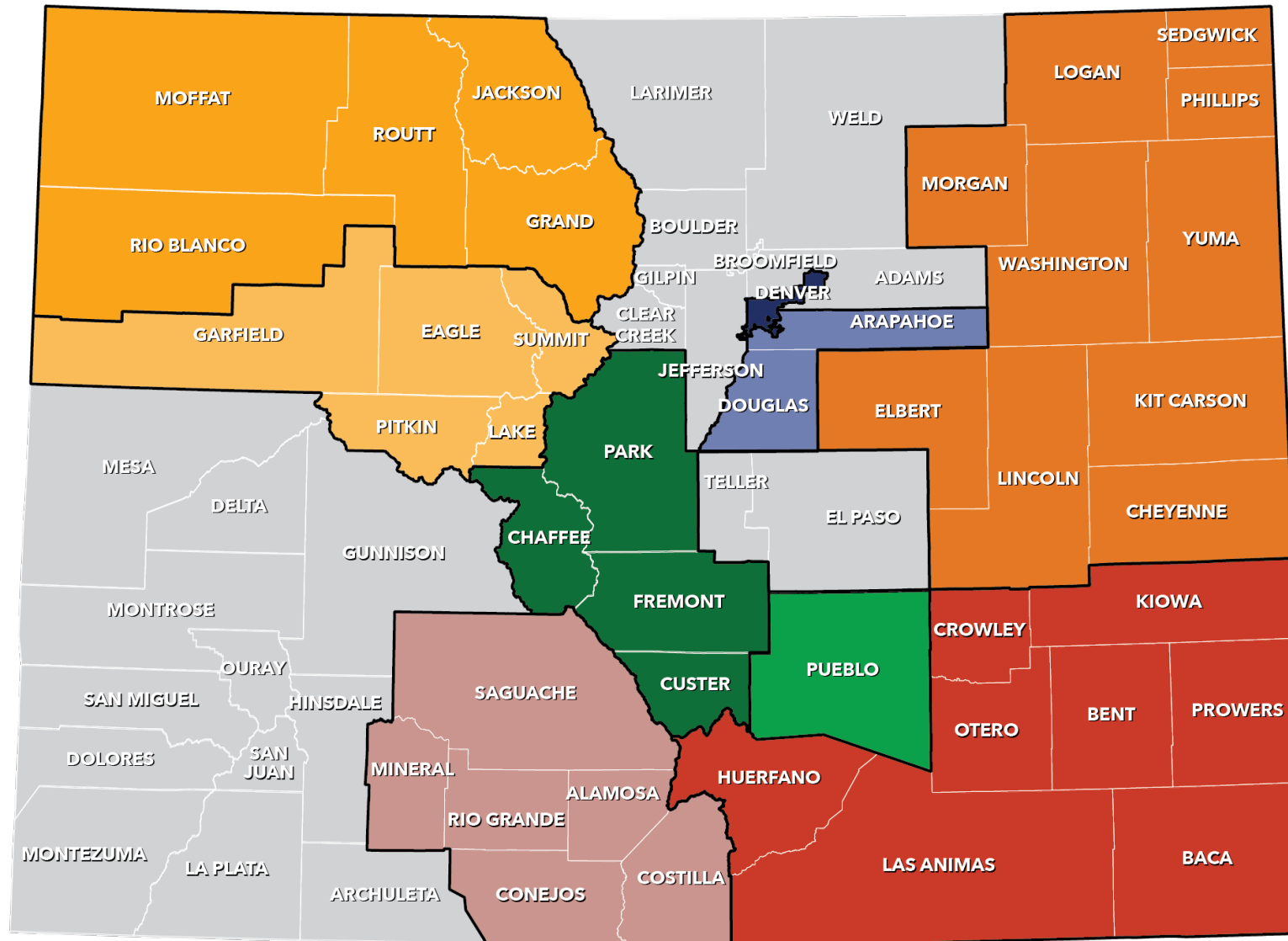
Population 25 to 54: **45.0%**  
 Share Non-White: **24.1%**  
 Share HS or Less: **32.3%**  
 Limited English HHs: **5.0%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **63.0%**

## UPPER ARKANSAS

Population 25 to 54: **38.8%**  
 Share Non-White: **17.1%**  
 Share HS or Less: **43.7%**  
 Limited English HHs: **0.5%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **58.2%**

## PUEBLO

Population 25 to 54: **36.7%**  
 Share Non-White: **44.8%**  
 Share HS or Less: **38.3%**  
 Limited English HHs: **1.3%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **62.1%**



## EASTERN

Population 25 to 54: **37.0%**  
 Share Non-White: **22.9%**  
 Share HS or Less: **42.8%**  
 Limited English HHs: **2.9%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **56.5%**

## DENVER

Population 25 to 54: **50.5%**  
 Share Non-White: **41.5%**  
 Share HS or Less: **27.5%**  
 Limited English HHs: **4.6%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **74.7%**

## ARAPAHOE/DOUGLAS

Population 25 to 54: **42.7%**  
 Share Non-White: **29.7%**  
 Share HS or Less: **22.7%**  
 Limited English HHs: **3.2%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **82.2%**

## SOUTH-CENTRAL

Population 25 to 54: **33.4%**  
 Share Non-White: **49.0%**  
 Share HS or Less: **42.9%**  
 Limited English HHs: **5.8%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **44.4%**

## SOUTHEAST

Population 25 to 54: **34.8%**  
 Share Non-White: **38.6%**  
 Share HS or Less: **45.9%**  
 Limited English HHs: **2.7%**  
 HHs With Broadband: **47.6%**

