

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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STATE OF ALABAMA

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Alabama's Unemployment Rate Drops to 6.9%

Economy Added Nearly 9,400 Jobs Over the Month, and Nearly 20,000 Jobs Over the Year

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted August unemployment rate is 6.9%, down from July's rate of 7.0%. August's rate represents 147,346 unemployed persons, compared to 148,652 in July.

"September's unemployment rate drop is good news for Alabama," Governor Robert Bentley said. "We've seen more jobs come online, and those jobs are being filled by people who want to work. The Alabama workforce is strong, and our commitment to job creation is just as strong. Our job recruitment efforts will continue until every Alabamian who wants a job has the opportunity to find one."

Wage and salary employment rose in August by 9,400. Monthly gains were seen in the professional and business services sector (+4,200), the construction sector (+2,300), and the government sector (+1,800), among others. The number of construction jobs the economy supported this month (83,400) marks the most that particular sector has seen since December 2010 (83,500).

"This month's unemployment rate reflects what usually happens as the summer winds down," Department of Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. "The slight decrease in the labor force reflects people going to back to school and no longer searching for work. Additionally, increases in jobs in local government and decreases in jobs in the leisure and hospitality sector further reflect the anticipated trend of people leaving summer employment and returning to school-related jobs."

Over the year, wage and salary employment increased by 19,500, with gains in the leisure and hospitality sector (+6,500), the manufacturing sector (+6,200), and the professional and business services sector (+5,200), among others.

JobLink, the state's free online jobs database (www.joblink.alabama.gov), registered 24,413 active job orders in August. The Help Wanted Online (HWOL) data showed

54,161 total job ads were placed online in Alabama, up 1.58% from July. The most advertised careers continue to be: truck drivers, retail supervisors, and registered nurses.

“Additionally, all but two counties saw their unemployment rates decrease in August,” continued Washington. “Dallas, Greene, and Wilcox Counties, which are traditionally the counties with some of the highest unemployment rates, all saw their unemployment rates drop by nearly 2% - the largest decreases in unemployment rates in the entire state this month.”

Dallas and Greene Counties experienced a decrease in their unemployment rate of 1.8%, and Wilcox County’s rate decreased by 1.9%.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 5.1%, Blount County at 5.7%, and Cullman, Lee, and Baldwin Counties at 5.8%.

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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.