

NEWS RELEASE

For Statewide Distribution



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Iowa's Unemployment Rate Increases to 2.6 Percent, Participation Rate Rises

DES MOINES, IOWA –Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 2.6 percent in October driven by an increase in the state's labor force. The state's jobless rate was 2.4 percent one year ago. The labor force participation rate rose to 70.4 percent in October from 70.1 percent in September. The U.S. unemployment rate rose to 3.6 percent in October.

"While Iowa saw a small increase in the number of unemployed in October, we also saw an increase of 9,100 more Iowans in the workforce than we saw in September," said Director Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development. "Over the past 12 months we have seen more than 52,000 Iowans join the workforce. Employers continue to face a shortage of skilled workers and there are currently over 60,000 job postings on www.iowaWorks.gov. Future Ready Iowa and our partners, the community colleges, are well positioned to help address this shortage through their effort to award thousands of Last-Dollar scholarships in high-demand occupations."

The number of unemployed Iowans increased to 45,100 in October from 44,200 in September. The current estimate is 5,100 higher than the year ago level of 40,000.

The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,703,400 in October. This figure was 9,100 higher than September and 52,600 higher than one year ago.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Hiring in Iowa slowed in October with payrolls remaining virtually unchanged versus September. A slight loss within private establishments (-400) was exactly offset by small gains in local and state government. Overall, half of all private super sectors posted the same job level in October that they had in September. The lack of movement this month halts six consecutive months of job gains for the state stretching back to April and leaves total nonfarm employment in Iowa up 7,800 jobs over-the-year (+0.5 percent).

Within private services, job growth this month was centered around professional and business services (+500), or more specifically, the professional, scientific, and technical services sector. This is the second straight month this sector has advanced, adding over 900 jobs since August. Job losses this month were generally small and led by financial activities (-400). Much of this loss was within credit intermediation and related activities. Insurance carriers and related activities has fared slightly better and helped mitigate some of this decrease. All other losses were small and included construction, other services, and education and health services, all of which combined for a loss of 500 jobs.

Over the past twelve months, manufacturing continues to lead all super sectors in terms of job growth (+2,800). This is contrary to the fact that Iowa's factories have not combined for a monthly job gain since the recent high established in June, when this sector topped at 229,900 jobs. Durable goods continue to comprise most of the gain (+2,800) with nondurable goods shops now paring jobs in each of the last four months. Construction had a small decline in October but remains up 1,600 jobs with growth being particularly strong in the Des Moines Metro area. Annual losses continue to be highest in information services (-1,500). This sector continues to structurally change away from print and wired media and become less labor intensive as new technologies advance. Leisure and hospitality now trails last year's mark by 1,000 jobs due to accommodations and food services staff reductions over the past three months.

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	October 2019	September 2019	October 2018	Change from	
				September 2019	October 2018
Civilian labor force	1,748,500	1,738,500	1,690,800	10,000	57,700
Unemployment	45,100	44,200	40,000	900	5,100
Unemployment rate	2.6%	2.5%	2.4%	0.1	0.2
Employment	1,703,400	1,694,300	1,650,800	9,100	52,600
U.S. unemployment rate	3.6%	3.5%	3.8%	0.1	-0.2

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,596,100	1,596,100	1,588,300	0	7,800
Mining	2,400	2,400	2,500	0	-100
Construction	80,600	80,700	79,000	-100	1,600
Manufacturing	228,600	228,600	225,800	0	2,800
Trade, transportation and utilities	312,400	312,400	311,900	0	500
Information	20,600	20,600	22,100	0	-1,500
Financial activities	109,100	109,500	109,400	-400	-300
Professional and business services	142,300	141,800	141,400	500	900
Education and health services	234,900	235,100	234,300	-200	600
Leisure and hospitality	143,500	143,500	144,500	0	-1,000
Other services	58,900	59,100	57,400	-200	1,500
Government	262,800	262,400	260,000	400	2,800

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	October 2019	September 2019	October 2018	% Change from	
				September 2019	October 2018
Initial claims	11,805	7,611	9,475	55.1%	24.6%
Continued claims					
Number of claimants	17,387	15,840	15,735	9.8%	10.5%
Weeks paid	58,455	47,753	53,152	22.4%	10.0%
Amount paid	\$23,500,010	\$18,888,646	\$20,100,113	24.4%	16.9%

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.

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MEDIA ALERT: Statewide data for November 2019 will be released on Friday, December 20, 2019. Local data for November will be posted to the IWD website on Tuesday, December 24, 2019.