



1001 North 23<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Post Office Box 94094  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9094

(O) 225-342-3035  
(F) 225-342-3743  
[www.laworks.net](http://www.laworks.net)

John Bel Edwards, Governor  
Ava Dejoie, Executive Director

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Media Contact:  
LWC Public Affairs (225) 342-3035

# N E W S R E L E A S E

## Louisiana employment improving, unemployment down and available jobs up

BATON ROUGE – Louisiana’s not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 4.0 percent in February. From January, this figure is down 0.4 percentage points. Compared to this time last year, this figure is down 1.4 percent. As reported last week, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped 0.1 percent to 4.5 percent. Compared to February 2017, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is down 1.2 percent. This decline represents the second largest over-the-year drop in the nation.

Not-seasonally adjusted data are useful for comparing trends in parishes and metropolitan statistical areas, and for comparing them to the state. Notably, every metropolitan statistical area (MSA) unemployment rate declined in February, with Hammond and Alexandria declining 0.6 percentage points over the month. The Houma MSA unemployment rate declined 0.5 percentage points from January. From February 2017, Houma’s MSA is down 2.1 percent.

From January 2018, not seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 14,800 jobs. Not seasonally adjusted private sector employment gained 1,100 jobs from February 2017. From January 2018, private sector employment increased by 10,400 jobs. Private sector employment is defined as nonfarm employment minus government jobs. Although not seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment decreased by 1,600 jobs from February 2017, these losses follow national trends with losses primarily in retail trade. The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) continues to provide training and placement services in growth sectors such as health care.

When looking at the number of not seasonally adjusted employed individuals, Louisiana saw an increase of 62,782 from February 2017. From January 2018, the number of not seasonally adjusted employed individuals increased by 24,780. The number of not seasonally adjusted unemployed individuals saw a decrease of 26,721 when comparing figures from February 2017. From January 2018, the number of not seasonally adjusted unemployed individuals decreased by 8,181.

The not seasonally adjusted civilian labor force, or the number of individuals who are employed in addition to those looking for work, increased by 36,061 from February 2017. From January 2018, the not seasonally adjusted civilian labor force increased by 16,599.

“There are thousands of jobs available within our online Helping Individuals Reach Employment (HiRE) system,” said LWC Executive Director Ava Dejoie. “I encourage everyone who is looking for a job to visit our [HiRE](#) website and apply, or visit one of the local offices located throughout the state. We will continue to work with employers and industry partners to ensure their talent needs are met. We also continue to invest in re-training and skill development of every job-seeker. Our job is not finished until every one of those jobs are filled, and every Louisiana resident is able to contribute to the state economy in a family-sustaining career.”

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All nine metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) saw a decrease from January 2018 and from February 2017. Not-seasonally adjusted February unemployment rates for the nine MSAs are as follows:

- Alexandria: 4.4 percent, down from 5.0 percent in January and down from 6.1 percent in February 2017.
- Baton Rouge: 3.5 percent, down from 3.9 percent in January and down from 4.6 percent in February 2017.
- Hammond: 4.3 percent, down from 4.9 percent in January and down from 5.8 percent in February 2017.
- Houma: 4.1 percent, down from 4.6 percent in January and down from 6.2 percent in February 2017.
- Lafayette: 4.2 percent, down from 4.6 percent in January and down from 6.2 percent in February 2017.
- Lake Charles: 3.1 percent, down from 3.5 percent in January and down from 4.2 percent in February 2017.
- Monroe: 4.3 percent, down from 4.7 percent in January and down from 5.7 percent in February 2017.
- New Orleans: 3.8 percent, down from 4.1 percent in January and down from 4.8 percent in February 2017.
- Shreveport: 4.3 percent, down from 4.6 percent in January and down from 5.7 percent in February 2017.

As reported last week, Louisiana's seasonally adjusted figures showed strong signs of continued improvement.

- Louisiana added 2,800 non-farm jobs in February. This makes it the third straight month, and four of the last five months that Louisiana has added jobs.
- Louisiana's private sector also added 2,800 jobs in February. Private sector employment has added jobs in four out of the last five months.
- The Louisiana labor participation rate, the percentage of people either working or looking for work increased by 0.2 percentage points from January to 59.2 percent.
- The number of people unemployed in Louisiana dropped by 1,469 from January and by 24,595 year over year. This is the lowest number of unemployed in Louisiana since May of 2008

#### Seasonally Adjusted vs. Not-Seasonally Adjusted Data

Jobs and employment trends data is often difficult to understand because two different ways to look at the data, seasonally or non-seasonally adjusted data.

