homebase

Main Street Health Report

Main Street at a glance:

In December, **employment activity on Main Street held steady** compared to earlier in the fall. Headcount for hourly teams remained consistent, with little change in the rate of worker turnover and job creation.

For the first time in months **worker wages have frozen** after trending downward since August.

Small business teams contracted more after Thanksgiving this year than in prior years, though **December employment activity was in line with preceding months.** Retail and entertainment saw the smallest dip.

Job turnover and creation remained relatively consistent with prior months this year, indicating small businesses had the holiday headcount they needed.

In December, hourly worker wages froze for the first time in months following a consistent downward trend in growth since August**.**
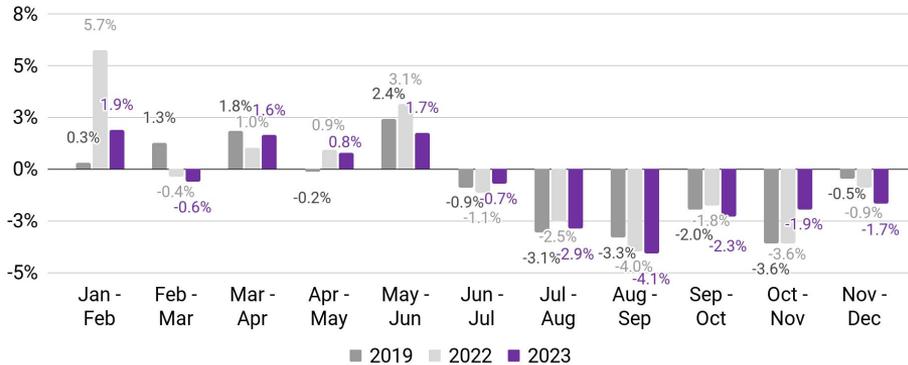
December employment activity held steady month over month

The monthly change in employees working and hours worked was bigger in December than in prior years, but held relatively consistent with prior months in 2023.

Employees working
(Monthly change in 7-day average, relative to January of reported year)

Legend: ■ 2019 ■ 2022 ■ 2023

Hours worked
(Monthly change in 7-day average, relative to January of reported year)


Legend: ■ 2019 ■ 2022 ■ 2023

Data compares rolling 7-day averages for weeks encompassing the 12th of each month; April data encompasses the subsequent week to account for Easter holiday. Source: Homebase data.

A regional view reveals the Eastern Seaboard saw biggest decline

Colder states in the Northeast had the greatest dip in hours worked, businesses open and employees working on Main Street in December.

