



# Illinois unemployment rate matches lowest on record

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**CHICAGO**—The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate fell to 4.1 percent in August and nonfarm payrolls decreased by -5,200 jobs over-the-month, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. The July job gain was revised down slightly from its initial report to show no growth. (+0 jobs versus +3,700 jobs).

Job growth moderated in the June to August period posting average monthly gains of +4,000 jobs over this three-month period, less than the prior 3-month average monthly gain of +8,300 jobs between May and July 2018.

“Illinois’ unemployment rate stood at 4.1% in August, matching the lowest rate on record,” said IDES Director Jeff Mays. “Even with the over-the-month drop, nonfarm payrolls have surpassed the prior business cycle peak of September 2000. Jobs are still up more than 47,000 over the year, led by manufacturing.”

“The positive job growth over the last year indicates that efforts to improve the Illinois economy and actively recruit new investment are paying off,” said Illinois Department of Commerce Director Sean McCarthy. “Illinois is seeing the best employment environment since 1999, demonstrating that companies can see the potential to grow in our state.”

In August, the three industry sectors with the largest over-the-month gains in employment were: Professional and Business Services (+900); Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+400); and Financial Activities (+400). The industry sectors with the largest payroll declines were: Leisure and Hospitality (-3,600); Education and Health Services (-1,300); and Construction (-1,200).

Over-the-year, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +47,500 jobs with the largest gains in these industry sectors in August: Manufacturing (+11,300); Government (+10,

500); and Financial Activities (+8,200). The industry sectors with over-the-year declines were: Information Services (-3,200) and Other Services (-600). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were up +0.8 percent over-the-year in sharp contrast to the nation’s +1.6 percent over-the-year gain in August.

The state’s unemployment rate is +0.2 percentage points higher than the national unemployment rate reported for August 2018, which held at 3.9 percent. The Illinois unemployment rate is down -0.9 percentage points from a year ago when it was 5.0 percent. The Illinois jobless rate last stood at 4.1 percent in February 1999. The difference between the Illinois unemployment rate and the U.S. rate represents the smallest gap since December 2010.

The number of unemployed workers decreased -1.3 percent from the prior month to 268,700, down -16.9 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force decreased -0.1 percent over-the-month and declined -0.2 percent over-the-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 56,784 posted resumes with 207,510 jobs available.

**Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates**

	Aug-18	Jul-18	Aug-17	3-month Moving Average	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
Illinois	4.1%	4.2%	5.0%	4.2%	-0.1	-0.9
U.S.	3.9%	3.9%	4.4%	3.9%	0.0	-0.5

**Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry**

	Aug-18	Jul-18	Aug-17	Over the	Over the	3-month	Change from Previous 3-month
	Current *	Prior mnth**	Year Ago	Month	Year	Moving Avg	Moving Avg
IL - Total Nonfarm	6,120,000	6,125,200	6,072,500	-5,200	47,500	6,123,500	4,000
IL - Mining	7,700	7,700	7,700	0	0	7,700	0
IL - Construction	226,200	227,400	220,900	-1,200	5,300	226,500	0
IL - Manufacturing	588,400	588,700	577,100	-300	11,300	588,600	300
IL - Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,215,100	1,214,700	1,212,300	400	2,800	1,214,600	-1,200
IL - Information	93,000	92,700	96,200	300	-3,200	93,000	-200
IL - Financial Activities	400,000	399,600	391,800	400	8,200	399,500	200
IL - Professional and Business Services	948,100	947,200	944,100	900	4,000	946,900	2,500
IL - Educational and Health Services	928,100	929,400	923,700	-1,300	4,400	929,400	-300
IL - Leisure and Hospitality	618,100	621,700	613,300	-3,600	4,800	620,300	900
IL - Other Services	251,800	252,200	252,400	-400	-600	252,500	0
IL - Government	843,500	843,900	833,000	-400	10,500	844,500	1,800

\* preliminary  
\*\*Final

- 1976-2017 seasonally adjusted 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. In February 2018, the BLS also introduced a new seasonal adjustment procedure for state labor force estimates which resulted in the entire monthly historical series for Illinois and all other states being replaced. For all of these reasons, the comments and tables citing unemployment rates in previous state news releases/materials may 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 2013-2017 seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment 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. Effective with January 2018 estimates, the BLS introduced concurrent seasonal adjustment for monthly state nonfarm payroll employment estimates

- 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

About IDES : IDES encourages employment by connecting employers to jobseekers, provides unemployment insurance benefits to eligible individuals, produces labor

market data and protects taxpayers from unemployment insurance fraud. Visit the Department's website at [www.ides.illinois.gov](http://www.ides.illinois.gov) for more information. You can also follow IDES on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).