Seasonally adjustment works to measure and remove the influences of predictable seasonal patterns to reveal how employment and unemployment change from month to month. Not seasonally adjusted data retains seasonal employment trends.

Over the course of a year, the labor force size, jobs available and employment rates undergo predictable fluctuations due to seasonal changes in weather, harvests, major holidays, and school schedules. Seasonal adjustment reduces the impact of these changes making it easier understand trends. Seasonally adjusted data is best utilized when comparing several months of employment and jobs data, while not seasonally adjusted data is best used to compare over-the-year trends. Seasonally adjusted data are useful for comparisons among states and the nation.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission primarily uses seasonally adjusted data because it provides a more useful and telling picture of Louisiana's jobs and employment situation.

To view all available employment data, visit Louisiana's employment homepage at <http://www.laworks.net> and select Labor Market Information from the top-right menu. Then, select LOIS (Louisiana Occupational Information System) and select Employment and Wage Data listed under Data Trends. To view the BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics for the state, visit <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=la>. For BLS nonfarm employment data, click here: <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=sm>.

### **Resources for employers and job seekers**

Job-seekers can explore careers, apply for top-rated jobs and connect with local training providers using Louisiana Star Jobs, the LWC's free career tool, at <http://www.laworks.net/Stars/>. Employers looking for workers should visit Louisiana's employment homepage at [www.laworks.net](http://www.laworks.net). Click on HiRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) and create an account allowing access to qualified job seekers.

### **About the Louisiana Workforce Commission**

The Louisiana Workforce Commission is an agency of state government that administers programs designed to enhance workforce growth and provide family-sustaining jobs for Louisiana residents. The commission monitors employment, administers unemployment compensation and tax funds, provides training resources for employers and employees and oversees worker compensation benefits. The agency also gathers and supplies information on the labor market and occupational sectors in Louisiana.

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**Louisiana Civilian Labor Force Not Seasonally Adjusted**

