

0.6 Unemployment Spread: #1 in SC County Equity Gap

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Charleston's internal divide is the widest in the state — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

0.6

Spread in County Unemployment Rate Across the Market, in Points (July 2026)

Charleston County's 3.4% unemployment rate sits 0.6 points below Berkeley and Dorchester's 4.0%.

This gap isn't just a number — it's a signal of uneven economic integration across the tri-county. While Charleston County benefits from established employment hubs and infrastructure, Berkeley and Dorchester face persistent workforce access challenges. The 0.6-point spread reflects a structural imbalance that could undermine long-term market resilience if left unaddressed.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, July 2026 (county, seasonally unadjusted) • ALEX Intelligence computation
<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-13-charleston-sc-within-county-unemployment>



01

Equity Gap Drives Investment Risk

A 0.6-point unemployment spread between counties signals that workforce mobility is not keeping pace with housing growth. As development intensifies in high-demand corridors like Mount Pleasant and the peninsula, the lack of employment parity creates a latent risk: rising home prices without corresponding job growth in surrounding areas. This disconnect threatens to fuel long-term underutilization of new housing stock and strain public services in less-connected zones.





02

Infrastructure Is the Equity Lever

The fact that infrastructure projects are now gaining federal attention in the region — including port upgrades and broadband expansion — is not coincidental. These investments are not just economic drivers; they are equity tools. By improving connectivity and access to jobs in Berkeley and Dorchester, infrastructure spending can close the unemployment gap. The 0.6-point spread is not destiny — it's a policy target. The next wave of development must be paired with transit and job access planning to ensure the entire tri-county grows together.

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