# COMMENTS ON RURAL COLORADO

**CLARKE BECKER**

Director, Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium



**COLORADO**

Department of  
Labor and Employment



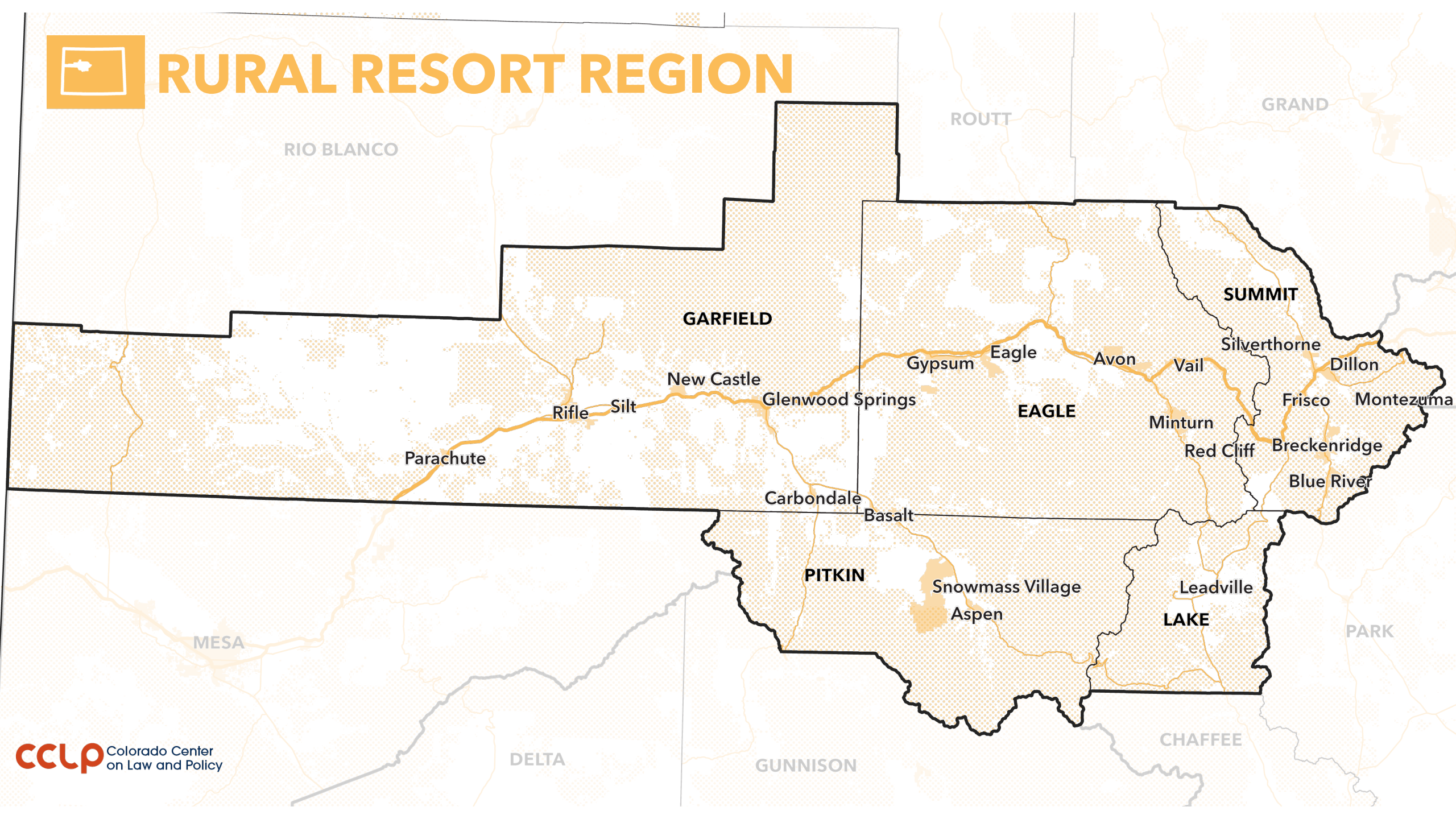
# **COLORADO BEFORE & DURING COVID-19**

## **A Look at Two Regions:**

- **Rural Resort Region**
  - Highest rate of unemployment in April 2020
- **Eastern Region**
  - Lowest rate of unemployment in April 2020



# RURAL RESORT REGION





# RURAL RESORT REGION: 2019

## Workforce Demographics

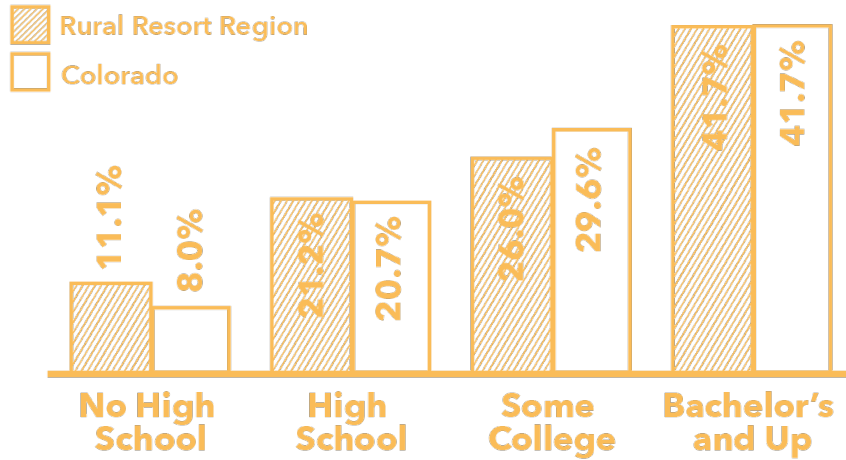
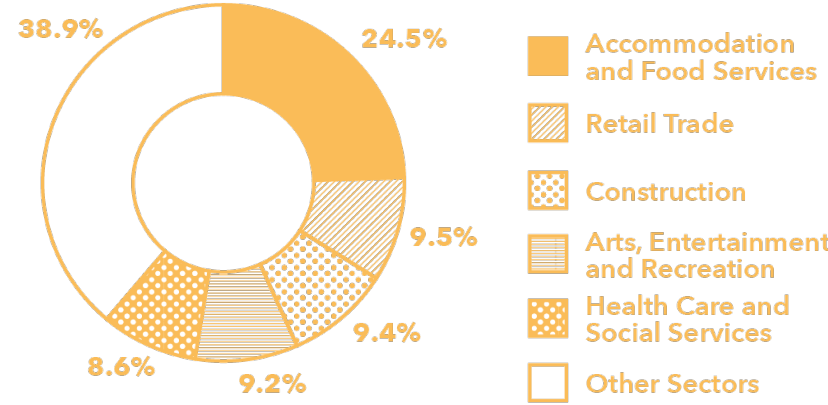


