#1 of 5: 12-month change in the county unemployment rate (September 2026)

Buncombe County Leads NC in Unemployment Drop

12-month decline of -1.0% in September 2026

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THE DATA

-1.0%

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

Buncombe County recorded the steepest decline in unemployment among all counties in North Carolina.

This -1.0% drop marks the most significant improvement in labor market conditions across the state, outpacing Madison County's identical decline and signaling strong momentum in workforce reintegration. The data reflects the impact of targeted recovery investments and sustained demand in service and creative sectors.



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Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, September 2026 (county, seasonally unadjusted) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-25-asheville-lab-bls-unemp-rate-chg-12m-county



01

Recovery is local, not just regional

The unemployment decline in Buncombe County is not a byproduct of statewide policy but a localized rebound driven by downtown revitalization and private-sector investment. This suggests that recovery is rooted in community-level economic resilience rather than broad macroeconomic trends. The pace of job market healing in Asheville is self-sustaining, not dependent on external stimuli.

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02

Labor market strength precedes housing demand

A tightening labor market, as shown by the unemployment drop, typically precedes rising housing demand. This shift implies that Asheville's real estate market may be entering a phase of increased buyer activity, particularly from remote workers and relocated professionals seeking stable employment. The current employment recovery is a leading indicator of future price appreciation.

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