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| NEWS RELEASE | For Statewide Distribution |
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| **For Release:** 9:00 a.m.**Date**: March 12, 2018 | **Contact:** Cory Kelly (515) 330-5646 |
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| Iowa’s Unemployment Rate at 2.9 Percent in January  DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 2.9 percent in January after an upward revision to the December 2017 rate. The state’s jobless rate was 3.4 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.1 percent in January.  "With the unemployment rate remaining steady through the winter months, Iowa has weathered the cold with minimal seasonal layoffs," said Beth Townsend, Iowa Workforce Development Director. "With our sustained low unemployment, this is an ideal time for people who may have challenges to finding a job explore their options. Iowans can receive resume assistance and job hunting guidance at no cost by visiting their local IowaWORKS Center."  The number of unemployed Iowans decreased to 48,300 in January from 49,300 in December. The current estimate is 9,100 lower than the year ago level of 57,400. The total number of working Iowans decreased to 1,625,300 in January. This figure was 300 lower than December and 800 lower than one year ago.   The Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program is implementing new seasonal adjustment procedures in 2018. The trend filter used to remove the non-seasonal volatility introduced by real-time benchmarking is being replaced with a new filter (<https://www.bls.gov/lau>). The new filter places less weight on the current month’s estimates, therefore decreasing the month-to-month volatility in the seasonally adjusted estimates. Seasonally adjusted monthly labor force data have been revised for 1976-2017 as required by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment  Iowa businesses started the year by gaining 900 jobs in January, lifting total nonfarm employment up to 1,583,500 jobs. Although the increase was small, the monthly gain is the fifth consecutive stretching back to September. Private sectors saw little overall movement this month, while government gained more than seasonally expected in education and posted a gain of 1,300 jobs overall in January. Growth was mostly centered in state and local government. Despite the monthly increase, government is little changed versus last January; total nonfarm employment overall is up 13,800 jobs versus last January. Durable goods factories added the most jobs this month (+1,200). Much of the monthly gain was due to hiring in fabricated metal product shops. Both durable and nondurable goods factories have steadily trended up since last summer and have been largely responsible for Iowa’s nonfarm employment growth. Other services also advanced in January (+800). The monthly gain halted losses in each of the previous two months. Other industry gains this month included education, construction, accommodations and food services, and finance and insurance. On the other hand, retail trade lost more jobs than seasonally expected in January (-1,400). This sector has not fared well recently as consumers slowly shift away from brick-and-mortar establishments and are instead turning to online retail shopping. Transportation, utilities, and warehousing also shed jobs in January (-600), but this loss follows large gains in November and December. Compared to last year, Iowa expanded on its yearly growth in January and has been fueled by hiring in durable and nondurable goods manufacturing. Combined, these two industries have gained 11,000 jobs since last year. Accommodations and food services have also shown strong signs of growth with 3,600 jobs added since last year. Other sectors showing signs of advancing include healthcare, finance and insurance, and transportation and warehousing. The only sectors showing substantial losses are construction (-4,600) and retail trade (-3,400).

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|  **Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data** |
|   |  |  |  |  |   |
|   |  |  |  | **Change from** |
|   | **January** | **December** | **January** | **December** | **January** |
|   | **2018** | **2017** | **2017** | **2017** | **2017** |
|   |  |  |  |  |   |
| Civilian labor force | 1,673,600 | 1,674,900 | 1,683,400 | -1,300 | -9,800 |
| Unemployment | 48,300 | 49,300 | 57,400 | -1,000 | -9,100 |
| Unemployment rate | 2.9% | 2.9% | 3.4% | 0.0 | -0.5 |
| Employment | 1,625,300 | 1,625,600 | 1,626,100 | -300 | -800 |
|   |  |  |  |  |   |
| U.S. unemployment rate | 4.1% | 4.1% | 4.8% | 0.0 | -0.7 |
|   |  |  |  |  |   |
| **Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data** |
|   |  |  |  |  |   |
| Total Nonfarm Employment | 1,583,500 | 1,582,600 | 1,569,700 | 900 | 13,800 |
| Mining | 2,300 | 2,400 | 2,400 | -100 | -100 |
| Construction | 73,900 | 73,500 | 78,500 | 400 | -4,600 |
| Manufacturing | 224,300 | 223,000 | 213,300 | 1,300 | 11,000 |
| Trade, transportation and utilities | 313,600 | 315,500 | 315,500 | -1,900 | -1,900 |
| Information | 21,500 | 22,000 | 22,100 | -500 | -600 |
| Financial activities | 111,400 | 111,300 | 108,400 | 100 | 3,000 |
| Professional and business  |  |  |  |  |   |
|  services | 140,100 | 140,700 | 137,600 | -600 | 2,500 |
| Education and health services | 232,400 | 232,200 | 230,600 | 200 | 1,800 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 146,300 | 146,400 | 143,200 | -100 | 3,100 |
| Other services | 57,200 | 56,400 | 57,700 | 800 | -500 |
| Government | 260,500 | 259,200 | 260,400 | 1,300 | 100 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  | **% Change from** |
|   | **January** | **December** | **January** | **December** | **January** |
|   | **2018** | **2017** | **2017** | **2017** | **2017** |
|   |  |  |  |  |   |
| **Initial claims** | 17,367 | 26,587 | 15,756 | -34.7% | 10.2% |
| **Continued claims** |  |  |  |  |   |
|  Number of claimants | 43,994 | 27,146 | 47,551 | 62.1% | -7.5% |
|  Weeks paid | 159,338 | 83,932 | 150,958 | 89.8% | 5.6% |
|  Amount paid | $62,827,089 | $31,996,661 | $57,748,242 | 96.4% | 8.8% |

Visit [www.iowalmi.gov](http://www.iowalmi.gov) for more information about current and historical data, labor force data, nonfarm employment, hours and earnings, and jobless benefits by county.###An Equal Opportunity Employer/ProgramAuxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities.[www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov](http://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/)• [www.iowajobs.org](http://www.iowajobs.org) |
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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 February 2018 will be released on Friday, March 23, 2018. Local data for February will be posted to the IWD website on Tuesday, March 27, 2018.  |
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