**45.0%**  
Population  
25 to 54 years old

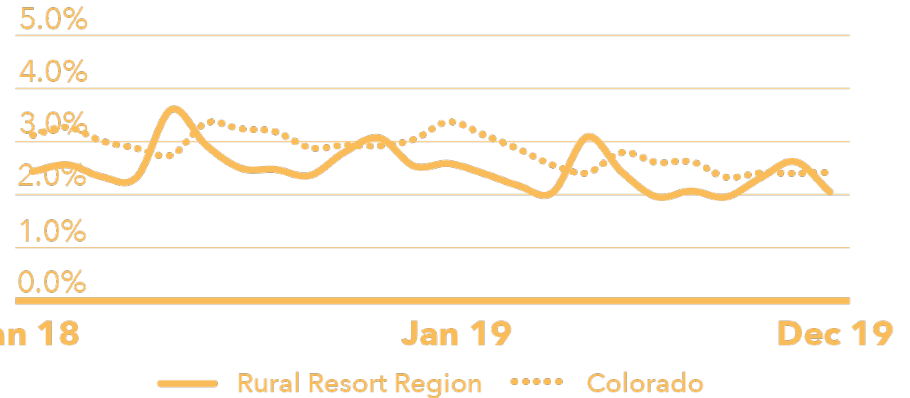


**76.2%**  
Labor Force  
Participation Rate

## Employment by Sector



## Unemployment Rate



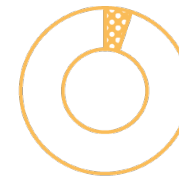
## Literacy and Numeracy



**49.4%**  
Share of adults not proficient  
at working with information  
and ideas in text



**60.1%**  
Share of adults not proficient  
at working with mathematical  
information and ideas

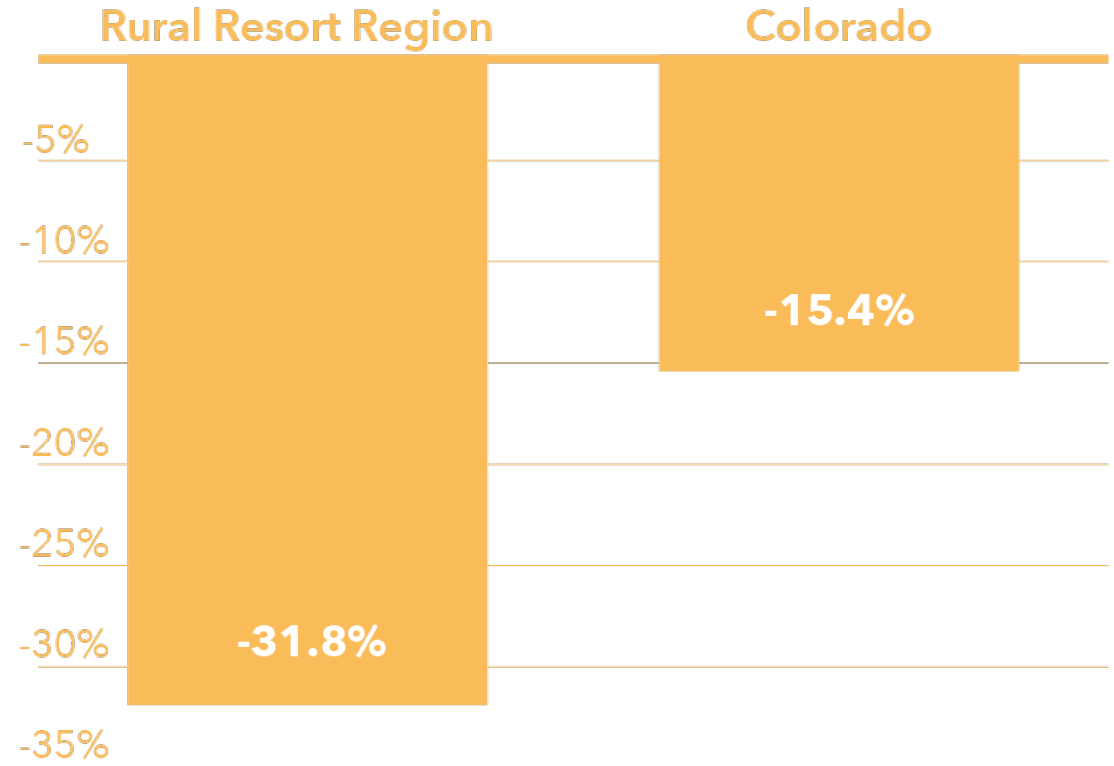
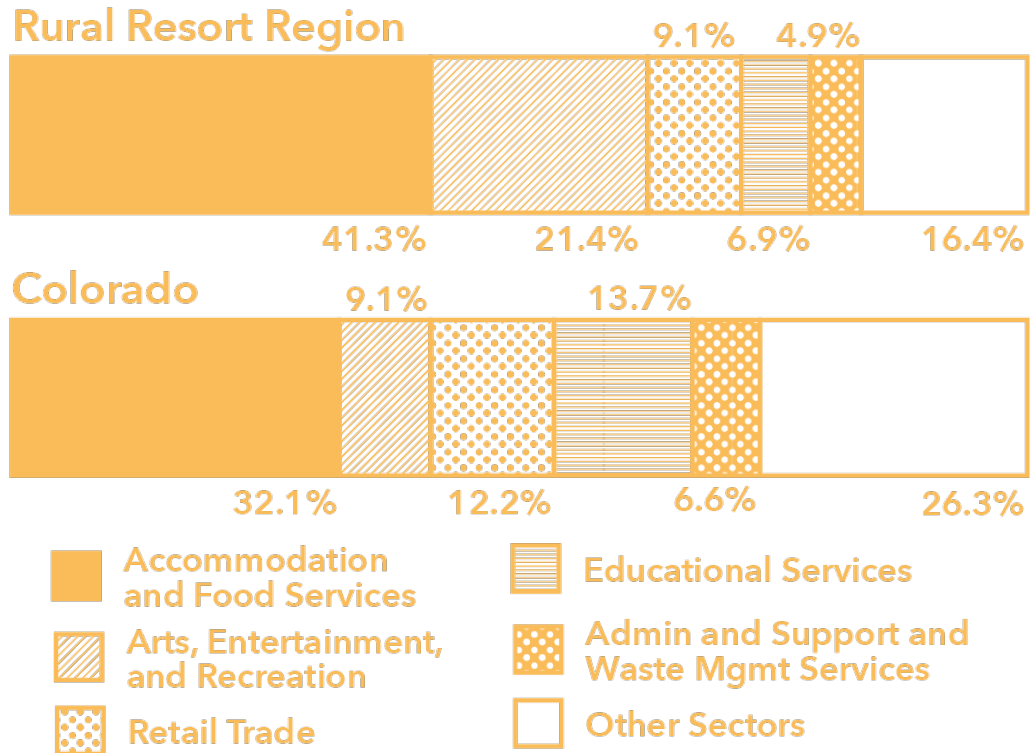


**5.0%**  
Households with  
limited English  
language proficiency



# RURAL RESORT REGION: 2020

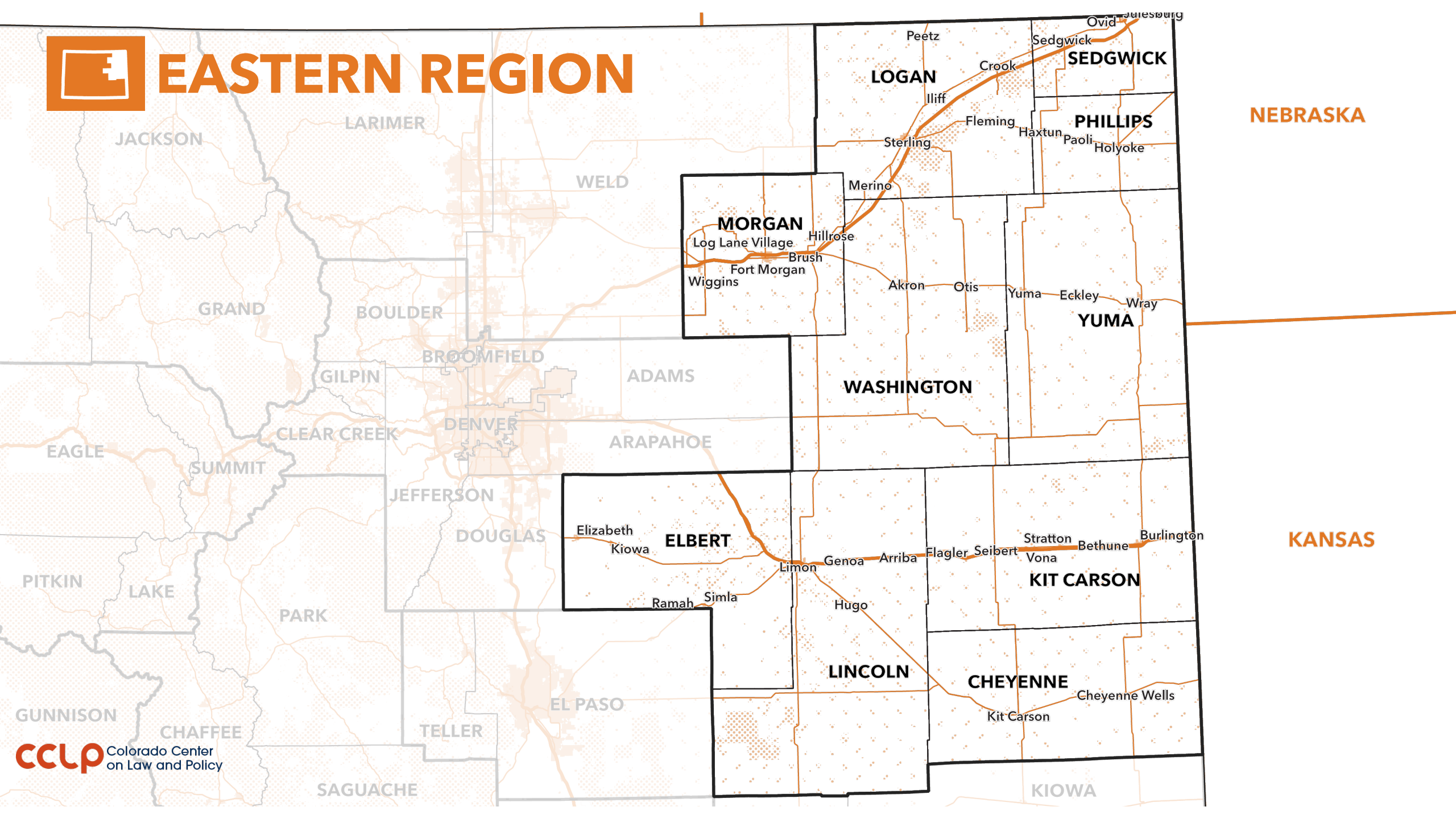
## Jobs Lost by Sector, Q1 to Q2 2020



**February 2020 Unemployment: 2.3%**  
**April 2020 Unemployment: 20.7%**



# EASTERN REGION



NEBRASKA

KANSAS



# EASTERN REGION: 2019

## Workforce Demographics

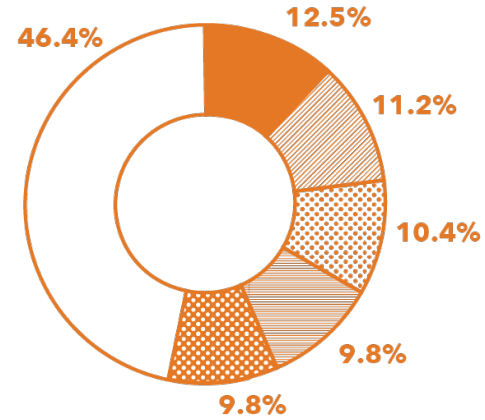


**37.0%**  
Population  
25 to 54 years old

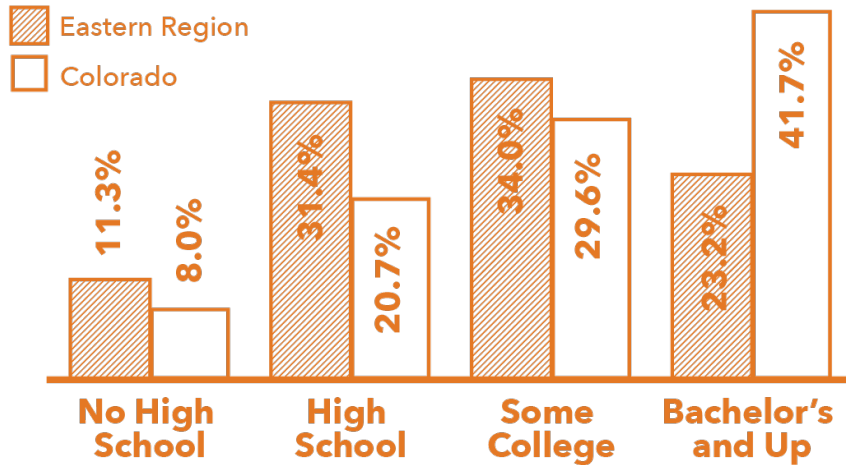


**63.2%**  
Labor Force  
Participation Rate

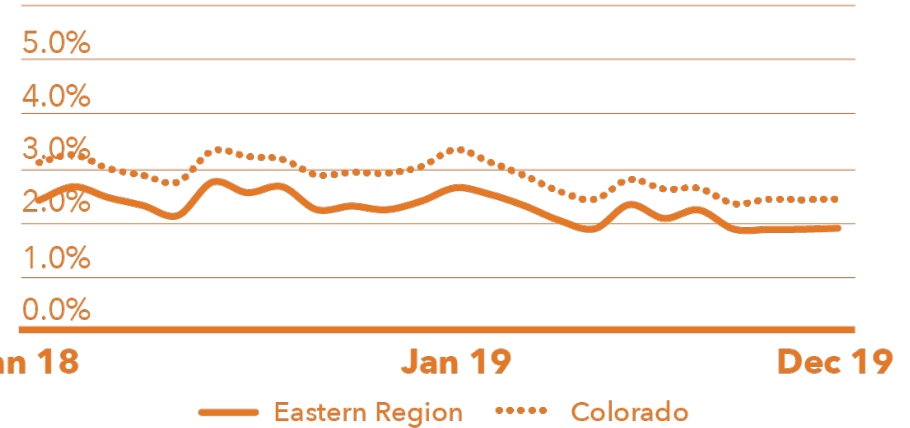
## Employment by Sector



- Manufacturing
- Educational Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Government
- Retail Trade
- All Others



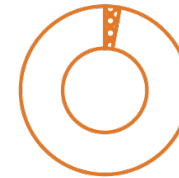
## Unemployment Rate



**56.5%**  
Share of adults not proficient  
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**66.4%**  
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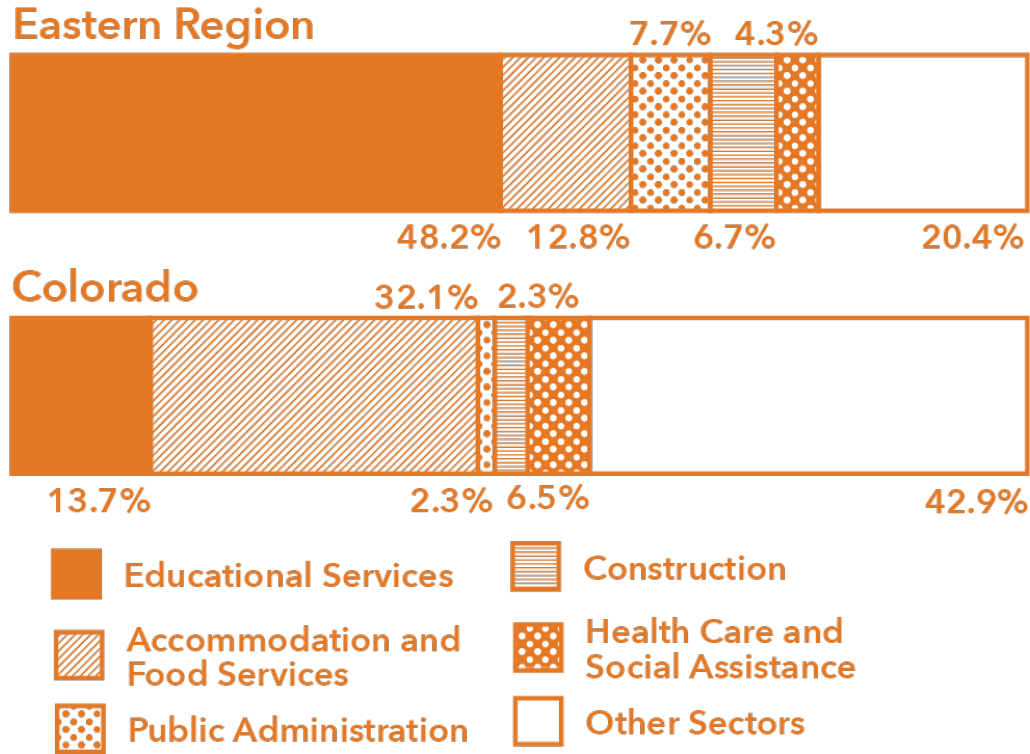


**2.9%**  
Households with  
limited English  
language proficiency

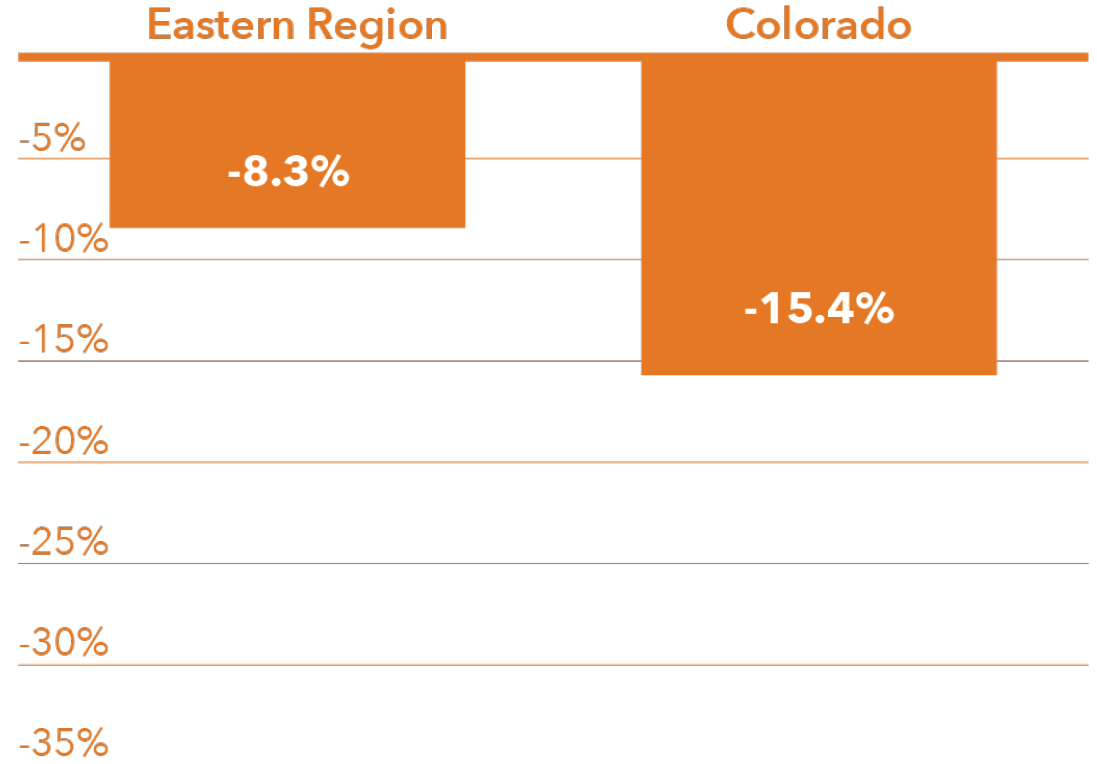


# EASTERN REGION: 2020

### Jobs Lost by Sector, Q1 to Q2 2020



### Decline in Employment Feb 2020 to Apr 2020



**February 2020 Unemployment: 2.4%**  
**April 2020 Unemployment: 5.7%**

# WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

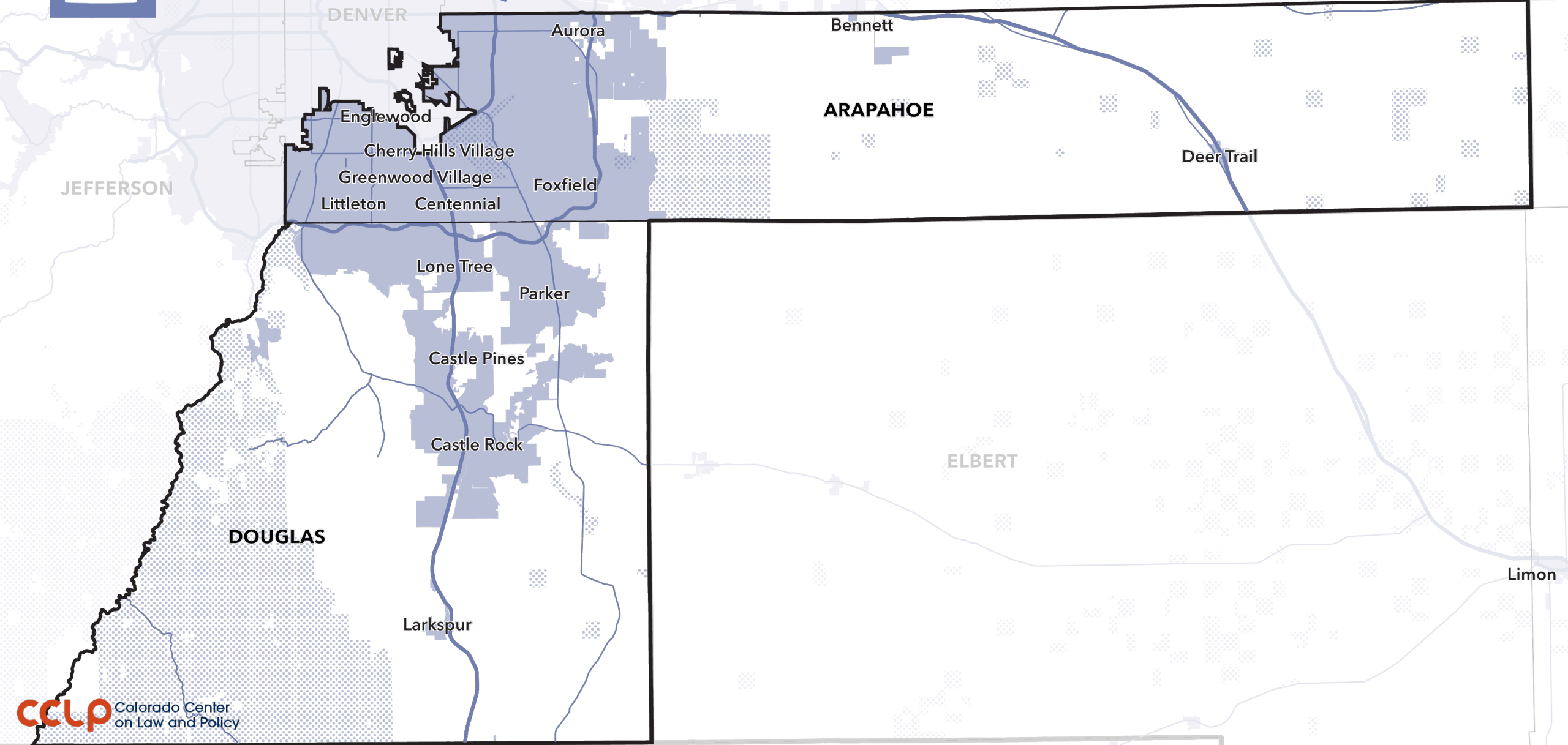
## A Look at Two Urban Regions:

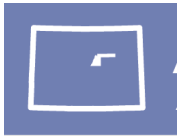
- Arapahoe/Douglas Region
  - Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA
- Pueblo Region
  - Pueblo MSA





