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Contact: Jesse Dougherty (515) 725-5487
communications@iwd.iowa.gov

Iowa's Unemployment Rate Remains at 4.1 percent in August

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 4.1 percent in August, down from 5.3 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate fell to 5.2 percent in August.

"Iowa's economy remains resilient despite ongoing ripples from COVID-19," said Beth Townsend, Director of Iowa Workforce Development.

The number of unemployed Iowans increased by 300 in August to 67,900 – still 18,100 lower than the year-ago level of 86,000. The total number of working Iowans decreased by 1,600 to 1,592,200 in August. This figure is 43,700 higher than one year ago.

The labor force participation rate declined from 66.9 percent in July to 66.8 percent in August. It was 65.9 percent one year ago.

Initial unemployment claims fell to 7,754 in August, compared to 8,362 in July. There were 23,393 initial claims in August of last year.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa establishments trimmed payrolls in August, shedding 6,500 jobs. The loss follows sharp gains in each of the last two months (totaling 16,100 jobs added) and is reflective of seasonal paring of temporary leisure and hospitality help.

Leisure and hospitality lost the most jobs in August (-4,700). This decline was the first since December but is smaller than the large gain posted in July (+5,900). The drop may be early evidence of establishments' continuing apprehension to becoming fully staffed, particularly as colder weather draws near. Even with the drop, this sector has added 12,600 jobs in 2021. Manufacturing lost 1,600 jobs, mostly within durable goods factories – the first loss in durable goods since February. Health care and social assistance gained 600 jobs following an increase of 1,100 in July. This sector had previously not added jobs since December. Wholesale trade also gained 600 jobs and has improved by 1,600 jobs over the prior three months.

Annually, Iowa establishments have added 37,400 jobs versus this time last year (+2.5 percent). Even with August's loss, leisure and hospitality has added the most jobs (+13,700 or 11.7 percent), with most of the gain coming from accommodations and food services (+11,000). Manufacturing has added 8,100 jobs over the past 12 months, with durable goods factories responsible for 4,500 jobs gained. Professional and business services are up 3,800 jobs due primarily to hiring in administrative and support services (+4,100).

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	August 2021	July 2021	August 2020	Change from	
				July 2021	August 2020
Civilian labor force	1,660,100	1,661,400	1,634,500	-1,300	25,600
Unemployment	67,900	67,600	86,000	300	-18,100
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.1%	5.3%	0.0	-1.2
Employment	1,592,200	1,593,800	1,548,500	-1,600	43,700
U.S. unemployment rate	5.2%	5.4%	8.4%	-0.2	-3.2

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,528,400	1,534,900	1,491,000	-6,500	37,400
Mining	2,200	2,200	2,300	0	-100
Construction	74,800	75,500	75,100	-700	-300
Manufacturing	221,300	222,900	213,200	-1,600	8,100
Trade, transportation and utilities	303,400	303,000	298,800	400	4,600
Information	18,200	18,400	18,600	-200	-400
Financial activities	109,700	109,700	109,000	0	700
Professional and business services	135,300	135,200	131,500	100	3,800
Education and health services	222,000	221,200	221,000	800	1,000
Leisure and hospitality	130,300	135,000	116,600	-4,700	13,700
Other services	56,400	56,400	54,600	0	1,800
Government	254,800	255,400	250,300	-600	4,500

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	August 2021	July 2021	August 2020	% Change from	
				July 2021	August 2020
Initial claims	7,754	8,362	23,393	-7.3%	-66.9%
Continued claims					
Benefit recipients	15,229	16,661	94,559	-8.6%	-83.9%
Weeks paid	53,530	61,116	302,873	-12.4%	-82.3%
Amount paid	\$20,269,114	\$22,806,572	\$94,990,097	-11.1%	-78.7%

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: Local data for August 2021 will be posted to the IWD website on Tuesday, September 21, 2021. Statewide data for September 2021 will be released on Friday, October 22, 2021.