Output by Region

Month-over-month change in core economic indicators, by Census region

Legend: ■ Hours Worked ┈ Businesses Open ── Employees Working
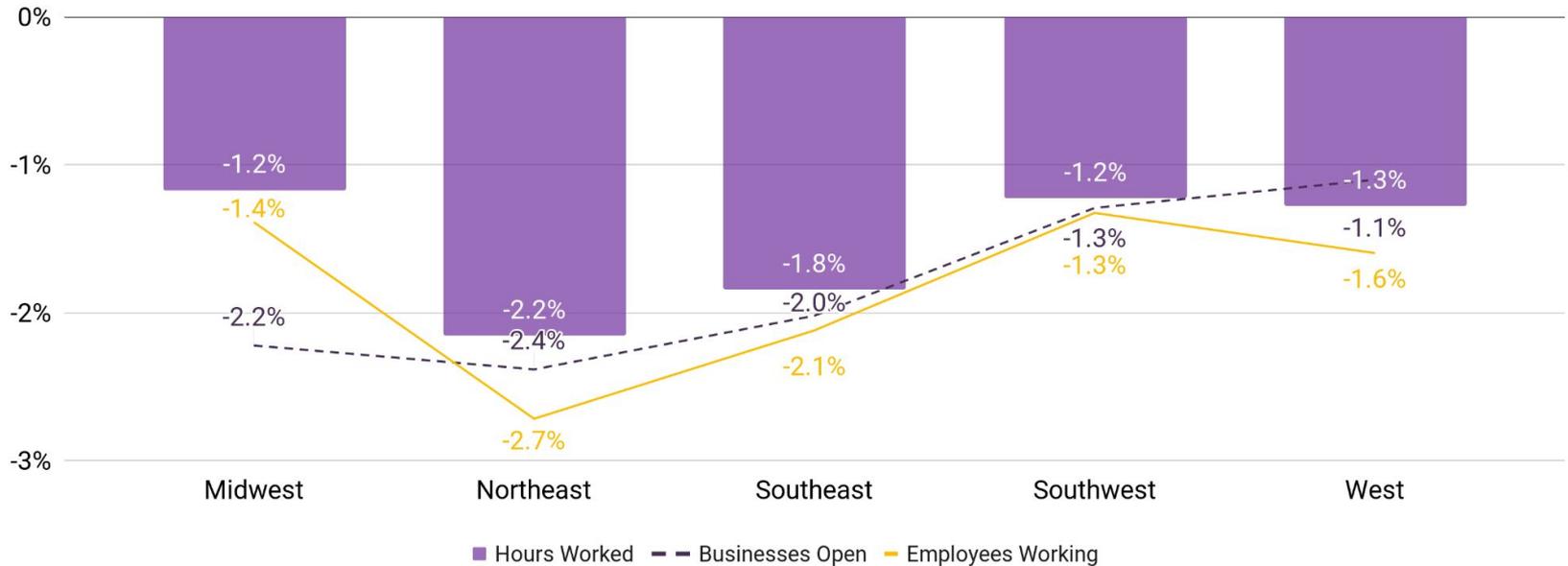
Note: December 10-16 vs. November 12-18. Region classification - Midwest: ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA, MO, WI, IL, IN, OH, MI; West: NV, UT, AZ, NM, CO, WY, MT, ID, OR, WA, CA, HI, AK; Northeast: NY, PA, NJ, CT, RI, MA, NH, VT, ME; Southeast: MS, AL, TN, KY, NC, SC, GA, FL; Southwest: TX, OK, AR, LA. Source: Homebase data
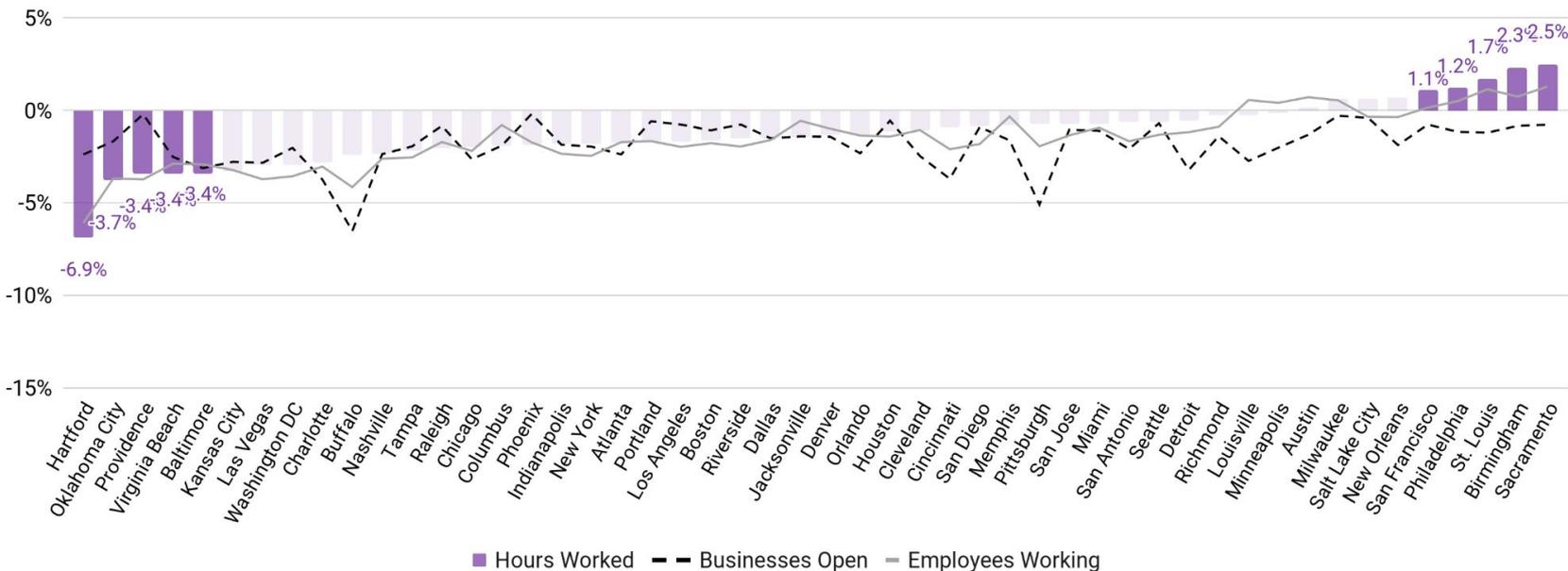
Main Street saw varied employment activity in cities coast to coast

