



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: April 18, 2014

Alabama's March Unemployment Rate is 6.7%

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's March seasonally adjusted preliminary unemployment rate is 6.7%, which is above February's rate of 6.4%, and above March 2013's rate of 6.6%. March's rate represents 144,628 unemployed persons, compared to 137,232 in February and 141,015 in March 2013.

“The unemployment rate increased this month because we saw the labor force grow by more than 14,000, and we saw the number of working Alabamians increase by nearly 7,000,” said Surtees. “These employment numbers are the highest they've been in at least nine months, which indicates increased confidence in the job market and that people are getting back to work.”

The number of people in the labor force increased to 2,148,148 in March from 2,133,948 in February. The number of people employed increased to 2,003,520 in March from 1,996,716 in February.

The last time the number of people in the labor force was at or above March's number was in April 2013, when it was 2,149,576. The last time the number of people employed was at or above March's number was June 2013, when it was 2,004,249.

“Additionally, employers reported over 12,000 more jobs this month, and the construction industry showed a gain for the first time in months,” Surtees continued. “This data, along with the nearly 20,000 jobs we are consistently reporting on JobLink, the state's free online jobs database, tells us that employers are hiring in Alabama.”

Wage and salary employment increased 12,400 over the month, with gains in the leisure and hospitality industry (+5,500), the trade, transportation, and utilities industry (+2,300), the government industry (+2,200), and the construction industry (+1,800).

The state's Help Wanted Online (HWOL) data, which tracks online job postings throughout the state, shows that more than 48,700 job ads were placed online in March. Truck drivers,

supervisors of retail sales workers, and registered nurses top the most in-demand jobs in Alabama.

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.8%, Lee County at 5.7%, and Cullman and Cherokee Counties at 5.9%. The counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 16.4%, Perry County at 13.2%, and Dallas County at 12.5%.

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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.