



Nonfarm payrolls remain 25,600 below prior peak

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Unemployment rate drops to 4.7% in April

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate declined -0.2 percentage points to 4.7 percent in April and nonfarm payrolls decreased by -7,200 jobs over-the-month, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. March job growth was revised up to show a decrease of -7,700 jobs rather than the preliminary estimate of -8,900 jobs. April's monthly payroll drop kept over-the-year job growth well below the national average. Due to payroll declines for both March and April, Illinois remains -25,600 jobs short of reaching its prior peak employment reached in September 2000.

“Illinois did not participate in the nation's job growth in April,” said IDES Director Jeff Mays. “Furthermore, the decline in the unemployment rate was largely due to a drop in the labor force, not more people working.”

“We continue to see sluggish growth in our economy due to the inability of the legislature to institute common-sense structural changes that would encourage investment in our state,” said Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity Director Sean McCarthy. “If we create a business-friendly environment, we will see greater opportunities and more good paying jobs in every community.”

In April, the three industry sectors with the largest gains in employment were: Education and Health Services (+2,600); Manufacturing (+1,900); and Information Services (+1,300). The largest payroll declines were in the following sectors: Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-7,100); Construction (-4,500); and Leisure and Hospitality (-2,400).

Over-the-year, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +22,100 jobs with the largest gains in these industry sectors in April: Education and Health Services (+16,200); Professional and Business Services (+11,600); Financial Activities (+8,700). Industry sectors with the largest over-the-year declines include: Construction (-6,600); Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-6,500); and Manufacturing (-3,600). The +0.4 percent over-the-year gain in Illinois is about one-fourth as strong as the +1.6 percent gain posted by the nation in April.

The state’s unemployment rate is +0.3 percentage points higher than the national unemployment rate reported for April 2017, which decreased to 4.4 percent. The Illinois unemployment rate is down -1.3 percentage points from a year ago when it was 6.0 percent. At 4.7 percent, the Illinois jobless rate stands at its lowest level since March 2007, after having decreased for three consecutive months.

The number of unemployed workers decreased -4.7 percent from the prior month to 307,000, down -21.9 percent over the same month for the prior year. This brings the number of unemployed workers to its lowest level since February 2007. The labor force decreased -0.3 percent over-the-month and declined by -0.7 percent in April over the prior year. The unemployment rate identifies those individuals who are out of work and are seeking employment. An individual who exhausts or is ineligible for benefits is still reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work.

To help connect jobseekers to employers who are hiring, IDES’ maintains the state’s largest job search engine IllinoisJoblink.com (IJL). IJL recently showed 66,212 posted resumes with 184,170 jobs available.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

	April 2017	March 2017 *	April 2016 *	3-Month Moving Avg.	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
Illinois	4.7%	4.9%	6.0%	5.0%	-0.2	-1.3
U.S.	4.4%	4.5%	5.0%	4.5%	-0.1	-0.6

* Revised

Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry

Industry Title	April* 2017	March** 2017	April 2016	Over the Month Change	Over the Year Change	3-Month Moving Avg.	Change From Previous 3-Month Mov. Avg.
Total Nonfarm	6,029,300	6,036,500	6,007,200	-7,200	22,100	6,036,700	0
Mining	8,200	8,200	8,200	0	0	8,200	100
Construction	211,900	216,400	218,500	-4,500	-6,600	217,200	-1,500
Manufacturing	572,300	570,400	575,900	1,900	-3,600	570,800	1,500
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1,204,700	1,211,800	1,211,200	-7,100	-6,500	1,209,300	-3,200
Information	100,200	98,900	98,400	1,300	1,800	99,400	1,000
Financial Activities	392,100	391,700	383,400	400	8,700	392,000	800
Professional and Business Services	940,900	939,700	929,300	1,200	11,600	941,100	-1,200
Educational and Health Services	927,800	925,200	911,600	2,600	16,200	926,500	2,900
Leisure and Hospitality	596,400	598,800	592,900	-2,400	3,500	596,800	800
Other Services	249,600	250,600	251,400	-1,000	-1,800	249,700	200
Government	825,200	824,800	826,400	400	-1,200	825,600	-1,500

*Preliminary
**Final

- Monthly 2012 - 2016 labor force data for Illinois, and all other states, have been revised as required by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The monthly historical revisions to state labor force estimates reflect new national benchmark controls, state working-age population controls, seasonal factors, as well as updated total nonfarm jobs and unemployment benefits claims inputs. Illinois labor force data were also smoothed to eliminate large monthly changes as a result of volatility in the monthly Census Population Survey (CPS) and national benchmarking. For these reasons, comments and tables citing unemployment rates in previous state news releases/materials might no longer be valid.
- Monthly seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for Illinois and the Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights Metropolitan Division are available here: [Illinois & Chicago Metropolitan Area Unemployment Rates](#)
- Monthly 1990 – 2016 unadjusted and seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll data for Illinois have been revised. To control for potential survey error, the estimates are benchmarked annually to universal counts derived primarily from unemployment insurance tax reports.
- Not seasonally adjusted jobs data with industry detail are available at [Not Seasonally Adjusted Jobs](#). “Other Services” include activities in three broad categories: Personal and laundry; repair and maintenance; and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations. Seasonally adjusted employment data for subsectors within industries are not available.