

April 2026



# CHALLENGER REPORT

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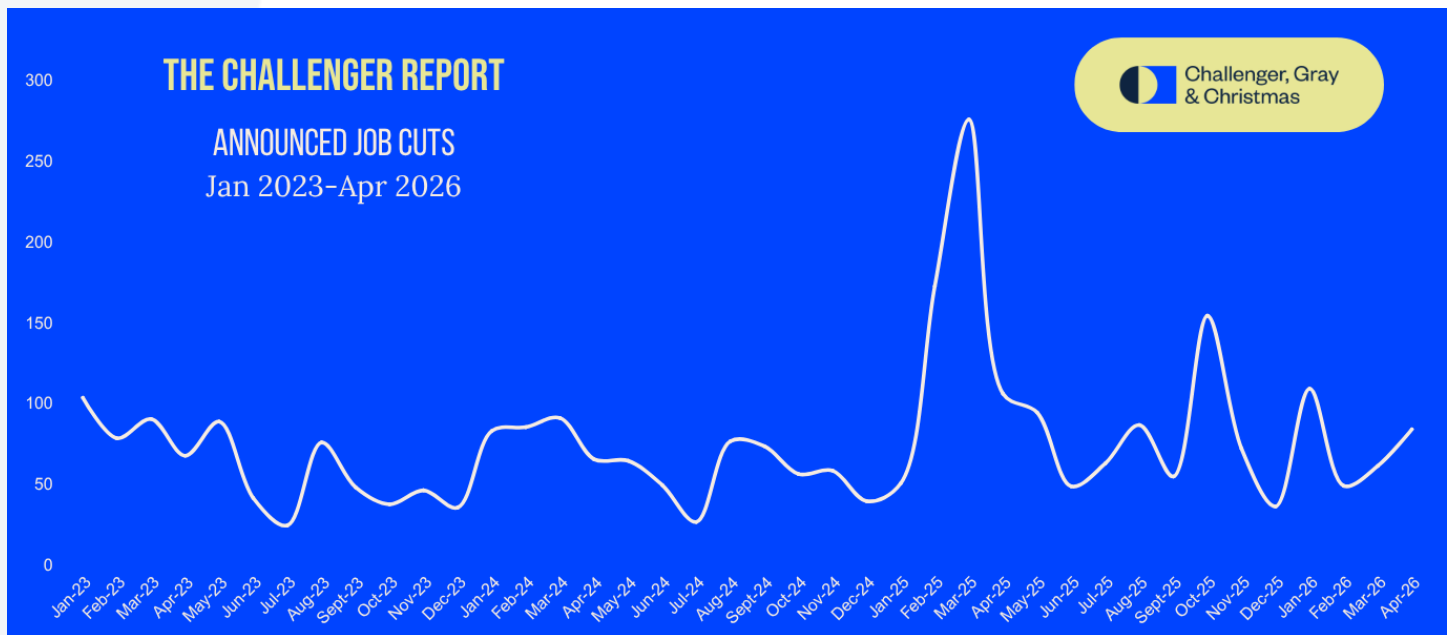
**FOR RELEASE AT 5:30 A.M. ET, THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026**

## **VOLITILITY CONTINUES: APRIL CUTS RISE 38% OVER MARCH; YTD DOWN 50%. AI LEADS REASONS FOR SECOND MONTH IN A ROW**

**CHICAGO, May 7, 2026** – U.S.-based employers announced 83,387 job cuts in April, up 38% from the 60,620 job cuts recorded in March. It is down 21% from the 105,441 cuts announced during the same month last year, according to a report released Thursday from global outplacement and executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas.

April's total is the third highest since 2009: 105,441 job cuts recorded in April 2025 and 671,129 in April 2020. So far this year, employers have announced 300,749 job cuts, down 50% from the 602,493 cuts recorded through April 2025.

“Technology companies continue to announce large-scale cuts and are leading all industries in layoff announcements. They are also often citing AI spend and innovation. Regardless of whether individual jobs are being replaced by AI, the money for those roles is,” said Andy Challenger, workplace expert and chief revenue officer for Challenger, Gray & Christmas.



## **WHICH INDUSTRIES CUT THE MOST IN APRIL?**

### **Technology**

Technology announced 33,361 job cuts in April for a total of 85,411 this year. That is a 33% increase from the 64,118 layoffs announced in this sector in the same period last year. It is the highest year-to-date total for the sector since 2023, when 113,944 Technology cuts were recorded.

### **Government**

Entities in federal, state, and local Government announced plans to cut 9,149 jobs, the highest monthly total since the sector cut 216,915 jobs in March 2025, 99.9% of which were due to Department of Government Affairs Actions. (The remainder came from the closing of an U.S. Army Depot.) For the year, the sector has announced 11,419 layoff plans, down 96% from the 282,227 cuts announced through April 2025.

### **Warehousing**

Warehousing announced 5,743 cuts in April for a total of 10,512 so far in 2026. This is down 65% from the 30,057 cuts announced in this sector through April 2025.

### **Services**

The Services sector cut 4,110 jobs in April for a total of 10,797. That is a 50% decrease from the 21,781 job cuts announced in this sector through April last year.

## **OTHER INDUSTRIES CUTTING JOBS**

### **Pharmaceutical**

Pharmaceutical companies have announced plans to cut 7,440 jobs through April, an increase of 500% from the 1,238 cuts announced in the same period in 2025.

“Layoffs typically occur at Pharma companies when patents expire, but the sector is also undergoing significant disruptions with new technology, competition, consumer behavior, and government regulations,” said Challenger.

### **Chemical**

Chemical companies announced 4,975 job cuts, an increase of 167% from the 1,863 cuts announced through April 2025.

“The primary reason cited for Chemical cuts this year is AI, but foreign competition is also at play and causing makers to cut back workers,” said Challenger.

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### Industrial Manufacturing

Through April, Industrial Goods Manufacturers announced plans to cut 7,799 job cuts, up 71% from the 4,563 cuts announced in the same period in 2025.

“Tariffs, an ongoing war in Iran, automation and AI, and shifting consumer behavior are all impacting manufacturing companies in a way that is likely to cost jobs,” said Challenger.

### Media & News

The Media industry announced 1,462 cuts in April, nearly doubling the total for the year to 2,954. This is down 18% from the 3,605 cuts announced in this sector through April 2025.

News, which Challenger tracks as a subset of Media and includes broadcast, digital, and print, has announced 200 job cuts in April, for a total of 839. That is up 46% from the 573 cuts announced during the same period last year.

### WHY ARE COMPANIES CUTTING?

In April, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** led all reasons for job cuts for the second month in a row, with 21,490 announced during the month, 26% of total cuts. This reason has been cited for 49,135 cuts this year, and it is the third-leading cause of layoff plans. AI accounts for roughly 16% of all 2026 job cut plans, up from 13% through March.

Closings followed with 14,782, Cost-Cutting was cited for 12,912, and Voluntary Severance/Buyouts accounted for 9,295 planned layoffs.

So far in 2026, Market and Economic Conditions lead all reasons year-to-date with 53,058 cuts, followed by Closings with 52,187. Restructuring was cited for 42,307 layoff plans, and Contract Loss caused with 34,484 job cuts.

### HIRING PLANS IN 2026

Hiring plans fell 69% in April to 10,049 from 32,826 in March. They are down 38% from the 16,191 hiring plans announced in April 2025. So far this year, employers have announced plans to hire 60,936 workers, down 13% from 70,058 new hires announced during the same period in 2025.

Government led April hiring with 2,350 announced positions, followed by Technology with 1,980 and Food with 1,348.

Year-to-date, Automotive leads all industries with 12,258 hiring plans, more than double the 4,874 announced through April 2025. Entertainment/Leisure is second with 8,261, though that figure is down 70% from 28,000 a year ago.

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Aerospace/Defense (7,366) and Government (7,268) round out the top four, with Aerospace/Defense up 165% year-over-year and Consumer Products (5,700) and Industrial Goods (3,971) more than doubling their year-ago totals. Several sectors that drove last year's hiring have pulled back sharply: Insurance is down 79% (2,575 vs. 12,000), Technology is down 51% (2,230 vs. 4,510), and the steep drop in Entertainment/Leisure summer announcements accounts for most of the overall YTD decline.

“With a number of factors potentially impacting summer travel plans as well as how businesses operate across sectors, we predict hiring plans will remain muted,” said Challenger.

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**Table 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

<b>TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES</b>		
<b>Year To Date</b>		
	<b>2026</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Technology</b>	<b>85,411</b>	<b>64,118</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>33,479</b>	<b>5,679</b>
<b>Health Care/Products</b>	<b>27,162</b>	<b>19,494</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>15,260</b>	<b>7,243</b>
<b>Government</b>	<b>11,419</b>	<b>282,227</b>

<b>MONTH BY MONTH TOTALS</b>		
	<b>2026</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>108,435</b>	<b>49,795</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>48,307</b>	<b>172,017</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>60,620</b>	<b>275,240</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>83,387</b>	<b>105,441</b>
<b>May</b>		<b>93,816</b>
<b>June</b>		<b>47,999</b>
<b>July</b>		<b>62,075</b>
<b>August</b>		<b>85,979</b>
<b>September</b>		<b>54,064</b>
<b>October</b>		<b>153,074</b>
<b>November</b>		<b>71,321</b>
<b>December</b>		<b>35,553</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300,749</b>	<b>1,206,374</b>

*Some reductions are identified by employers as workers who will take early retirement offers or other special considerations to leave the company.*

<b>LAYOFF LOCATION</b>		
	<b>YTD 2026</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>
<b>California</b>	<b>41,857</b>	<b>68,063</b>
<b>Texas</b>	<b>37,065</b>	<b>24,425</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>34,759</b>	<b>25,254</b>
<b>Washington</b>	<b>31,674</b>	<b>7,632</b>
<b>Michigan</b>	<b>23,831</b>	<b>8,350</b>

*Listings are identified by the location of the layoff or corporate headquarters as stated in announcement.*

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**Table 2: JOB CUTS BY INDUSTRY**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>25-Apr</b>	<b>26-Mar</b>	<b>26-Apr</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>
Aerospace/Defense	47	119	207	1,061	3,640
Apparel	125	299	1,400	1,176	4,707
Automotive	1,989	3,160	2,712	9,135	10,263
Chemical	37	173	101	1,863	4,975
Construction	451	118	369	1,355	1,784
Consumer Products	4,071	2,508	3,329	18,690	11,253
Education	3,001	5,258	3,793	7,243	15,260
Electronics	544	1,050	319	5,747	3,656
Energy	1,550	72	311	3,324	1,319
Entertainment/Leisure	2,147	1,115	1,403	8,484	5,757
Financial	1,857	5,114	1,336	17,839	10,733
FinTech		502		1,143	672
Food	1,632	1,505	2,759	6,526	8,078
Government	2,782	1,127	9,149	282,227	11,419
Health Care/Products	7,654	4,292	3,642	19,494	27,162
Industrial Goods	851	1,235	879	4,563	7,799
Insurance	310	389	25	2,346	3,391
Legal				0	0
Media	1,785	352	1,462	3,605	2,954
Mining		60	92	1,393	1,357
Non-Profit	2,496	513	2,670	5,453	4,416
Pharmaceutical	315	5,356	1,062	1,238	7,440
Real Estate	693	101	53	1,323	235
Retail	7,235	2,446	1,171	64,319	10,065
Services	3,731	2,543	4,110	21,781	10,797
Technology	27,021	18,720	33,361	64,118	85,411
Telecommunications	9,295	688	412	10,135	1,754
Transportation	1,662	539	1,238	5,679	33,479
Utility	110	135	279	1,176	461
Warehousing	22,050	1,131	5,743	30,057	10,512
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105,441</b>	<b>60,620</b>	<b>83,387</b>	<b>602,493</b>	<b>300,749</b>

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**Table 3: JOB CUTS BY REGION, STATE**

<b>EAST</b>	<b>Apr-26</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>
Connecticut	84	3,764	930
Delaware		50	90
Dist. of Columbia	8,768	10,478	282,596
Maine		200	4,517
Maryland	1,034	2,013	5,883
Massachusetts	1,721	5,866	5,699
New Hampshire		90	0
New Jersey	4,946	9,604	19,549
New York	3,603	16,208	44,794
Pennsylvania	829	8,231	9,104
Rhode Island		90	373
Vermont	53	265	86
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,038</b>	<b>56,859</b>	<b>373,621</b>

