



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: March 28, 2014

Alabama's February Unemployment Rate is 6.4%

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's preliminary seasonally adjusted February unemployment rate is 6.4%, up from January's rate of 6.1%, and below the February 2013 rate of 6.6%. February's rate represents 137,256 unemployed persons, compared to 130,456 in January, and 142,855 in February 2013.

“Although we saw an uptick in the state's unemployment rate, we also saw an increase in the number of people working, as well as the number of people in the labor force,” said Surtees. “These indicators, combined with an increase in the number of jobs reported by employers, tell me that more people are out in the workforce – either looking for jobs or working, and that is certainly good news.”

In February, the number of people working in Alabama increased to 1,996,720 from 1,990,938 in January (seasonally adjusted). The Civilian Labor Force, or people who are either working or actively seeking work, increased to 2,133,976 from 2,121,394 in January (seasonally adjusted).

Wage and salary employment, which is the measure of how many jobs Alabama's economy supports and is reported by employers, increased 8,700 over the month. Gains were seen in the professional and business services sector (+3,000), the government sector (+2,700), the education and health services sector (+1,600), and the leisure and hospitality sector (+1,200), among others.

“Additionally, we continue to see high numbers of jobs posted on JobLink, the state's free online jobs database, and online ads for jobs statewide top 48,000,” continued Surtees. “Just this week, we announced that we would be offering additional career center services in Lowndes County, which has one of the higher unemployment rates in the state. Hopefully the free services offered there will help the unemployed citizens in that area get back to work.”

There were 18,955 active job orders placed on JobLink in February. The Help Wanted Online (HWOL) data show that 48,213 job ads were placed online in February.

A complete listing of career centers is available at: www.joblink.alabama.gov.

Counties with lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 5.1%, Lee County at 5.9%, and Autauga County at 6.3%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 16.9%, Perry County at 13.3%, and Dallas County at 13.1%.

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Members of the media seeking more information should contact Communications Director Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.

“Seasonal adjustment” refers to BLS’s practice of anticipating certain trends in the labor force, such as hiring during the holidays or the surge in the labor force when students graduate in the spring, and removing their effects to the civilian labor force.

The Current Population (CPS), or the household survey, is conducted by the Census Bureau and identifies members of the work force and measures how many people are working or looking for work.

The establishment survey, which is conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), a division of the U.S. Department of Labor, surveys employers to measure how many jobs are in the economy. This is also referred to as wage and salary employment.