

# NEWS RELEASE

# For Statewide Distribution



**For Release:** 9:00 a.m.  
**Date:** April 21, 2015

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## Iowa Unemployment Rate Drops to 4.0 Percent

**DES MOINES, IOWA** – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped to 4.0 percent in March from 4.1 percent in February. The state's jobless rate was 4.4 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate remained at 5.5 percent in March.

"Nonfarm employment increased for the sixth-consecutive month in March, adding 3,300 jobs," said Beth Townsend, director of Iowa Workforce Development. "While the state's nonfarm employment expanded to an all-time high, the unemployment rate dropped to 4.0 percent, making it the lowest rate since May 2008."

The number of unemployed Iowans decreased to 67,800 in March from 70,300 in February. The current estimate is 6,200 lower than the year ago level of 74,000.

The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,647,100 in March. This figure is 600 higher than February and 25,500 higher than one year ago.

## Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa's nonfarm employment posted another gain this month, adding 3,300 jobs. Following last month's revision upward, total nonfarm employment has now increased in six consecutive months. Job growth was fueled primarily by service sectors, with private services gaining a combined 3,100 jobs. Public sectors added 500 jobs at the local level and remain up 3,600 jobs compared to one year ago. The state itself has added 26,900 jobs since last March (+1.7 percent).

The education and health services sector added the most jobs this month (+2,300) due to expansion in both private education and health care. Trade and transportation also posted a strong showing this month (+2,100) following a slight drop in February. This month's gain was primarily bolstered by hiring in retail (+1,800) in preparation for increased summer traffic. Other monthly increases were small and included professional and business services, mining, and construction. Losses were slight this month and included a drop in leisure and hospitality (-1,100). A majority of this decline was in accommodations and food services (-900). Manufacturing pared jobs for the first time since October, with small losses occurring in both durable and nondurable goods factories. Financial activities pared 400 following an unexpectedly large increase in February.

Since last March, nonfarm employment has steadily advanced with growth occurring in most segments of the Iowa economy. Trade and transportation now leads all super sectors with 6,700 jobs added, followed by construction (+6,200) then professional and business services (+4,300). The only sector to trail last year's level is the information sector (-1,000) as media becomes less labor-intensive and more technology-based. Iowa's indicator sectors, manufacturing and financial services, are up 600 jobs combined.

**MEDIA ALERT:** An audio cut of comments about Iowa's labor market situation is available by calling (515) 281-6057. Statewide and local data for April 2015 will be released on May 27, 2015.

### Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	March 2015	February 2015	March 2014	Change from	
				February 2015	March 2014
Civilian labor force	1,715,000	1,716,800	1,695,600	-1,800	19,400
Unemployment	67,800	70,300	74,000	-2,500	-6,200
Unemployment rate	4.0%	4.1%	4.4%	-0.1	-0.4
Employment	1,647,100	1,646,500	1,621,600	600	25,500
U.S. unemployment rate	5.5%	5.5%	6.6%	0.0	-1.1

### Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,568,100	1,564,800	1,541,200	3,300	26,900
Mining	2,300	2,200	2,200	100	100
Construction	77,400	77,300	71,200	100	6,200
Manufacturing	217,400	217,900	217,200	-500	200
Trade, transportation and utilities	318,600	316,500	311,900	2,100	6,700
Information	24,800	25,000	25,800	-200	-1,000
Financial activities	104,500	104,900	104,100	-400	400
Professional and business services	138,700	138,200	134,400	500	4,300
Education and health services	225,800	223,500	222,600	2,300	3,200
Leisure and hospitality	140,300	141,400	137,900	-1,100	2,400
Other services	59,800	59,900	59,000	-100	800
Government	258,500	258,000	254,900	500	3,600

### Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	March 2015	February 2014	March 2014	% Change from	
				February 2015	March 2014
<b>Initial claims</b>	9,713	10,513	11,936	-7.6%	-18.6%
<b>Continued claims</b>					
Number of claimants	40,012	40,795	41,230	-1.9%	-3.0%
Weeks paid	128,564	140,183	138,131	-8.3%	-6.9%
Amount paid	\$45,530,551	\$49,513,589	\$47,389,525	-8.0%	-3.9%

Visit [www.iowaworkforce.org/lmi/laborforce/locallaborforce.html](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/lmi/laborforce/locallaborforce.html) for county unemployment rates, [www.iowaworkforce.org/lmi/laborforce/index.html](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/lmi/laborforce/index.html) for current and historical labor force data and [www.iowawokforce.org/lmi/empstat/msanonag.htm](http://www.iowawokforce.org/lmi/empstat/msanonag.htm) for detailed information on nonfarm employment.

Visit [www.iowaworkforce.org/trends/wages.html](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/trends/wages.html) for information on hours and earnings and [www.iowaworkforce.org/trends/uiclaimscomo.html](http://www.iowaworkforce.org/trends/uiclaimscomo.html) to obtain a breakout of jobless benefits by county.

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