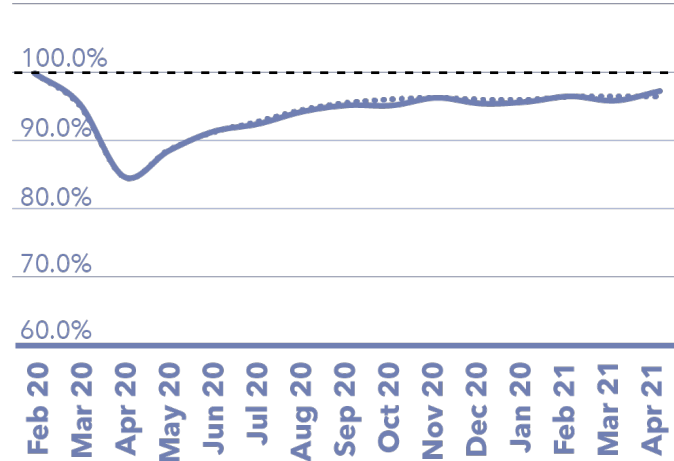
# ARAPAHOE/DOUGLAS REGION: 2021



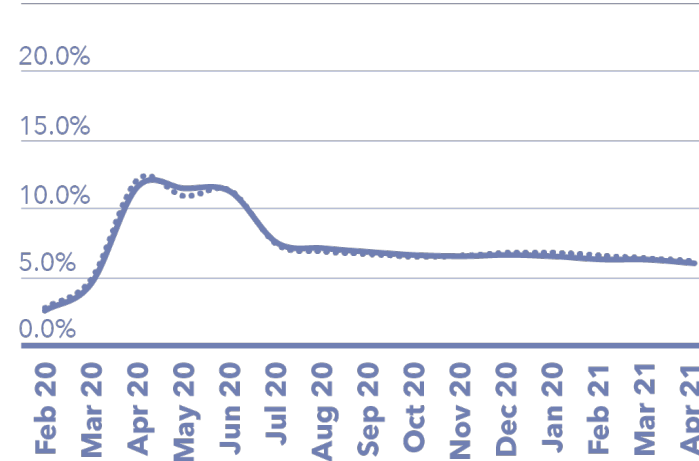


# ARAPAHOE/DOUGLAS REGION: 2021

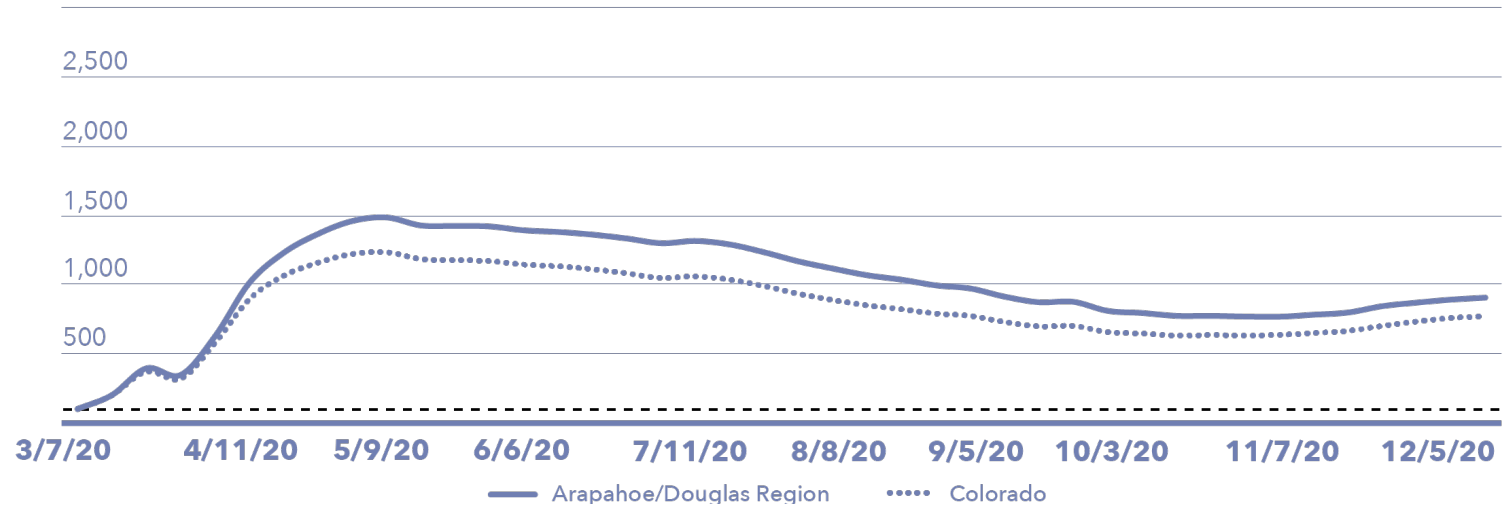
### Monthly Employment as Share of Feb 2020

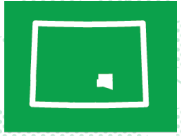


### Monthly Unemployment Rate

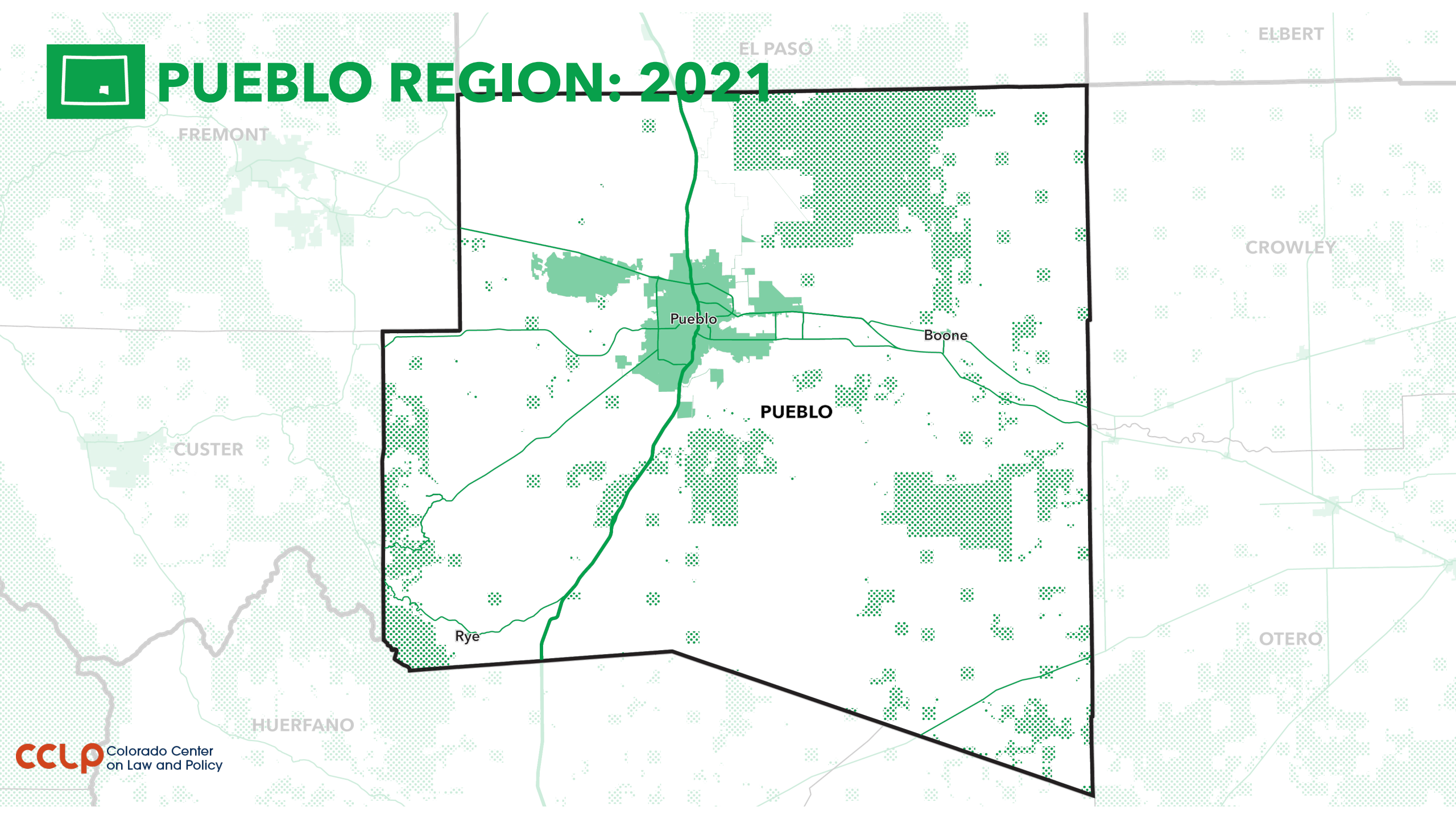


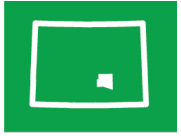
### Change in Unemployment Insurance Continued Claims Filed from Week of March 7, 2020 (100 = continued claims filed in 3/7/20)





