



CONTACT

Colleen Madden, Director of Public Relations
Office: 312-422-5074
Mobile: 314-807-1568
colleenmadden@challengergray.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Challenger COVID19 Coverage:

HOW WILL THE PANDEMIC IMPACT TEEN SUMMER HIRING THIS YEAR?

CHICAGO, April 7, 2020 – Teen employment skyrocketed during the summer months of 2019 to the highest number of jobs added since 2001, according to an analysis of non-seasonally adjusted data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics by global outplacement and executive and business coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. However, the global pandemic of COVID-19 has changed everything and total jobs added for teens may fall well under 1,000,000, according to one workplace authority.

“A month ago, we would have predicted another summer of massive teen hiring. We had one of the tightest labor markets on record, historically low unemployment, and high consumer confidence – the perfect recipe for companies that traditionally hire teen workers, like retail and entertainment venues, to beef up staff,” said Andrew Challenger, Senior VP of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

“Everything has changed. Many of these venues have stopped operating as non-essential businesses with reopening timelines in question. Grocery and department stores that are on a hiring binge now come with an inherent risk that did not exist before the outbreak. If we are able to weather this crisis and get businesses back up and running by June, we may see a surge in teen hiring then, however, teen workers, as well as any job seeker, may be much more wary of accepting public-facing roles,” he added.

Last summer saw 1,737,000 jobs gained by teens, 25% higher than the 1,388,000 jobs gained by teenagers in the summer of 2018. This was the highest number of teen jobs gained since 2001, when 1,742,000 jobs were added.

However, many companies are in a holding pattern and thousands of others are not open for business at all. A [recent Challenger survey](#) found 37% of companies have instituted hiring freezes. Another 11% have implemented permanent layoffs and 49% are likely to in the next three months. Meanwhile, 4% report they are revoking internship offers for the summer, many of which tend to go to older teens.

Nearly 10 million workers have filed initial jobless claims over the last two weeks. Challenger predicts job losses in the Leisure sector alone could top 14 million.

"The teen summer job is the first step in people's careers. It is vitally important to helping young workers gain valuable skills that they will draw upon later in their jobs. Many employers want to see some job experience from even their entry-level workers," said Challenger.

"The year with the lowest summer hiring since 1998 occurred in 2010, during the recovery from the Great Recession, when 960,000 teen jobs were added in May, June, and July. This year may see even fewer as conservative estimates suggest businesses will likely still be closed for much or part of May," he added.

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SUMMER EMPLOYMENT GROWTH AMONG WORKERS AGED 16 TO 19

Year	May	June	July	Summer Jobs Gained	Change from Prior Year
1998	270,000	1,058,000	675,000	2,003,000	
1999	415,000	750,000	852,000	2,017,000	0.70%
2000	111,000	1,087,000	311,000	1,509,000	-25.20%
2001	58,000	1,124,000	560,000	1,742,000	15.40%
2002	161,000	985,000	510,000	1,656,000	-4.90%
2003	152,000	859,000	458,000	1,469,000	-11.30%
2004	168,000	827,000	597,000	1,592,000	8.40%
2005	183,000	1,007,000	546,000	1,736,000	9.00%
2006	230,000	1,033,000	471,000	1,734,000	-0.10%
2007	62,000	1,114,000	459,000	1,635,000	-5.70%
2008	116,000	683,000	355,000	1,154,000	-29.40%
2009	111,000	698,000	354,000	1,163,000	0.80%
2010	6,000	497,000	457,000	960,000	-17.50%
2011	71,000	714,000	302,000	1,087,000	13.20%
2012	157,000	858,000	382,000	1,397,000	28.50%
2013	215,000	779,000	361,000	1,355,000	-3.00%
2014	217,000	661,000	419,000	1,297,000	-4.30%
2015	182,000	609,000	369,000	1,160,000	-10.60%
2016	156,000	691,000	492,000	1,339,000	15.40%
2017	75,000	1,023,000	190,000	1,288,000	-3.80%
2018	130,000	951,000	307,000	1,388,000	7.80%
2019	216,000	1,053,000	468,000	1,737,000	25.10%
AVERAGE Since 1998	157,364	866,409	449,773	1,473,545	
AVERAGE Since 2006	140,091	815,361	389,052	1,344,503	

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., with non-seasonally adjusted data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics