



For Release: 9:00 a.m.
Date: March 11, 2019

Contact: Communications Bureau (515) 281-9646

Iowa's Unemployment Rate Remains at 2.4 Percent in January

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 2.4 percent in January. The state's jobless rate was 2.8 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate rose to 4.0 percent in January.

"More Iowans than ever are now employed," said Beth Townsend, director of Iowa Workforce Development. "This is the fourth straight month for job gains. These positive numbers reflect the efforts we are making through [Registered Apprenticeship](#), [Home Base Iowa](#) and [Future Ready Iowa](#). With historically low unemployment continuing, now more than ever, is the right time to invest in Future Ready Iowa to help Iowans improve their lives through good paying jobs and careers by ensuring access to training and education opportunities in high demand careers."

The number of unemployed Iowans increased to 40,600 in January from 40,400 in December. The current estimate is 5,900 lower than the year ago level of 46,500. The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,654,400 in January. This figure was 3,200 higher than December and 22,500 higher than one year ago.

Monthly labor force data have been revised for 2014-2018 as required by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Benchmarking is the process of re-estimating statistics as more complete data becomes available. Prior year's estimates for the Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) programs are benchmarked annually. In March, the revised data is incorporated with the January employment statistics.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa establishments added 500 jobs in January, lifting total nonfarm employment up slightly to 1,593,900 jobs. The monthly gain is now the fourth consecutive increase for the state. Overall, private sectors shed 300 jobs in January while government agencies added 800 jobs. This gain was primarily within local governments. Compared to last year, private sectors have accounted for virtually all of the annual gain in Iowa (+13,700) whereas government is nearly unchanged (+200).

Education and health care gained 700 jobs in January to lead all super sectors. Both education and health care advanced slightly. Private education has been sluggish over the past few months, while health care and social assistance continues to steadily advance slowly and has now added jobs in five straight months. Manufacturing firms also added jobs to start the year (+500). The monthly increase stemmed from durable goods shops in January, although both durable and nondurable goods have generally shown some level of hiring over the past few years. The only other sector showing an increase this month was arts, entertainment, and recreation, up 500 jobs from December. This is the fourth consecutive increase for this sector. Alternatively, losses were largest in other services (-1,000). The monthly decline is the first since August. Construction pared jobs for the third month in a row (-400). This sector has lost steam following a ramp-up in activity in 2018. The only other notable loss occurred in professional and business services, down 400 jobs in January.

Annually, total nonfarm employment is up 13,900 jobs. Manufacturing continues to fuel much of the growth in the economy with 8,800 jobs added versus last year. Professional and business services is up 1,300 jobs due to hiring within professional, scientific, and technical services. Leisure and hospitality has advanced 1,800 jobs fueled by arts, entertainment, and recreation. Retail trade continues to lead all sectors in losses (-3,300). A minor increase of 100 jobs in December was the first gain since September of 2017. This sector continues to adjust to shifting consumer preferences and is not expected to show any major gains this year.

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	January 2019	December 2018	January 2018	Change from	
				December 2018	January 2018
Civilian labor force	1,695,000	1,691,600	1,678,400	3,400	16,600
Unemployment	40,600	40,400	46,500	200	-5,900
Unemployment rate	2.4%	2.4%	2.8%	0.0	-0.4
Employment	1,654,400	1,651,200	1,631,900	3,200	22,500
U.S. unemployment rate	4.0%	3.9%	4.1%	0.1	-0.1

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,593,900	1,593,400	1,580,000	500	13,900
Mining	2,500	2,600	2,400	-100	100
Construction	76,500	76,900	75,900	-400	600
Manufacturing	228,600	228,100	219,800	500	8,800
Trade, transportation and utilities	314,000	314,000	313,600	0	400
Information	21,700	21,700	22,100	0	-400
Financial activities	109,300	109,300	109,100	0	200
Professional and business services	142,600	143,000	140,500	-400	2,100
Education and health services	235,400	234,700	234,800	700	600
Leisure and hospitality	145,400	145,000	143,600	400	1,800
Other services	56,800	57,800	57,300	-1,000	-500
Government	261,100	260,300	260,900	800	200

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	January 2019	December 2018	January 2018	% Change from	
				December 2018	January 2018
Initial claims	18,768	22,799	17,367	-17.7%	8.1%
Continued claims					
Number of claimants	40,985	26,605	43,994	54.0%	-6.8%
Weeks paid	149,070	82,560	159,338	80.6%	-6.4%
Amount paid	\$59,267,019	\$31,987,365	\$62,827,089	85.3%	-5.7%

Visit www.iowalmi.gov for more information about current and historical data, labor force data, nonfarm employment, hours and earnings, and jobless benefits by county.

###

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities.

www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov • www.iowajobs.org

MEDIA ALERT: Local data for January 2019 is available on the IWD website. Statewide data for February 2019 will be released on Friday, March 22, 2019.