



For Release: 9:00 a.m.
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Contact: Courtney Maxwell Greene (515) 281-9646

Iowa January Unemployment Rate Released

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.5 percent in January 2016. The state’s revised December rate, originally reported as 3.4 percent, was adjusted to 3.5 percent after benchmarking.

Iowa’s jobless rate was 3.8 percent one year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate decreased to 4.9 percent in January. This was the lowest national rate since February 2008.

“January data shows the number of unemployed Iowans increased slightly from December 2015,” said Beth Townsend, director of Iowa Workforce Development. “We will continue to monitor the economic landscape throughout the spring season and actively promote employment opportunities across Iowa.”

The number of unemployed Iowans increased to 59,800 in January from 59,400 in December. The current estimate is 5,200 lower than the year ago level of 65,000. The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,649,400 in January. This figure was 3,400 higher than December and 12,100 higher than one year ago.

Benchmarking is the process of re-estimating statistics as more complete data becomes available. Prior year’s estimates for the Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) programs are benchmarked annually. In March, the revised data is incorporated with the January employment statistics.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa’s nonfarm employment surged ahead 7,900 jobs in January, lifting the total up to 1,581,800 jobs. This month’s gain is the fourth-consecutive increase and was heavily fueled by service industries. Private sectors alone contributed 6,000 jobs, primarily within service sectors; goods producing sectors were little changed compared to December. Government gained 1,900 jobs this month due to higher-than-expected seasonal gains in local government education. With this month’s increase, government is now up 1,000 jobs versus one year ago.

The largest private sector gain was in trade and transportation (+2,200). The increase was fueled by the retail sector (+1,400) which has fared better than expected during the holiday season. Leisure and hospitality also added jobs this month (+2,100) due primarily to increased staffing in accommodations and food services. This sector has also fared well compared to one year ago. Smaller gains this month included other services, financial activities, and manufacturing. Losses were sparse in January and limited to professional and business services (-600) and construction (-400).

Since last January, Iowa has added 23,500 jobs, a gain of 1.5 percent. The largest nonfarm employment gains in Iowa have been in construction (+4,900), due to growth in both residential and commercial/industrial projects. Leisure and hospitality also remains markedly up (+4,600), as does other services (+4,300) and trade and transportation (+4,300). Yearly losses have been limited to only two sectors: manufacturing (-1,700) and information services (-1,200). Manufacturing losses have been limited to durable goods producers. Non-durable goods factories, including food manufacturers, have added jobs annually (+900).

MEDIA ALERT: An audio cut of comments about Iowa’s labor market situation is available by calling (515) 281-6057. Statewide and local data for February 2016 will be released on Friday, March 25, 2016.

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	January 2016	December 2015	January 2015	Change from December 2015	January 2015
Civilian labor force	1,709,300	1,705,400	1,702,300	3,900	7,000
Unemployment	59,800	59,400	65,000	400	-5,200
Unemployment rate	3.5%	3.5%	3.8%	0.0	-0.3
Employment	1,649,400	1,646,000	1,637,300	3,400	12,100
U.S. unemployment rate	4.9%	5.0%	5.7%	-0.1	-0.8

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,581,800	1,573,900	1,558,300	7,900	23,500
Mining	2,300	2,300	2,300	0	0
Construction	82,500	82,900	77,600	-400	4,900
Manufacturing	216,000	215,700	217,700	300	-1,700
Trade, transportation and utilities	319,400	317,200	315,100	2,200	4,300
Information	24,100	23,900	25,300	200	-1,200
Financial activities	107,600	106,900	104,500	700	3,100
Professional and business services	139,000	139,600	138,200	-600	800
Education and health services	226,900	226,600	223,500	300	3,400
Leisure and hospitality	143,700	141,600	139,100	2,100	4,600
Other services	63,600	62,400	59,300	1,200	4,300
Government	256,700	254,800	255,700	1,900	1,000

(above data subject to revision)

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	January 2016	December 2015	January 2015	% Change from December 2015	January 2015
Initial claims	17,704	10,513	20,167	68.4%	-12.2%
Continued claims					
Number of claimants	50,342	40,795	52,994	23.4%	-5.0%
Weeks paid	152,612	140,183	181,785	8.9%	-16.0%
Amount paid	\$55,749,721	\$49,513,589	\$63,155,474	12.6%	-11.7%

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.

For further information on benchmarking please visit the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website at www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm.