

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ROBERT BENTLEY
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**** Attached are maps showing individual county unemployment rates and detailed county unemployment data ****

Alabama's September Unemployment Rate Falls to 8.3%

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley announced Friday that Alabama's preliminary September unemployment rate fell to 8.3%, down from the August rate of 8.5%, and below last year's rate of 8.8%.

September's rate represents 177,848 unemployed persons, down from 183,267 last month and 192,667 in September 2011.

"More Alabamians are working this month, and that is certainly good news for the state," Governor Robert Bentley said. "We still have a long way to go, and I will continue doing everything I can to put Alabamians back to work."

"This drop in the unemployment rate is more consistent with what we've been seeing over the past few months: unemployment claims going down, fewer WARN notices, and record numbers of available jobs," Alabama Department of Labor Director Tom Surtees said.

The number of initial unemployment claims dropped by 19% from last year. There were 18,525 initial claims in September, compared to 22,890 last year.

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices are required submissions when businesses employing more than 100 are planning a mass layoff or closing. Thus far this year, the state's Rapid Response unit has received notification of 3,977 layoffs, compared to 14,184 in 2009, the height of the recession. The reduction in these notices indicates that employers are more confident and willing to keep their workforces.

Alabama's online jobs database, www.joblink.alabama.gov, is continuing to see record breaking numbers of jobs, logging a high of 12,764 new job orders in September.

"As far as unemployment compensation goes, nearly every indicator we measure is well below pre-recession levels. Claims data don't directly impact the unemployment rate, but they do allow us to gauge the frequency with which people are losing their jobs," Surtees added.

First payments in September were 5,346, below the 2008 level of 10,065. Benefits payments in September were \$20,250,885, also below the 2008 level of \$28,532,386. Additionally, the number of weeks compensated and the number of weeks claimed followed the same trend, with 100,128 weeks compensated in September compared to 145,546 in 2008, and 121,910 weeks claimed in September compared to 164,045 in 2008.

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates were: Shelby County at 5.2%, Coffee County at 6.2%, and Lee, Limestone, and Madison Counties at 6.4%. The counties with the highest

unemployment rates were: Wilcox County at 17.8%, Bullock County at 15.4%, and Dallas County at 15.1%.

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For additional information, contact the Governor's Press Office at 334-242-7150.