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Jobs Report: Local Government Employment Picking Up.

The latest job estimates from the Labor Department suggest a recent uptick in local government payrolls.

In August, the sector added 24,000 jobs, while July estimates were revised for a monthly gain of 43,000 positions nationally. Total local government employment, including education, has expanded by about 1 percent so far this year.

Growth in hiring among schools, in particular, appears to have accelerated after changing little over the first half of the year. Aggregate totals increased by 12,000 jobs last month and 35,000 in July.

Employment for all other areas of local government registered increases each month this year, albeit very slight gains some months. In all, local public employment (excluding education) has expanded by 68,000 positions since December, an increase of 1.1 percent.

Still, local government employment remains a long way off from pre-recession levels. The Labor Department's August estimate is more than 300,000 jobs below peak employment, a figure that rises substantially when population growth is taken into consideration.

By comparison, state-level public employment has showed little movement. Current estimates for total state government jobs, excluding education, are the same as they were in January.

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