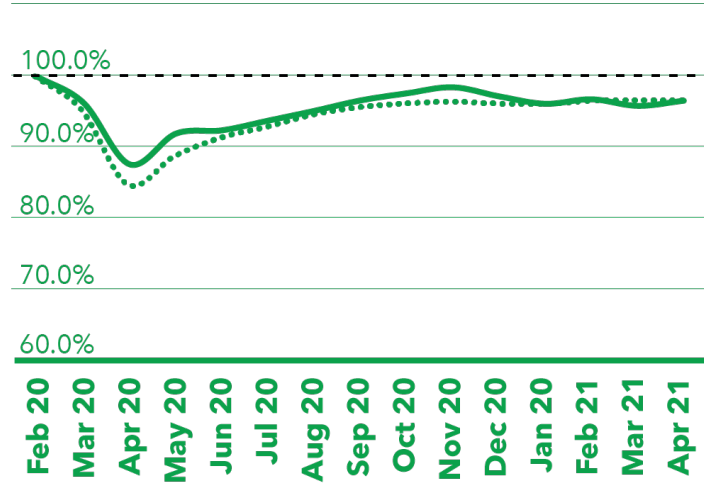
# PUEBLO REGION: 2021



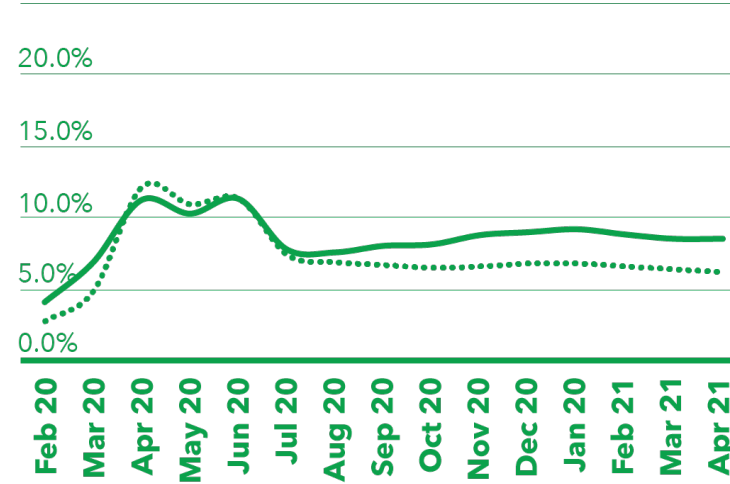


# PUEBLO REGION: 2021

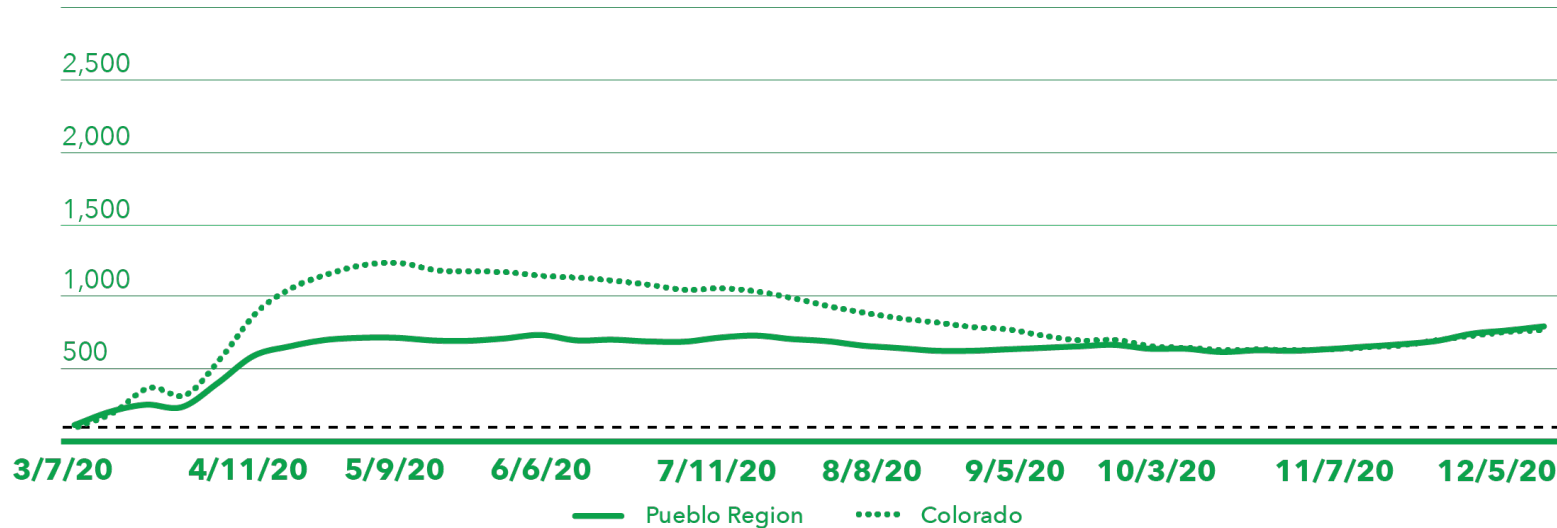
### Monthly Employment as Share of Feb 2020



### Monthly Unemployment Rate



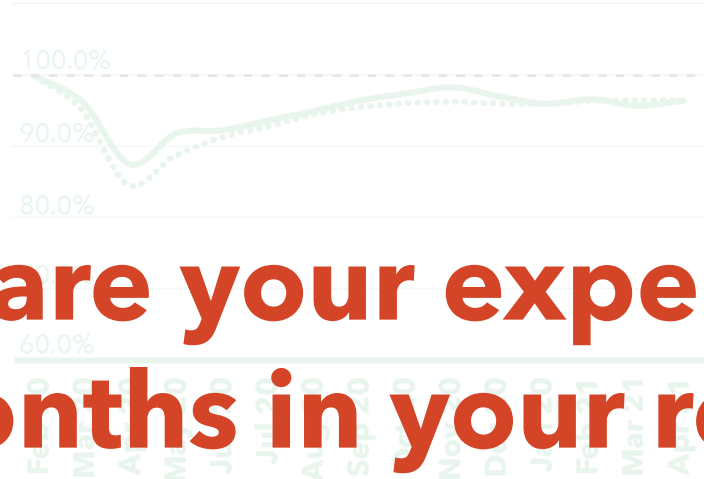
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# PUEBLO REGION: 2021

