



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: June 20, 2014

Alabama's May Unemployment Rate is 6.8%

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced Alabama's preliminary seasonally adjusted May unemployment rate is 6.8%, down from April's rate of 6.9%. May's rate represents 147,068 unemployed persons, compared to 147,229 in April and 138,432 in May 2013.

"My goal is for every Alabamian who wants a job to have the opportunity to find a job, and we are heading in the right direction," Governor Robert Bentley said. "Each month since I have been Governor, the number of jobs has increased when compared to the same month one year earlier, and initial unemployment claims continue to be the lowest in five years. While we still have a long way to go before Alabama is at full employment, we are making progress."

Wage and salary employment increased in May by 4,700, rising to 1,925,000. Monthly gains were seen in the leisure and hospitality sector (+2,200), the manufacturing sector (+1,700), the professional and business services sector (+1,200), the government sector (+500), and the construction sector (+200), among others. Over the year, wage and salary employment increased 12,200, with gains in the leisure and hospitality sector (+4,600), the professional and business services sector (+3,700), the manufacturing sector (+2,900), and the education and health services sector (+1,900), among others.

"We have seen increases in wage and salary employment for the past four months," Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees said. "In fact, the number of jobs supported by Alabama's economy is at its highest point since January 2009, when the recession really began to affect Alabama's employment picture."

Wage and salary employment in January 2009 measured 1,905,600.

"Additionally, more than 26,000 job orders were placed on JobLink, Alabama's free online jobs database in May – this is, by far, the most job orders ever recorded in the site's nine year history.

This, combined with the more than 50,000 jobs announced by the Alabama Department of Commerce, show that employers are hiring in Alabama,” Surtees added.

JobLink, the state’s online free jobs database (www.joblink.alabama.gov), registered a record 26,190 active job orders in May.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.4%, Lee County at 4.8%, and Cullman and Baldwin Counties at 5.1%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 15.6%, Dallas County at 12.1%, and Lowndes County at 11.9%.

*This was originally released by the Alabama Governor’s Office and can be found at: <http://governor.alabama.gov/newsroom/2014/06/alabamas-may-unemployment-rate-6-8/>

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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.

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Members of the media seeking more information should contact Communications Director Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.