

NEWS RELEASE

For Statewide Distribution



For Release: 9:00 a.m.
Date: March 25, 2016

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Iowa's Unemployment Rate Increases to 3.7 Percent in February

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 3.7 percent in February. The state's jobless rate was 3.7 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate remained at 4.9 percent in February.

"This is the first increase in Iowa's unemployment rate since 2009, and I'm not surprised," said Iowa Workforce Director Beth Townsend. "Given the number of layoff announcements over recent months, I'm pleased the increase isn't bigger. The silver lining for workers experiencing layoffs is, they are finding jobs, and Iowa Workforce Development stands ready to provide training and services to displaced workers."

The number of unemployed Iowans rose to 63,000 in February from 60,200 in January. The current estimate is 800 lower than the year ago level of 63,800.

The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,651,100 in February. This figure was 1,900 higher than January and 13,700 higher than one year ago.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa businesses shed 6,200 jobs in February, lowering total nonfarm employment down to 1,574,400 jobs (-0.4 percent). This month's decline is the first loss since September and follows an unusually high gain to start the year. Virtually all segments of the Iowa economy scaled back this month, with private sectors losing 5,000 jobs. Government was down 1,200 jobs due to a decline in local government. Government remains little changed versus last year (-100).

Private sector losses were largest in leisure and hospitality this month (-3,100). Accommodations and food services experienced most of the decline. Although the loss was large, it is the first since July for this super sector. Professional and business services trended down for the fourth consecutive month, fueled by losses in administrative and support services. Other losses this month included trade and transportation, information, manufacturing and other services. Conversely, education and health services added jobs this month (+2,200) and has been steadily climbing due to unyielding demand for health care services. The only other major sector to add employment this month was financial activities, up 500 jobs in February. Iowa's finance industry has steadily advanced over the past several months with jobs last being pared in November 2014.

Despite the monthly decline, Iowa remains up 15,800 jobs compared to last February. Education and health services is now the leader in jobs added (+6,100) due entirely to hiring in health care fields. Construction changed little this month, but remains up 4,300 versus one year ago. Manufacturing continues to navigate the storm and remains down (-3,100). Other losses include professional and business services (-1,800) and information services (-1,600).

MEDIA ALERT: An audio cut of comments about Iowa's labor market situation is available by calling (515) 281-6057. Statewide data for March will be released on Friday, April 15, 2016. Local data for March will be posted to the IWD website on Tuesday, April 19, 2016.

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	February 2016	January 2016	February 2015	Change from	
				January 2016	February 2015
Civilian labor force	1,714,100	1,709,500	1,701,200	4,600	12,900
Unemployment	63,000	60,200	63,800	2,800	-800
Unemployment rate	3.7%	3.5%	3.7%	0.2	0.0
Employment	1,651,100	1,649,200	1,637,400	1,900	13,700
U.S. unemployment rate	4.9%	4.9%	5.5%	0.0	-0.6

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,574,400	1,580,600	1,558,600	-6,200	15,800
Mining	2,200	2,300	2,300	-100	-100
Construction	82,500	82,600	78,200	-100	4,300
Manufacturing	214,000	214,200	217,100	-200	-3,100
Trade, transportation and utilities	318,900	320,000	315,400	-1,100	3,500
Information	23,600	24,100	25,200	-500	-1,600
Financial activities	107,800	107,300	104,700	500	3,100
Professional and business services	136,300	138,700	138,100	-2,400	-1,800
Education and health services	229,700	227,500	223,600	2,200	6,100
Leisure and hospitality	140,800	143,900	139,200	-3,100	1,600
Other services	63,100	63,300	59,200	-200	3,900
Government	255,500	256,700	255,600	-1,200	-100

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	February 2016	January 2016	February 2015	% Change from	
				January 2016	February 2015
Initial claims	10,177	17,704	10,513	-42.5%	-3.2%
Continued claims					
Number of claimants	43,595	50,342	40,795	-13.4%	6.9%
Weeks paid	148,211	152,612	140,183	-2.9%	5.7%
Amount paid	\$54,851,063	\$55,749,721	\$49,513,589	-1.6%	10.8%

Visit www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/labor-market-information-division 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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