



## Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

### News Release

For Immediate Release: Friday, July 17, 2009

### Alabama's Unemployment Rate Rises to 10.1% *DIR Hiring Additional Employees to Assist the Jobless*

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's June unemployment rate rose to 10.1%, up from 9.8% in May. The comparable June national rate is 9.5%.

The 10.1% figure represents 215,617 unemployed Alabamians. The sectors of Leisure & Hospitality, Other Services, Financial Activities, Construction, and Professional & Business Services experienced gains, while the Government, Education & Health Services, Manufacturing, Trade, Transportation & Utilities, Natural Resources & Mining, and Information sectors experienced losses. The counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby at 7.6%, Madison at 7.9%, and Coffee at 8.2%. Counties with the highest rates are: Wilcox at 24.4%, Dallas at 20.0%, and Perry at 19.4%.

“As I've said for many months now, as long as the nation continues to suffer from this recession, so will Alabama,” said Surtees. “Unemployment also tends to be a lagging indicator of economic recovery. With that said, we at DIR are doing everything we can to help the thousands of jobless Alabamians.”

In response to the increasing unemployment situation, the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations has increased its Call Center personnel by 55% since April 2008, when Alabama's unemployment rate began to be affected by the recession.

The Department has added an additional Call Center staffed with 20 new employees, who will begin taking calls from claimants next week, following a three week training period. The new employees' primary function is to take initial claims and handle processing issues with initial internet claims.

67 Call Center employees have been added since April 2008.

Unemployed Alabamians who need to file for unemployment compensation benefits can do so in two ways. They can file on the internet at [www.dir.alabama.gov](http://www.dir.alabama.gov), or call 1-866-234-5382.

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