



Illinois Unemployment Rate Drops to New Historical Low in December

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate fell -0.1 percentage point to 3.7 percent, a new historical low, while nonfarm payrolls added +8,000 jobs in December, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. The November monthly change in payrolls was revised from the preliminary report from -17,200 to -13,400 jobs.

The state's unemployment rate is +0.2 percentage points higher than the national unemployment rate reported for December 2019, which was 3.5 percent, unchanged from the previous month. The Illinois unemployment rate was down -0.6 percentage point from a year ago when it was 4.3 percent.

Illinois payroll employment has shown variability since the beginning of the year, as have national payrolls. Average payroll employment in Illinois during the October to December three-month period, which provides a more stable measure of payroll employment change, was up +900 jobs, compared to the September to November three-month period. The largest average gains were found in Educational and Health Services (+2,900), Leisure and Hospitality (+1,900) and Government (+1,700).

“Over the past year, Governor Pritzker has worked hard to improve Illinois’ economy and create the conditions for good jobs around the state that will build long-term economic success,” said Deputy Governor Dan Hynes. “From the bipartisan balanced budget and historic Rebuild Illinois infrastructure plan to lifting up workers and families by raising the minimum wage, this administration is creating an economy that works for everyone.”

“Governor Pritzker has implemented a number of policies and strategies that continue to address the needs of the diverse Illinois workforce,” said Erin Guthrie, Acting Director

of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. “The Five-Year Economic and Rebuild Illinois Plans, coupled with the minimum wage increase, are steps that will help create a symbiotic environment in which businesses and workers can thrive.”

Compared to a year ago, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +45,000 jobs with the largest gains in: Educational and Health Services (+17,100), Leisure and Hospitality (+16,900), and Government (+13,400). The industry sectors with the largest over-the-year declines were: Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-4,600), Manufacturing (-1,900) and Construction (-1,200). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were up +0.7 percent over-the-year as compared to the nation’s +1.4 percent over-the-year gain in December.

The number of unemployed workers decreased from the prior month, -2.4 percent to 240,100, a new record low, and was down -13.2 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force was down -0.3 percent over-the-month but up +0.1 percent over-the-year. The unemployment rate identifies those individuals who are out of work and seeking employment.

An individual who exhausts or is ineligible for benefits is still reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work. IDES maintains the state’s largest job search engine, [Illinois Job Link](#) (IJL), to help connect jobseekers to employers who are hiring, which recently showed 60,792 posted resumes with 90,561 jobs available.