

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

STATE OF ALABAMA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 2015

Alabama's July Unemployment Rate is 6.2%

All Counties' Year over Year Rates Improved

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted July unemployment rate is 6.2%.

"We continue to show strong yearly growth in our jobs numbers as reported by Alabama employers," Governor Bentley said. "Employment is up by more than 30,000, and is at its highest point for the same time period since 2008. This is a strong indicator that employers are continuing to hire, and we are getting closer and closer to the two million mark – numbers that reflect pre-recession employment in Alabama."

Over the year, wage and salary employment increased 30,700 to 1,945,600, with gains in the education and health services sector (+10,400), the professional and business services sector (+5,600), the leisure and hospitality sector (+5,400), and the construction sector (+3,800), among others. The last time wage and salary employment was equal to or greater than 1,945,600 was in July 2008, when it was 1,989,000.

Monthly gains were seen in the professional and business services sector (+1,600), the education and health services sector (+1,200), and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+800), among others.

"The reason that our unemployment rate is virtually unchanged is mostly due to continued seasonal effects," Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. "It is not uncommon to see stagnant or increased unemployment rates during the summer months, as many education employees remain out of work."

JobLink, the state's online free jobs database (www.joblink.alabama.gov), registered 27,896 active job orders in July.

“Over the year, 66 counties experienced a drop in their unemployment rate, and the 67th county saw no change. This is excellent news,” continued Washington. “Every single Alabama county is doing better now than they were one year ago.”

Choctaw County was the only county that did not see a drop in its rate, which remained unchanged.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.6%, Elmore and Baldwin Counties at 5.6%, and Cullman and St. Clair Counties at 5.7%.

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“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.