<b>MIDWEST</b>	<b>Apr-26</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>
Illinois	1,279	8,795	5,762
Indiana	883	1,800	492
Iowa	667	1,998	3,347
Kansas	123	267	2,499
Michigan	2,148	23,831	8,350
Minnesota	142	994	3,926
Missouri	337	1,346	2,132
Nebraska	22	316	4,150
Ohio	1,544	5,885	25,811
Wisconsin	790	3,237	1,612
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,935</b>	<b>48,469</b>	<b>58,081</b>

<b>WEST</b>	<b>Apr-26</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>
Alaska		500	30
Arizona	681	1,080	9,820
California	8,645	41,857	68,063
Colorado	2,913	4,608	2,513
Hawaii		991	312
Idaho	211	949	258
Montana		70	244
Nevada	135	3,091	1,304
New Mexico	33	33	0
North Dakota		140	0
Oklahoma		92	904
Oregon	2,021	5,551	541
South Dakota		0	373
Texas	19,712	37,065	24,425
Utah	176	367	281
Washington	9,646	31,674	7,632
Wyoming		9	28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44,173</b>	<b>128,077</b>	<b>116,728</b>

<b>SOUTH</b>	<b>Apr-26</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>
Alabama	221	1,537	1,632
Arkansas	42	42	340
Florida	2,578	11,536	11,739
Georgia	824	34,759	25,254
Kentucky	395	1,263	2,142
Louisiana		85	0
Mississippi	844	844	660
North Carolina	582	4,867	3,971
South Carolina	2,950	4,821	1,063
Tennessee	619	3,308	6,215
Virginia	954	3,320	882
West Virginia	232	962	165
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,241</b>	<b>67,344</b>	<b>54,063</b>

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**Table 4: JOB CUTS BY REASON**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Apr-26</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>
Market/Economic Conditions	7,955	53,058
Closing	14,782	52,187
Artificial Intelligence	21,490	49,135
Restructuring	4,391	42,307
Contract Loss	2,667	34,484
Cost-Cutting	12,912	28,894
Voluntary Severance/Buyouts	9,295	9,656
Acquisition/Merger	1,833	9,367
Demand Downturn	3,518	8,220
Bankruptcy	1,630	3,251
EV Tax Credit Expiration		2,058
Financial Loss	1,186	2,058
No Reason Provided	860	1,402
Technological Update (automation)		1,353
DOGE Downstream Impact		826
Consolidation	276	593
Relocation (Domestic)		449
Federal Cuts/Shutdown	432	432
Relocation (International)		341
Tariffs	37	331
Government Regulations		148
Avian Flu	87	87
Legal Trouble		76
Natural Disaster	36	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83,387</b>	<b>300,749</b>

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**Table 5: QUARTER BY QUARTER**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
1989	9,850	10,100	24,085	67,250	111,285
1990	107,052	87,686	49,104	72,205	316,047
1991	110,056	76,622	147,507	221,107	555,292
1992*	110,815	85,486	151,849	151,850	500,000
1993	170,615	84,263	194,486	165,822	615,186
1994	192,572	107,421	117,706	98,370	516,069
1995	97,716	114,583	89,718	137,865	439,882
1996	168,695	101,818	91,784	114,850	477,147
1997	134,257	51,309	95,930	152,854	434,350
1998	139,140	131,303	161,013	246,339	677,795
1999	210,521	173,027	173,181	118,403	675,132
2000	141,853	81,568	168,875	221,664	613,960
2001	406,806	370,556	594,326	585,188	1,956,876
2002	478,905	292,393	269,090	426,435	1,466,823
2003	355,795	274,737	241,548	364,346	1,236,426
2004	262,840	209,895	251,585	315,415	1,039,735
2005	287,134	251,140	245,378	288,402	1,072,054
2006	255,878	180,580	202,771	200,593	839,822
2007	195,986	197,513	194,095	180,670	768,264
2008	200,656	275,292	287,142	460,903	1,223,993
2009	578,510	318,165	240,233	151,122	1,288,030
2010	181,183	116,494	113,595	118,701	529,973
2011	130,749	115,057	233,258	127,018	606,082
2012	143,094	139,997	102,910	137,361	523,362
2013	145,041	113,891	128,452	121,667	509,051
2014	121,341	124,693	117,374	119,763	483,171
2015	140,214	147,458	205,759	105,079	598,510
2016	180,920	132,834	121,858	91,303	526,915
2017	126,201	100,799	94,478	97,292	418,770
2018	140,379	104,800	120,879	172,601	538,659
2019	190,410	140,577	133,882	127,687	592,556
2020	346,683	1,238,364	497,215	222,493	2,304,755
2021	144,686	67,975	52,560	56,749	321,970
2022	55,696	77,515	76,284	154,329	363,824
2023	270,416	187,793	146,305	117,163	721,677
2024	257,254	177,391	174,597	152,116	761,358
2025	497,052	247,256	202,118	259,948	1,206,374
2026	217,362				217,362
AVG	208,009	181,307	176,025	187,106	

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas

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**Table 6: ANNOUNCED HIRING PLANS**

**By Month**

	<b>2026</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>January</b>	5,306	6,089	5,376	32,764	77,630	72,063	23,229	74,040
<b>February</b>	12,755	34,580	10,317	28,830	215,127	146,403	88,202	15,279
<b>March</b>	32,826	13,198	21,102	9,044	105,224	97,767	824,610	96,368
<b>April</b>	10,049	16,191	9,802	23,310	88,622	76,345	285,639	258,302
<b>May</b>		9,683	4,236	7,885	126,083	49,118	38,981	8,663
<b>June</b>		3,191	19,087	13,629	102,897	110,093	75,454	11,946
<b>July</b>		3,200	3,676	12,774	25,506	18,281	246,507	22,316
<b>August</b>		1,494	6,101	7,744	41,985	94,004	160,411	24,937
<b>September</b>		117,313	403,893	590,353	380,014	939,790	929,860	459,689
<b>October</b>		283,138	266,743	35,202	237,380	52,042	255,198	190,835
<b>November</b>		9,074	11,621	15,566	30,203	6,527	185,504	19,063
<b>December</b>		10,496	7,999	3,022	51,693	89,984	77,267	26,313
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60,936</b>	<b>507,647</b>	<b>769,953</b>	<b>780,123</b>	<b>1,482,364</b>	<b>1,752,417</b>	<b>3,190,862</b>	<b>1,207,751</b>
<b>YTD</b>		<b>70,058</b>	<b>46,597</b>	<b>93,948</b>	<b>486,603</b>	<b>392,578</b>	<b>1,221,680</b>	<b>443,989</b>
<b>Monthly Average</b>		<b>42,304</b>	<b>64,163</b>	<b>65,010</b>	<b>123,530</b>	<b>146,035</b>	<b>265,905</b>	<b>100,646</b>

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**Table 7: ANNOUNCED HIRING PLANS**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>26-Apr</b>	<b>YTD 2026</b>	<b>YTD 2025</b>
Aerospace/Defense	596	7,366	2,776
Apparel	300	300	98
Automotive		12,258	4,874
Chemical	50	213	40
Construction	251	860	0
Consumer Products	885	5,700	2,215
Education	150	292	0
Electronics	30	380	175
Energy	150	1,400	1,070
Entertainment/Leisure		8,261	28,000
Financial	630	930	75
FinTech		0	2,130
Food	1,348	1,755	192
Government	2,350	7,268	7,056
Health Care/Products	216	846	300
Industrial Goods	311	3,971	1,722
Insurance		2,575	12,000
Legal		0	0
Media		0	0
Mining		0	900
Non-Profit		32	0
Pharmaceutical		75	400
Real Estate		0	0
Retail	32	1,157	0
Services		707	70
Technology	1,980	2,230	4,510
Telecommunications		0	100
Transportation		980	305
Utility	770	1,380	760
Warehousing		0	290
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,049</b>	<b>60,936</b>	<b>70,058</b>

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas