

NEWS RELEASE

For Statewide Distribution



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Iowa Adds 5,500 Jobs in May

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 3.1 percent for the third straight month. The state’s jobless rate was 3.8 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate dropped to 4.3 percent in May.

“After two months of losses, Iowa businesses showed some signs of optimism in May with 5,500 jobs added,” said Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development Director. “Hiring in trade, healthcare, and manufacturing establishments helped keep the state growing.”

The number of unemployed Iowans increased to 52,900 in May. The current estimate is 11,200 lower than the year ago level of 64,100.

The total number of working Iowans decreased to 1,636,400 in May. This figure was 3,400 lower than April and 100 higher than one year ago.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa establishments expanded in May and added 5,500 jobs. This month’s gain was the first since February and more than offsets losses of 3,500 jobs over the last two months. Aside from government, job growth was evident in most segments of the Iowa economy in May and was led by private services. Government shed 500 jobs due to larger than expected seasonal declines at the local level. Compared to last year, government trails last year’s mark by 2,000 jobs due to reduced staffing levels at the local level.

Within private industries, trade and transportation added the most jobs this month (+2,400) due to hiring in both retail and wholesale trade. Transportation and utilities shed jobs in May, but remains up 2,500 jobs versus one year ago. Manufacturing added 2,300 jobs this month to help ease some of the recent losses plaguing this sector. Job gains were nearly split between both durable and nondurable goods factories. Some of the gain this month was due to a surge in hiring in food manufacturing (+800). Smaller gains this month included other services (+1,000), professional and business services (+900), and financial activities (+600). Information services added jobs for the first time since January and increased by 300 jobs in May. Alternatively, job losses were led by leisure and hospitality (-1,200) with declines almost entirely focused in accommodations and food services. Construction experienced another small drop this month (-200) and follows another larger decline in April. The only other loss this month was in education and health care services (-100) due to a reduction in private education services.

Annually, nonfarm employment recovered this month and is up 15,200 jobs versus last May. Trade and transportation has been adding jobs lately in sales and leads all sectors with 7,100 total jobs gained. Education and health care is up 5,100 jobs due entirely to hiring in health care. Professional and business services has advanced steadily (+4,000) due mostly to hiring in professional, scientific, and technical services. Despite a large gain this month, manufacturing continues to lead all sectors in jobs lost versus last May (-1,600). Durable goods factories have been responsible for all of the layoffs as nondurable goods factories have added jobs in food manufacturing and animal slaughtering and processing. Leisure and hospitality is down versus last year (-1,300) with losses being concentrated in accommodation and food services. Construction also trails last year’s record highs due in part to the completion of a few large scale projects and is down (-1,100).

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	May 2017	April 2017	May 2016	Change from March 2017	April 2016
Civilian labor force	1,689,300	1,692,000	1,700,400	-2,700	-11,100
Unemployment	52,900	52,200	64,100	700	-11,200
Unemployment rate	3.1%	3.1%	3.8%	0.0	-0.7
Employment	1,636,400	1,639,800	1,636,300	-3,400	100
U.S. unemployment rate	4.3%	4.4%	4.7%	-0.1	-0.4

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,583,100	1,577,600	1,567,900	5,500	15,200
Mining	2,500	2,500	2,300	0	200
Construction	79,000	79,200	80,100	-200	-1,100
Manufacturing	212,500	210,200	214,100	2,300	-1,600
Trade, transportation and utilities	322,400	320,000	315,300	2,400	7,100
Information	21,400	21,100	22,500	300	-1,100
Financial activities	111,700	111,100	108,200	600	3,500
Professional and business services	142,400	141,500	138,400	900	4,000
Education and health services	233,600	233,700	228,500	-100	5,100
Leisure and hospitality	141,100	142,300	142,400	-1,200	-1,300
Other services	61,300	60,300	58,900	1,000	2,400
Government	255,200	255,700	257,200	-500	-2,000

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	May 2017	April 2017	May 2016	% Change from April 2017	May 2016
Initial claims	9,272	8,646	10,382	7.2%	-10.7%
Continued claims					
Number of claimants	22,504	29,471	24,313	-23.6%	-7.4%
Weeks paid	68,070	85,247	74,021	-20.1%	-8.0%
Amount paid	\$25,555,092	\$32,361,531	\$26,757,397	-21.0%	-4.5%

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: An audio cut of comments about Iowa's labor market situation is available by calling (515) 281-6057. Statewide data for June 2017 will be released on Friday, July 21, 2017. Local data for June will be posted to the IWD website on Tuesday, July 25, 2017.