



JB Pritzker, Governor
Thomas D. Chan, Acting Director

NEWS RELEASE

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Unemployment Falls to New Historical Low in January *First Time in Ten Years Illinois Falls Below National Rate*

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate fell -0.2 percentage point to 3.5 percent, a new record low, while nonfarm payrolls added +16,600 jobs in January, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. The December monthly change in payrolls was revised from the preliminary report from +8,000 to +12,000 jobs.

The state's unemployment rate is -0.1 percentage point lower than the national unemployment rate reported for January, which was 3.6 percent, up +0.1 percentage point from the previous month. This was the first time the state unemployment rate was lower than the national unemployment rate since November 2010. The Illinois unemployment rate was down -0.9 percentage point from a year ago when it was 4.4 percent.

Statewide monthly payroll employment can be subject to volatility. The three-month average Illinois payroll employment, which provides a more stable measure of payroll employment change, was up +5,800 jobs during the November to January three-month period, compared to the October to December three-month period. The largest average gains were found in Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+2,100), Educational and Health Services (+2,100) and Leisure and Hospitality (+1,600).

“Governor Pritzker has remained dedicated to improving Illinois’ economy, expanding job-growth, and building foundations for long-term success with the historic Rebuild Illinois infrastructure plan,” said Deputy Governor Dan Hynes. “Rebuild Illinois and its next phase will make further investments in infrastructure and continue to provide workers and families the opportunity to take part in the state’s economy.”

“A strong economy is built on the foundation of strong infrastructure, and Governor Pritzker has made both of these a priority of his administration,” said Erin Guthrie, Acting Director of the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. “The new wave of Rebuild Illinois is an important building block to addressing and investing in infrastructure in communities that have been neglected for far too long.”

Compared to a year ago, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +9,100 jobs with the largest gains in: Educational and Health Services (+17,100), Government (+10,000) and Financial Activities (+6,400). The industry sectors with the largest over-the-year declines were: Manufacturing (-13,900), Professional and Business Services (-11,400) and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-3,300). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were up +0.1 percentage point over-the-year as compared to the nation’s +1.4 percent over-the-year gain in January.

The number of unemployed workers decreased from the prior month, -3.6 percent to 227,700, a new record low, and was down -19.6 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force was down -0.2 percent over-the-month and -0.9 percent over-the-year. The unemployment rate identifies those individuals who are out of work and seeking employment.

An individual who exhausts or is ineligible for benefits is still reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work. IDES maintains the state’s largest job search engine, [Illinois Job Link](#) (IJL), to help connect jobseekers to employers who are hiring, which recently showed 61,549 posted resumes with 96,799 jobs available.



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Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

	Jan-20	Dec-19	Jan-19	3-month Moving Average	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
Illinois	3.5%	3.7%	4.4%	3.6%	-0.2	-0.9
U.S.	3.6%	3.5%	4.0%	3.5%	0.1	-0.4

Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry

	Jan-20 Current *	Dec-19 Prior month**	Jan-19 Year Ago	Over the Month	Over the Year	3-month Moving Avg	Change from Previous 3-month Moving Avg
IL - Total Nonfarm	6,133,800	6,117,200	6,124,700	16,600	9,100	6,118,700	5,800
IL - Mining	8,100	8,100	8,100	0	0	8,100	-100
IL - Construction	225,800	223,100	228,200	2,700	-2,400	223,700	200
IL - Manufacturing	577,000	577,800	590,900	-800	-13,900	577,800	-900
IL - Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,208,000	1,200,100	1,211,300	7,900	-3,300	1,202,400	2,100
IL - Information	95,900	95,900	95,300	0	600	95,600	-300
IL - Financial Activities	414,000	413,900	407,600	100	6,400	413,800	400
IL - Professional and Business Services	937,900	936,500	949,300	1,400	-11,400	937,000	-900
IL - Educational and Health Services	951,900	949,700	934,800	2,200	17,100	948,700	2,100
IL - Leisure and Hospitality	625,600	624,400	622,200	1,200	3,400	623,300	1,600
IL - Other Services	258,100	257,000	255,500	1,100	2,600	257,100	900
IL - Government	831,500	830,700	821,500	800	10,000	831,200	700

* Preliminary
** Final

- 2015-2019 seasonally adjusted labor force data for Illinois, and all other states, have been revised as required by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The monthly historical revisions to state labor force estimates reflect new national benchmark controls, state working-age population controls, seasonal factors, as well as updated total nonfarm jobs and unemployment benefits claims inputs. Illinois labor force data were also smoothed to eliminate large monthly changes as a result of volatility in the monthly Census Population Survey (CPS) and national benchmarking. For these reasons, the comments and tables citing unemployment rates in previous news releases/materials may no longer be valid.
- Monthly seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for Illinois and the Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights Metropolitan Division are available [here](#).
- Monthly 2011-2019 seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment data for Illinois have been revised. To control for potential survey error, the estimates are benchmarked annually to universal counts derived primarily from unemployment insurance tax reports.
- Not seasonally adjusted jobs data with industry detail are available [here](#). “Other Services” include activities in three broad categories: personal and laundry; repair and maintenance; and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations. Seasonally adjusted data for subsectors within industries are not available.

About the Department of Employment Security

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) provides vital employment services to Illinois workers, employers, and job seekers with resources including [Job Fairs](#) and [Illinois Job Link](#), analyzes and disseminates actionable [Labor Market Information](#), and administers the [Unemployment Insurance Program](#). To see the full range of services provided by IDES, and for the latest news concerning the department, visit IDES.Illinois.gov.

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