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State's jobless numbers continue to increase

Unemployment continues to rise in New Mexico.

According to the latest statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the jobless numbers went from 3.9 percent in March 2008 to 5.9 percent in March 2009, the numbers adjusted for normal changes for the month and season.

"These numbers represent a substantial decrease in economic security as the state's job base continues to shrink," Gerry Bradley, research director at New Mexico Voices for Children, said in a statement.

"The state's unemployment rate has been implausibly low for the past four years, and has lost its reliability as an economic indicator," Bradley said. The national unemployment rate stood at 8.5 percent in March, and the New Mexico rate has historically been higher than the national rate.

The state is losing 12,200 jobs annually. Manufacturing dropped 3,400 jobs from March 2008 to March 2009 and construction jobs fell by 7,200 over the year as New Mexico's modest housing bubble continued to deflate.

For more information, visit New Mexico Voices for Children at nmvoices.org.