

MORTGAGE RATE WATCH

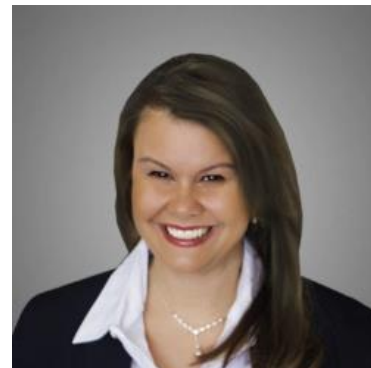
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Mortgage Rates Recover Somewhat

Today is a half day for financial markets, which is a typical feature of a federal holiday weekend. Because tomorrow is fully closed, the big jobs report (normally a Friday affair) was instead released this morning. It ended up helping rates move lower.

The jobs report (officially "The Employment Situation") measures new jobs created (or lost) each month in addition to the unemployment rate. The job count was much weaker than expected and, although the unemployment rate technically dropped, it did so for the wrong reasons (fewer people considered themselves part of the workforce). In fact, if we adjust for labor force participation, unemployment actually moved higher.

The jobs report is the most important economic data as far as bonds are concerned. And because bonds dictate rates, there's a clear connection to the mortgage world. Weaker jobs data = lower rates, all else equal. Today was no exception with MND's 30yr fixed rate index erasing most of yesterday's spike.



Deanna Adinolfo-Rivera

Community Lending
Powered by Lower, LLC.

NMLS# 1124061

M: (239) 878-0107

deanna@communitylendingfl.com

8191 College Pkwy Suite 203
Fort Myers, FL 33919

NMLS#327112

