#6 of 8: 12-month change in the metropolitan unemployment rate (September 2026)



Columbia’s job market is cooling slower than any SC metro

Columbia, SC · U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2026

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THE DATA

-0.7%

12-month change in the metropolitan unemployment rate (September 2026)

Columbia’s unemployment rate dropped by 0.7 percentage points over the past year, the slowest decline among South Carolina’s eight metros.

This modest improvement signals a resilient labor market, where job losses are being absorbed more gradually than in faster-cooling markets like Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach. The stability suggests sustained hiring momentum in public, healthcare, and education sectors—key drivers of housing demand in the Midlands.



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Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics, September 2026 (seasonally unadjusted, metropolitan) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-09-columbia-sc-lab-bls-unemp-rate-chg-12m-msa



01

Stability fuels housing demand

A cooling job market that’s still positive—rather than collapsing—means households are not fleeing the area. This supports sustained homebuying interest, even amid elevated mortgage rates. The slow pace of job market normalization preserves buyer confidence, reducing the risk of a sharp correction in housing prices.

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02

The Midlands is a refuge for job seekers

Columbia's relative job market resilience makes it a magnet for migration, particularly from neighboring states like North Carolina and Georgia. As other SC metros see faster declines in unemployment, Columbia remains a stable anchor, attracting professionals seeking long-term employment security—especially in government and health services.

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