



## Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

### News Release

For Immediate Release: June 15, 2012

### Alabama's May Unemployment Rate is 7.4%

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's preliminary May unemployment rate is 7.4%, up from 7.2% in April. May's rate represents 159,218 unemployed persons, compared to 154,012 last month, and 203,806 in May 2011.

“While it's certainly never a good thing to report an increase in the unemployment rate, I have to say this one was expected,” said Surtees. “We traditionally see an increase in the May and June rates as more people enter the workforce in the form of new graduates and education staff who aren't working during the summer months. In addition, the national unemployment rate rose slightly, and the states usually follow the nation's lead.”

The national unemployment rate for May was 8.2%, up from 8.1% in April.

Alabama's workforce grew by more than 6,000 people in May. The seasonally adjusted civilian labor force measured 2,143,105, up from 2,137,043 in April.

Additionally, unemployment compensation claims data continues to indicate economic improvement. Initial claims for benefits are down 34.7% from last year. The number of initial claims recorded in May 2012 was 22,865, compared to 34,995 in May 2011.

The counties with the lowest unemployment rate were: Shelby County at 5.2%, Coffee County at 6.3%, Limestone County at 6.4% and Autauga County at 6.4%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates were: Wilcox County at 16.2%, Lowndes County at 15.0%, and Dallas County at 13.3%.

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*Members of the media needing more information should contact Public Information Manager Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.*