



# Illinois unemployment rate dips in March

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CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today the unemployment rate decreased by -0.1 percentage point to 4.6 percent in March and nonfarm payrolls decreased by -2,100 jobs over-the-month, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. The February job gain was virtually unchanged from its initial report. (+15,300 jobs versus +15,200 jobs).

Job growth improved in the January to March period posting average monthly gains of +4,000 jobs, an increase over the prior three-month period (October to December 2017) with average monthly gains of +2,200 jobs.

“The number of unemployed in Illinois is at its lowest level since December 2006 and the unemployment rate dipped to its lowest level since March 2007,” said IDES Director Jeff Mays. “The stabilization of the labor force is also an encouraging sign.”

“Professional and Business Services have produced the largest recovery in Illinois, albeit at a lesser rate than the national average,” said DCEO Director Sean McCarthy. “The difference between Illinois and the nation is partly due to significantly slower growth in management of companies and enterprises in the state. This is why the governor and I are on this trade mission to Poland and Germany as we work to improve that standing.”

Over-the-year, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +39,200 jobs with the largest gains in these industry sectors in March: Manufacturing (+18,200); Financial Activities (+7,800); and Government (+6,800). The industry sectors with the largest over-the-year declines include: Information Services (-4,600); Professional and Business Services (-2,700); and Other Services (-1,200). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were up +0.6 percent over-the-year in sharp contrast to the nation’s +1.5 percent over-the-year gain in March.

The state’s unemployment rate is +0.5 percentage points higher than the national unemployment rate reported for March 2018, which held at 4.1 percent. The Illinois unemployment rate is down -0.4 percentage points from a year ago when it was 5.0 percent. The Illinois jobless rate last stood at 4.6 percent in March 2007.

The number of unemployed workers decreased -2.5 percent from the prior month to 297,700, down -7.5 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force was unchanged over-the-month, but it was up +0.1 percentage points 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), which recently showed 59,539 posted resumes with 184,089 jobs available.

**Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates**

	Mar-18	Feb-18	Mar-17	3-month Moving Average	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
Illinois	4.6%	4.7%	5.0%	4.7%	-0.1	-0.4
U.S.	4.1%	4.1%	4.5%	4.1%	0.0	-0.4