In descending order, Sacramento, Birmingham and St. Louis saw the biggest gains in employment activity, with Providence, Oklahoma City and Hartford bringing up the rear.

Output by MSA

Month-over-month change in core economic indicators, by metropolitan statistical area

Note: December 10-16 vs. November 12-18. Source: Homebase data

# Across industries, employees working dipped below prior years

2023 saw a greater decline in employees working by industry than in 2022 and 2019. Retail and entertainment held steady month over month, as they worked to meet holiday demand.

Small businesses in the **retail and entertainment sectors** saw the most muted declines compared to the prior month (-0.2% and -0.4%, respectively).

Home & repair businesses saw the greatest month over month drop off (-5.3%), a significant change from prior years. This could be due to more suitable outdoor working conditions in early fall than December.

Percent change in employees working
(Mid-December vs. mid-November, using Jan. '19, Jan. '22, and Jan. '23 baselines)[1]
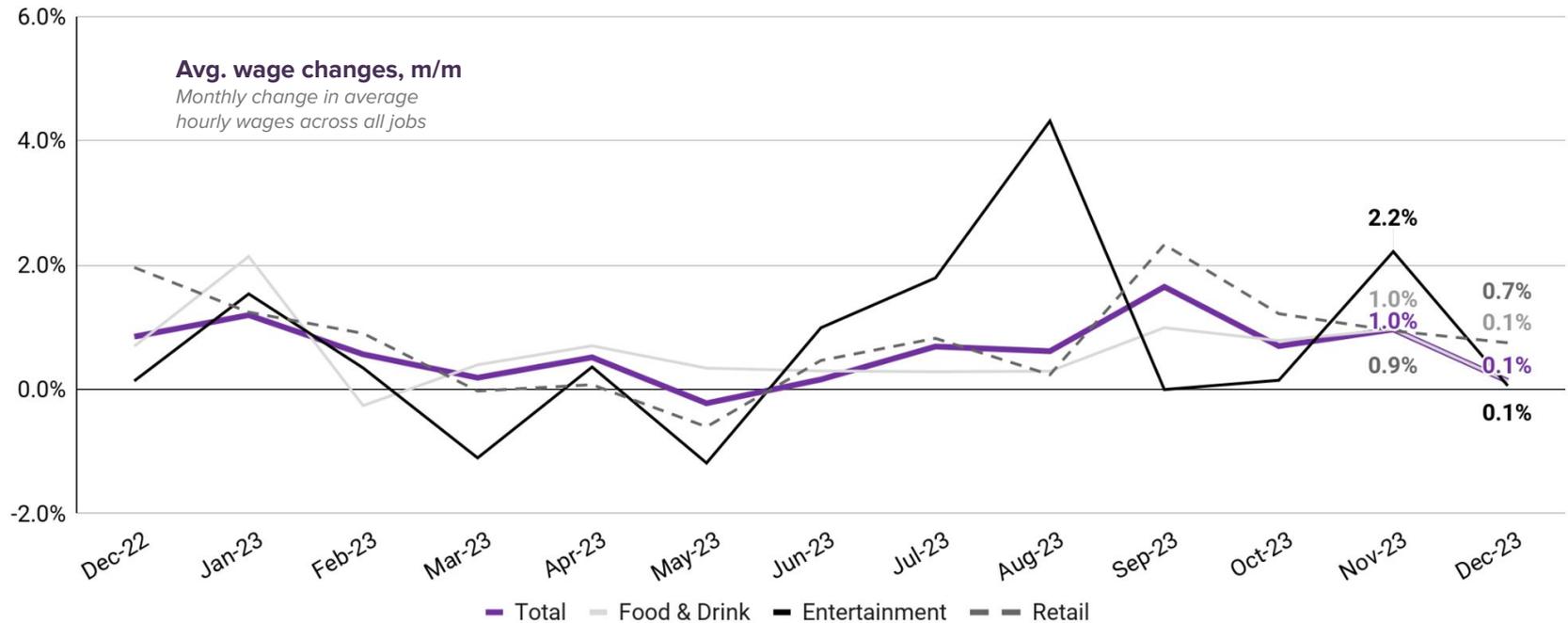

Legend: ■ 2019 ■ 2022 ■ 2023
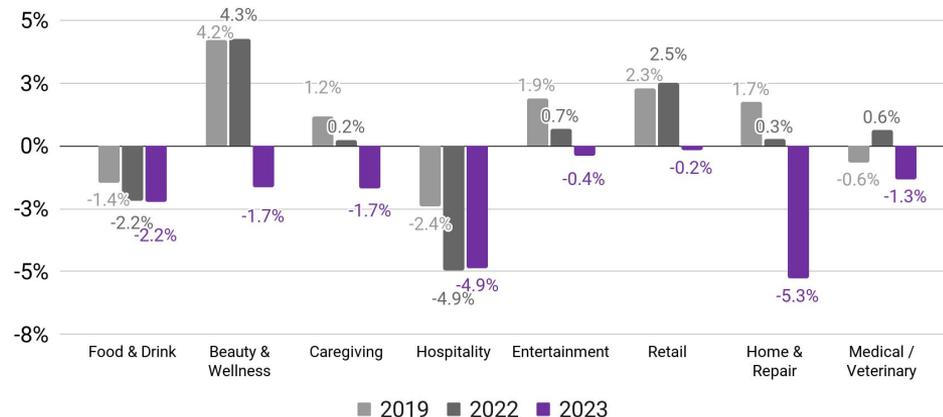
1. December 8-14 vs. November 10-16 (2019); December 11-17 vs. November 6-12 (2022); December 10-16 vs. November 12-18 (2023). Source: Homebase data

Worker wage growth halted over the holiday season

December marks a wage standstill following a consistent downward trend in the rate of growth since August.

Avg. wage changes, m/m
*Monthly change in average
hourly wages across all jobs*

Legend: Total — Food & Drink — Entertainment — — Retail

Labeled values (Nov-23 / Dec-23):
2.2%, 1.0%, 1.0%, 0.9% (Nov-23); 0.7%, 0.1%, 0.1%, 0.1% (Dec-23)

Note: Data measures average hourly wages for locations that utilized Homebase to pay employees in both December 2022 and December 2023. Total incl. industries not depicted here. Source: Homebase Payroll data.

Main Street moved through the holidays with minimal turnover

The rate of jobs removed at small businesses was consistently low through all of fall. Hourly teams navigated the holiday season with relatively stable headcount.
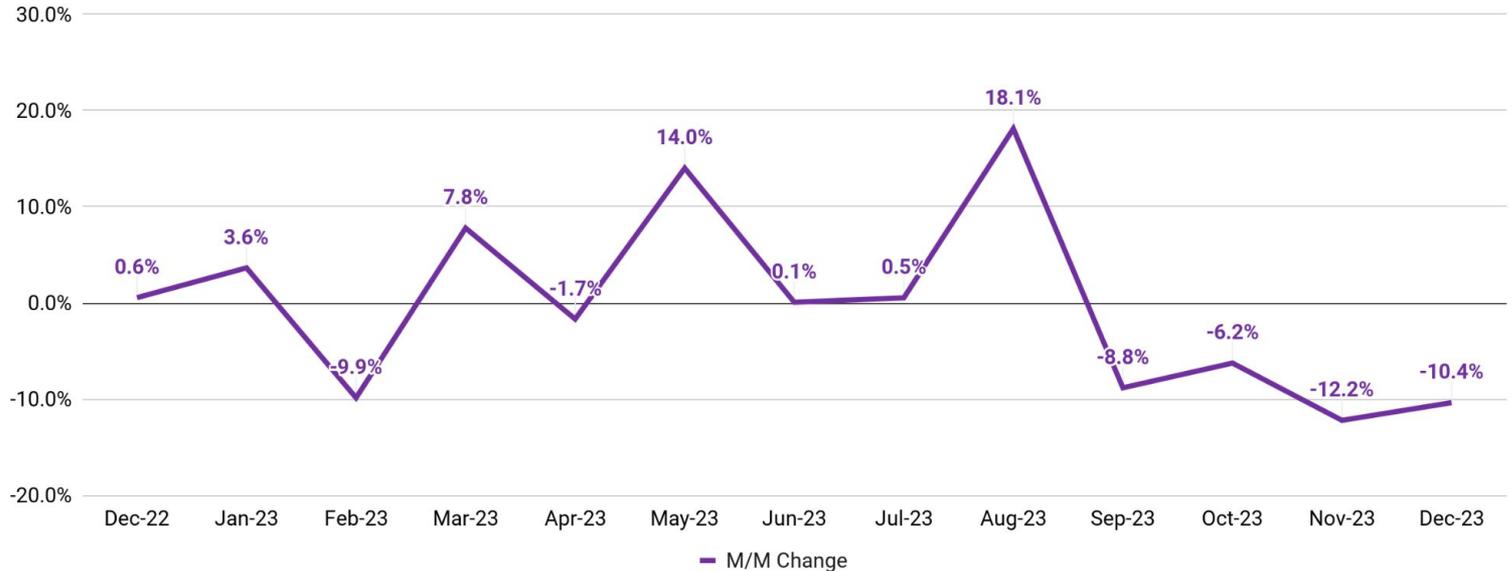
m/m changes in average number of jobs removed

Monthly change in average jobs archived across all jobs

Legend: ■ M/M Change

Note: Data measures average monthly change in total number of jobs removed, whether by voluntary or involuntary exit, from official employee rosters for companies active in any given month. Source: Homebase data.

Small businesses did most of their seasonal hiring in early fall

As consumers started their holiday shopping earlier in 2023 than 2022, small business owners also hired most of their seasonal workers in early fall with job creation dipping in December.
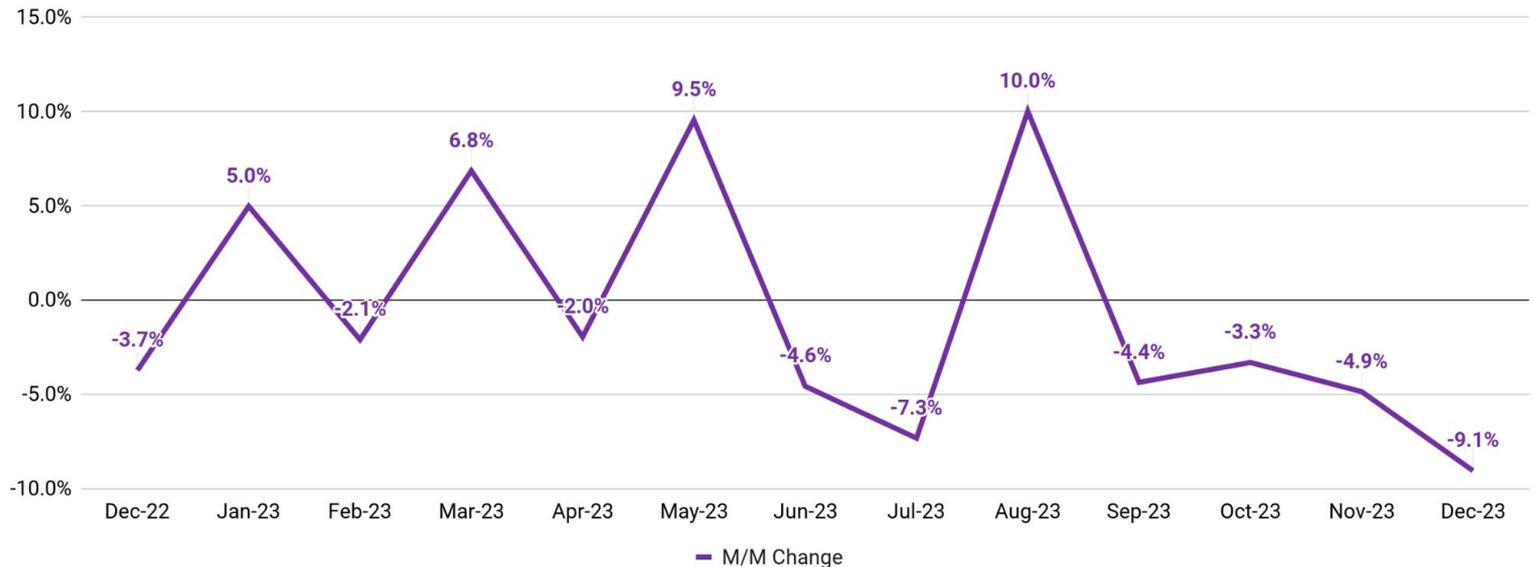
m/m changes in average jobs created

Monthly change in average number of jobs added across all jobs

Note: Data measures average monthly change in total number of jobs created in official employee rosters for companies active in any given month. Source: Homebase data.

Contact Us

Please reach out for comment or if you are interested in additional data

December 2023 — Main Street Health Report

January 2024 — **Main Street Health Report + Employee Pulse Check**

February 2024 — Main Street Health Report

March 2024 — **Main Street Health Report + Employee Pulse Check**

Contact Us

If you have any questions, or if you're interesting in gaining real-time access to Homebase data feeds, please reach out to data@joinhomebase.com

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Homebase makes work easier for 100,000+ small (but mighty) businesses with everything they need to manage an hourly team: employee scheduling, time clocks, payroll, team communication, hiring, onboarding, and more.

We're tools built for the busiest businesses, so owners and employees can spend less time on paperwork and more time on what matters.

Methodology and definitions

The December 2023 dataset is based on Homebase data gathered from **more than 100,000 businesses and 2 million hourly employees** active in the US on our platform in December 2023. We are one of the largest and most trusted sources of real-time, quality data on employment growth across the small business landscape.

Data from prior years (e.g., 2019, 2021, 2022) use a similar cohort-based logic. Unless indicated otherwise, daily figures are calculated relative to the median value for that specific day for the baseline month (e.g., January) net of the first 4 days of the month.

"Hours worked" is calculated from hours recorded in Homebase timecards.

"Businesses open" is based on whether a business had at least one employee clock-in.

"Employees working" is based on the distinct number of hourly workers with at least one clock-in.

Wage inflation data measures the monthly change in average hourly wages at businesses who ran Payroll with Homebase in December 2022 and December 2023

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