



# Unemployment Rate Falls to New Historic Low in September

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter  
October 18 2019 9:36 AM

**CHICAGO**—The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that nonfarm payrolls increased +4,800 jobs compared to last month, and the unemployment rate was 3.9 percent in September, down -0.1 percentage point from the prior month, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. The September unemployment rate established a new record low for the state, following the previous record set in August. The August monthly change in payrolls was revised from the preliminary report (from -1,400 to -5,800 jobs).

The state's unemployment rate is +0.4 percentage points higher than the national unemployment rate reported for September 2019, which was 3.5 percent and down -0.2 percentage point from the previous month. The Illinois unemployment rate was down -0.3 percentage point from a year ago when it was 4.2 percent.

Illinois payroll employment has shown variability since the beginning of the year, as have national payrolls. Average payroll employment in Illinois during the July to September three-month period, which provides a more stable measure of payroll employment change, was about unchanged, up +100 jobs. The largest average gains were found in Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+1,400), Government (+600), Financial Activities (+400) and Educational and Health Services (+400).

“We’re working hard to make sure Illinois’ economy works for everyone, and this administration is pleased to see the unemployment rate in Illinois reach a historic low – and we’ll keep building on that success by strengthening schools, improving our business climate and investing in infrastructure,” said Deputy Governor Dan Hynes. “That is why we raised the minimum wage for our workers, passed a balanced budget that invests in education, and passed Rebuild Illinois, the historic bipartisan capital plan that lays the foundation for long term economic growth in every region of the state.”

“Governor Pritzker remains committed to creating an environment where both businesses and working people can thrive,” said Erin Guthrie, Acting Director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. “With the recently-released Five-Year Economic Plan as our roadmap, I look forward to working with the Governor to implement strategies and policies that will keep Illinois on the path to success.

Compared to a year ago, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +66,600 jobs with the largest gains in these industry sectors in September: Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+17,900), Leisure and Hospitality (+16,700) and Educational and Health Services (+14,900). The industry sectors with over-the-year declines were: Information (-3,300), Mining (-400) and Construction (-100). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were up +1.1 percent over-the-year as compared to the nation’s +1.4 percent over-the-year gain in September.

The number of unemployed workers decreased from the prior month, -2.5 percent to 255,900, a new record low, and was down -6.5 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force was about unchanged over-the-month but up +0.7 percentage point 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 60,315 posted resumes with 101,544 jobs available.

## **Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates**

### **Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industr**

- 2014-2018 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. For 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 1990-2018 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.
- 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 availabl

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](#).