

NEWS RELEASE

For Statewide Distribution



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Iowa's Unemployment Rate Drops to 3.0 Percent

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 3.0 percent for October. The state's jobless rate was 3.6 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate dropped to 4.1 percent in October.

"Iowa's unemployment rate dropped to its lowest level since January, 2001. This is great news for Iowa's economy as we move into the holiday season," said Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development Director. "Our biggest gains this past month occurred in the manufacturing sector, which is the backbone of many of Iowa's rural communities and economy at large. This sector has grown 6,000 jobs in the last year."

The number of unemployed Iowans decreased to 51,000 in October. The current estimate is 9,800 lower than the year ago level of 60,800.

The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,635,700 in October. This figure was 3,400 higher than September and 500 lower than one year ago.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Employment in Iowa establishments was little changed compared to last month and held at 1,586,700 jobs in October. Gains in Iowa's goods-producing sectors were exactly matched by losses in service industries. Private industries pared jobs for the second-consecutive month and were led by losses in trade. On the other hand, government added 1,100 jobs due to growth at the state and local levels. Following this month's report, total nonfarm employment is now up 13,500 jobs versus last year's mark, a gain of 0.9 percent.

Manufacturing led all sectors in jobs added in October (+2,200). This month's gain for manufacturing is the second consecutive, and the fifth in the last six months. The majority of the jobs gained were in nondurable goods factories. Firms involved in food production and fabricated metal production added staff in October. Leisure and hospitality also added jobs in October (+1,800) with all of the growth stemming from accommodations and food services. Construction increased slightly in October (+500), snapping a streak of losses stretching back to April. Alternatively, trade, transportation, and utilities pared the most jobs of any super sector in October (-2,300). The losses were sharpest in retail trade (-1,000) which has shown some signs of weakness throughout the year. Annual losses have been evident in both food and beverage stores along with general merchandise retailers. Other services shed 1,300 jobs in October and professional and business services lost 1,200 jobs. Within this sector, administrative and support and waste management alone lost 1,400 jobs since September but remains up 900 jobs annually. Other sectors posting small losses this month included education and healthcare, information, and financial activities.

Compared to last October, no sector has added more jobs in Iowa than manufacturing (+6,000) with the majority of the gains stemming from nondurable goods factories (+4,100). The annual growth in manufacturing marks a substantial turnaround for the sector that had lost jobs annually as recently as June of this year. Education, health care, and social assistance follows closely behind with 5,800 jobs added and leisure and hospitality is third with 4,400 jobs gained. Losses have been greatest in construction (-5,300) following a record-setting year last year that included several large-scale industrial projects.

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	Change from				
	October 2017	September 2017	October 2016	September 2017	October 2016
Civilian labor force	1,686,700	1,687,000	1,697,000	-300	-10,300
Unemployment	51,000	54,700	60,800	-3,700	-9,800
Unemployment rate	3.0%	3.2%	3.6%	-0.2	-0.6
Employment	1,635,700	1,632,300	1,636,200	3,400	-500
U.S. unemployment rate	4.1%	4.2%	4.8%	-0.1	-0.7

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,586,700	1,586,700	1,573,200	0	13,500
Mining	2,500	2,500	2,400	0	100
Construction	75,300	74,800	80,600	500	-5,300
Manufacturing	217,500	215,300	211,500	2,200	6,000
Trade, transportation and utilities	318,700	321,000	318,300	-2,300	400
Information	21,000	21,200	22,100	-200	-1,100
Financial activities	112,400	112,600	109,000	-200	3,400
Professional and business services	140,200	141,400	138,900	-1,200	1,300
Education and health services	233,600	234,000	227,800	-400	5,800
Leisure and hospitality	147,700	145,900	143,300	1,800	4,400
Other services	59,200	60,500	60,600	-1,300	-1,400
Government	258,600	257,500	258,700	1,100	-100

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	% Change from				
	October 2017	September 2017	October 2016	September 2017	October 2016
Initial claims	9,585	7,654	9,560	25.2%	0.3%
Continued claims					
Number of claimants	17,122	17,499	19,580	-2.2%	-12.6%
Weeks paid	51,871	54,536	60,374	-4.9%	-14.1%
Amount paid	\$19,350,692	\$20,442,432	\$22,414,603	-5.3%	-13.7%

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.

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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 November 2017 will be released on Friday, December 22, 2017. Local data for November will be posted to the IWD website on Wednesday, December 27, 2017.