

Statewide Unemployment Rate Up, Jobs Nearly Unchanged In December

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SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate increased +0.7 percentage point to 7.6 percent, while nonfarm payrolls were nearly unchanged, down -2,500 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 -20,000 to -16,200 jobs. The November unemployment rate was unchanged from the preliminary report, holding at 6.9 percent.

The December payroll jobs estimate and unemployment rate reflects activity for the week including the 12th. The BLS has published [FAQs](#) for the December payroll jobs and the unemployment rate.

The state's unemployment rate was +0.9 percentage point higher than the national unemployment rate reported for December, which was 6.7 percent, unchanged from the previous month. The Illinois unemployment rate was up +3.9 percentage points from a year ago when it was 3.7 percent.

In December, the three industry sectors with the largest over-the-month gains in employment were: Professional and Business Services (+13,000), Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+10,100), and Construction (+8,300). The industry sectors that reported the monthly payroll declines were: Leisure and Hospitality (-40,900), Information (-1,300), and Other Services (-800).

“The administration remains focused on continuing to support claimants and their families through the pandemic’s ongoing impact on our economy,” said Deputy Governor Dan Hynes. “This includes standing up new unemployment programs enacted through federal legislation, ensuring claimants get the help they need to process their claims, and rebuilding our economy in the weeks and months ahead to ensure working families get the opportunities they deserve.”

“While Illinois is making important progress with administering vaccines which will protect our health and allow a gradual reopening of our economy – we can see in today’s data that COVID-19 continues to place an extraordinary burden on businesses, workers and communities in Illinois,” said Erin Guthrie, Director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). “Under the Governor’s leadership, our administration is committed to taking necessary action to aid in an economic recovery that will reopen our businesses and return our workers to the job. This work began with the historic and equitable launch of more than \$1 billion in relief since last March and will continue in the months ahead as we invest in programs to help restore our smallest and most vulnerable businesses and to revitalize our Illinois economy.”

Compared to a year ago, nonfarm payroll employment decreased by -423,300 jobs, with losses across nearly all major industries. The industry groups with the largest jobs decreases were: Leisure and Hospitality (-198,100), Educational and Health Services (-58,300) and Government (-48,700). The only industry group with an over-the-year jobs increase was Construction (+1,000). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were down -6.9 percent over-the-year as compared to the nation’s -6.2 percent over-the-year decline in December.

The number of unemployed workers rose from the prior month, a +9.5 percent increase to 466,200 and was up +97.4 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force was up +0.1 percent over-the-month and down -4.1 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.

In May, Governor Pritzker launched [Get Hired Illinois](#), a new one-stop-shop website to help connect job seekers with hiring employers in real time. The site features virtual job fairs, no-cost virtual training, and includes [Illinois Job Link](#) (IJL), the state's largest job search engine, which recently showed 43,352 posted resumes with 91,765 available jobs.

Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry

- 2015-2019 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 Current Population Survey (CPS) and national benchmarking. For these reasons, the comments and tables citing unemployment rates in previous 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](#).
- Monthly 2011-2019 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 [here](#). “Other Services” include activities in three broad categories: personal and laundry; repair and maintenance; and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations. Seasonally adjusted data for subsectors within industries are not available.

About the Department of Employment Security

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) provides vital employment services to Illinois workers, employers, and job seekers with resources including [Job Fairs](#) and [Illinois Job Link](#), analyzes and disseminates actionable [Labor Market Information](#), and administers the [Unemployment Insurance Program](#). To see the full range of services provided by IDES, and for the latest news concerning the department, visit [IDES.Illinois.gov](https://www.ides.illinois.gov).