



## Alabama Department of Labor

### News Release

For Immediate Release: June 17, 2016

### Alabama's May Unemployment Rate is Unchanged at 6.1%

*Wage & Salary Employment Nearing 2 Million; All Metro Areas Experienced a Yearly Rate Drop*

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington announced today that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted May unemployment rate is 6.1%, unchanged from both April 2016's rate and May 2015's rate. May's rate represents 132,106 unemployed persons, compared to 133,252 in April and 130,722 in May 2015.

“These numbers show that we are continuing to see job growth in Alabama,” said Governor Robert Bentley. “We are working hard every day to put Alabamians back to work. Though this month's percentage remains the same, more people are working today than a month ago and more people are looking for work. This is a sign that the economy is on the right track, as we continue to work diligently to bring more jobs to Alabama.”

The Civilian Labor Force (CLF), which is made up of people who are working or looking for work, increased in May both over the month and over the year. 40,548 more people are working or looking for work in May 2016 than there were in May 2015. The number of people who are counted as employed also increased over the month and the year, with 39,164 more working this year than last.

“Our wage and salary employment continues to show marked improvement,” said Fitzgerald Washington, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Labor. “We're less than 25,000 jobs away from reaching the two million mark, which has been among the highest number of jobs our economy has ever supported over the last 20 years. I'm optimistic that we will reach this milestone this year.”

Over the year, wage and salary employment increased 20,000, with gains in the professional and business services sector (+7,300), the education and health services sector (+5,200), and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+4,600), among others.

Wage and salary employment increased in May by 4,200. Monthly gains were seen in the government sector (+1,800), the leisure and hospitality sector (+1,700), and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+1,300), among others.

Sixty-five of Alabama's 67 counties experienced no change or a decrease in their rate over the year. Additionally, all of Alabama's metropolitan statistical areas saw their rates decrease over the year as well.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.2%, Elmore County at 4.8%, and Cherokee County at 4.9%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 13.5%, Lowndes County at 10.7%, and Clarke County at 10.6%.

Major cities with the lowest unemployment rates are: Vestavia Hills at 3.6%, Homewood at 3.7%, and Alabaster and Hoover at 4.2%. Major cities with the highest unemployment rates are: Selma at 10.3%, Prichard at 9.1%, and Bessemer at 8.4%.

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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.*