Monthly Employment as Share of Feb 2020

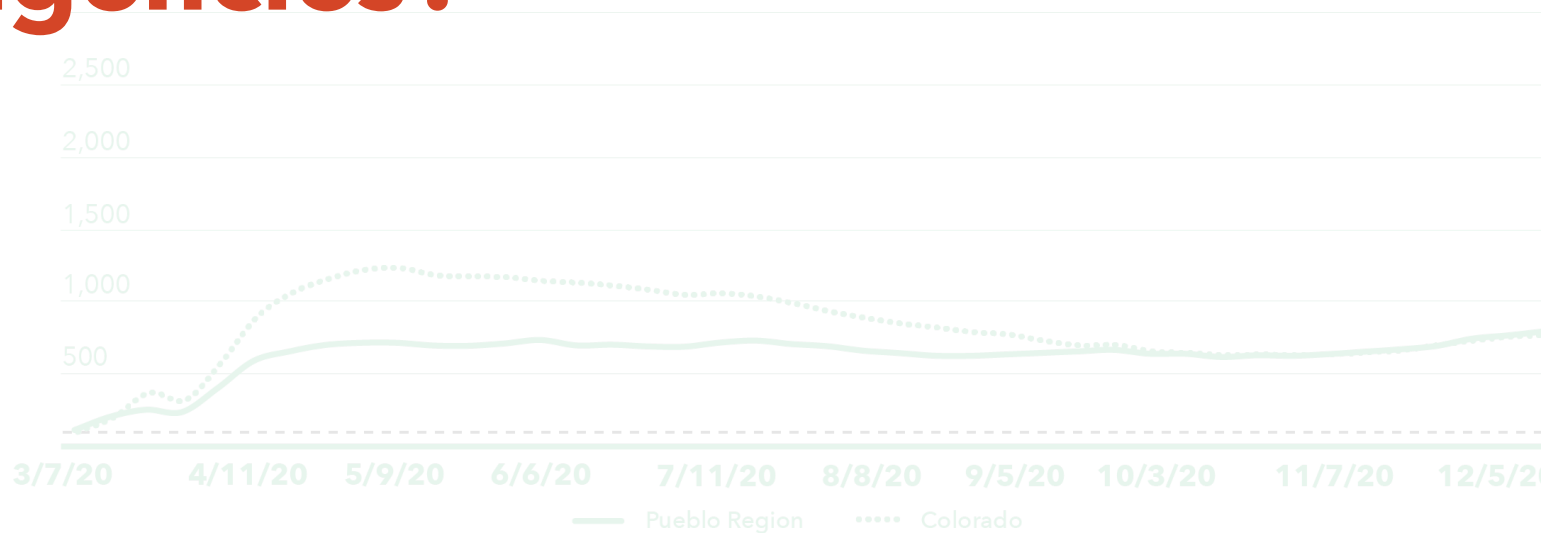


Monthly Unemployment Rate



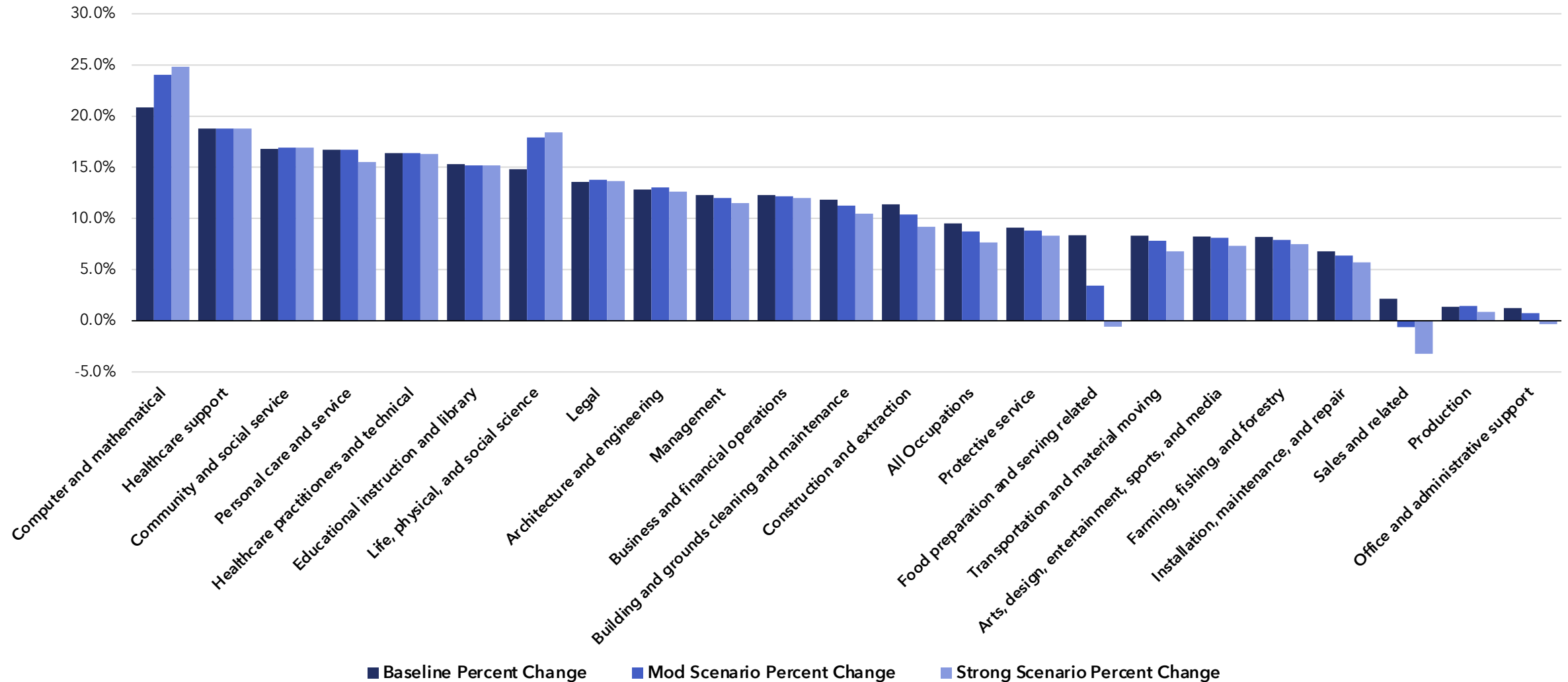
**What are your experiences over the past 15 months in your regions, organizations and agencies?**

Change in Unemployment Insurance Continued Claims Filed from Week of March 7, 2020



# COLORADO'S POST-COVID ECONOMY

## Occupational Employment Growth Projections: Colorado, 2019-29



# OPPORTUNITIES OF INTEREST

- Expanding Broadband across Colorado will create new jobs for installing and related positions (*Office of the Future of Work, CDLE*)
- Increased types of apprenticeships will create different career pathways in new sectors, including public service (*Discussion with staff at CDLE*)
- Parents with children at home are increasingly wanting and pursuing jobs that can be performed from home, saving on child care and transportation expenses (*Interview with CWEE staff*)
- There are ongoing opportunities for health professionals in most regions across Colorado (*Interviews with Southeast and Rural Resort subregions*)
- Increasing opportunities for Coloradans with justice involvement in tech and construction industries (*Interviews with Justice Reskill and Community Works*)

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- Increasing opportunities for Coloradans with justice involvement in tech and construction industries (*Interviews with Justice Reskill and Community Works*)

**What are some examples of additional current activities and momentum?**

**Any new challenges?**



# PROMISING PRACTICES

## ▪ **State:**

- Create state Apprenticeship Office that can authorize diverse types of formal learning opportunities
- Approach the issue of digital equity and inclusion as a statewide initiative
- Create state-level funding positions to build capacity of small regions to procure public, private, and more flexible sources of funding

## ▪ **Regional:**

- Incentivize counties across the state to create a Municipal Broadband System with fiber service for every home
- Partner with Workforce Boards and Chambers of Commerce to create apprenticeships in different emerging business sectors

# PROMISING PRACTICES

## ▪ **Regional:**

- Establish “Pathway to the Pathway” series of apprenticeships and credentials that invite workers of diverse levels and aspirations to pursue new fields and positions
- Create regional networks that are part of larger state digital coaching system-- establish fieldwork opportunities with community colleges and universities to add capacity
- Establish and operate career pathways for justice involved individuals and tech and construction sectors

## ▪ **Local:**

- Establish and support new training/work opportunities in human services sector through diverse workforce funding streams
- Create new positions and training credentials for jobs that are emerging from the pandemic (culturally responsive health care workers)

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Prioritize and invest in the importance and significance of digital equity in all parts of the state
- Broadband and connectivity to each home (affordable and high speed), equipment and security programs, access to a flexible and responsive coaching/navigation program
- Create a position at the state (perhaps CDLE) that assists workforce regions to identify and obtain diverse funding streams
- Identify specific pre-apprenticeship options in rural and urban regions to develop and fund as new work pathways for workers impacted by COVID-19
- Incorporate new funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) into targeted opportunities for displaced workers with lower skills
- Encourage employers to develop work environments that prioritize living wage pay, benefits, and predictable and flexible schedules for employees

# NEXT STEPS

- Please email any additional comments or questions to Laura and Charlie
- Report launch date: Mid-July 2021
- Contact information:
  - Charlie Brennan: [cbrennan@cclponline.org](mailto:cbrennan@cclponline.org)
  - Laura Ware: [lauraware985@gmail.com](mailto:lauraware985@gmail.com)
  - Katherine Keegan: [katherine.keegan@state.co.us](mailto:katherine.keegan@state.co.us)
  - Clarke Becker: [clarke.becker@state.co.us](mailto:clarke.becker@state.co.us)
  - CCLP: [info@cclponline.org](mailto:info@cclponline.org)

**THANK YOU!**

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