Area	February 2018			January 2018			February 2017		
	Employed	Unemp	Rate	Employed	Unemp	Rate	Employed	Unemp	Rate
<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>2,042,396</b>	<b>85,765</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2,017,616</b>	<b>93,946</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1,979,614</b>	<b>112,486</b>	<b>5.4</b>
<b>Alexandria, LA MSA</b>	<b>61,977</b>	<b>2,871</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>61,631</b>	<b>3,212</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>59,763</b>	<b>3,873</b>	<b>6.1</b>
Grant Parish, LA	7,808	407	5.0	7,765	477	5.8	7,527	546	6.8
Rapides Parish, LA	54,169	2,464	4.4	53,866	2,735	4.8	52,236	3,327	6.0
<b>Baton Rouge, LA MSA</b>	<b>408,668</b>	<b>15,010</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>402,271</b>	<b>16,468</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>397,421</b>	<b>19,142</b>	<b>4.6</b>
Ascension Parish, LA	60,848	2,187	3.5	59,889	2,370	3.8	59,171	2,733	4.4
East Baton Rouge Parish, LA	227,282	8,040	3.4	223,702	8,860	3.8	220,998	10,423	4.5
East Feliciana Parish, LA	7,874	304	3.7	7,755	334	4.1	7,656	386	4.8
Iberville Parish, LA	13,518	796	5.6	13,310	839	5.9	13,167	891	6.3
Livingston Parish, LA	67,267	2,262	3.3	66,224	2,525	3.7	65,408	3,011	4.4
Pointe Coupee Parish, LA	9,560	458	4.6	9,421	507	5.1	9,313	587	5.9
St. Helena Parish, LA	4,176	251	5.7	4,112	263	6.0	4,063	278	6.4
West Baton Rouge Parish, LA	12,944	514	3.8	12,738	563	4.2	12,585	608	4.6
West Feliciana Parish, LA	5,199	198	3.7	5,120	207	3.9	5,060	225	4.3
<b>Hammond, LA MSA</b>	<b>53,413</b>	<b>2,404</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>52,840</b>	<b>2,715</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>51,037</b>	<b>3,152</b>	<b>5.8</b>
Tangipahoa Parish, LA	53,413	2,404	4.3	52,840	2,715	4.9	51,037	3,152	5.8
<b>Houma-Thibodaux, LA MSA</b>	<b>85,829</b>	<b>3,688</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>84,255</b>	<b>4,081</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>82,737</b>	<b>5,448</b>	<b>6.2</b>
Lafourche Parish, LA	40,480	1,669	4.0	39,738	1,873	4.5	39,001	2,410	5.8
Terrebonne Parish, LA	45,349	2,019	4.3	44,517	2,208	4.7	43,736	3,038	6.5
<b>Lafayette, LA MSA</b>	<b>203,946</b>	<b>9,051</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>201,838</b>	<b>9,820</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>198,678</b>	<b>13,184</b>	<b>6.2</b>
Acadia Parish, LA	22,898	1,095	4.6	22,670	1,211	5.1	22,354	1,526	6.4
Iberia Parish, LA	27,600	1,512	5.2	27,327	1,635	5.6	26,897	2,521	8.6
Lafayette Parish, LA	108,912	4,277	3.8	107,761	4,653	4.1	106,021	5,999	5.4
St. Martin Parish, LA	21,410	1,027	4.6	21,184	1,105	5.0	20,892	1,494	6.7
Vermilion Parish, LA	23,126	1,140	4.7	22,896	1,216	5.0	22,514	1,644	6.8
<b>Lake Charles, LA MSA</b>	<b>112,854</b>	<b>3,606</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>110,461</b>	<b>3,992</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>103,647</b>	<b>4,502</b>	<b>4.2</b>
Calcasieu Parish, LA	108,807	3,485	3.1	106,499	3,869	3.5	99,926	4,348	4.2
Cameron Parish, LA	4,047	121	2.9	3,962	123	3.0	3,721	154	4.0
<b>Monroe, LA MSA</b>	<b>77,463</b>	<b>3,521</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>76,521</b>	<b>3,773</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>74,838</b>	<b>4,524</b>	<b>5.7</b>
Ouachita Parish, LA	68,691	3,085	4.3	67,849	3,297	4.6	66,340	3,965	5.6
Union Parish, LA	8,772	436	4.7	8,672	476	5.2	8,498	559	6.2
<b>New Orleans-Metairie, LA MSA</b>	<b>579,179</b>	<b>22,622</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>574,596</b>	<b>24,724</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>563,993</b>	<b>28,438</b>	<b>4.8</b>
Jefferson Parish, LA	209,955	7,805	3.6	208,279	8,473	3.9	204,477	9,859	4.6
Orleans Parish, LA	173,526	7,261	4.0	172,151	8,013	4.4	168,936	8,932	5.0
Plaquemines Parish, LA	9,809	387	3.8	9,738	434	4.3	9,578	489	4.9
St. Bernard Parish, LA	18,779	795	4.1	18,637	877	4.5	18,287	1,046	5.4
St. Charles Parish, LA	24,543	894	3.5	24,347	978	3.9	23,907	1,147	4.6
St. James Parish, LA	9,076	526	5.5	9,004	556	5.8	8,854	638	6.7
St. John the Baptist Parish, LA	19,125	974	4.8	18,971	1,053	5.3	18,634	1,231	6.2
St. Tammany Parish, LA	114,366	3,980	3.4	113,469	4,340	3.7	111,320	5,096	4.4
<b>Shreveport-Bossier City, LA MSA</b>	<b>181,678</b>	<b>8,071</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>178,906</b>	<b>8,707</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>175,900</b>	<b>10,714</b>	<b>5.7</b>
Bossier Parish, LA	55,487	1,981	3.4	54,642	2,176	3.8	53,729	2,654	4.7
Caddo Parish, LA	101,794	4,798	4.5	100,239	5,150	4.9	98,536	6,279	6.0
De Soto Parish, LA	10,250	517	4.8	10,095	552	5.2	9,935	682	6.4
Webster Parish, LA	14,147	775	5.2	13,930	829	5.6	13,700	1,099	7.4

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Allen Parish, LA	8,755	425	4.6	8,687	499	5.4	8,411	462	5.2
Assumption Parish, LA	8,330	540	6.1	8,219	596	6.8	8,241	714	8.0
Avoyelles Parish, LA	14,682	726	4.7	14,604	831	5.4	14,569	991	6.4
Beauregard (DeRidder, MC)	14,168	627	4.2	14,023	727	4.9	13,714	795	5.5
Bienville Parish, LA	5,313	279	5.0	5,260	290	5.2	5,255	357	6.4
Caldwell Parish, LA	3,663	191	5.0	3,635	203	5.3	3,602	255	6.6
Catahoula Parish, LA	3,174	210	6.2	3,158	226	6.7	3,117	258	7.6
Claiborne Parish, LA	5,690	257	4.3	5,655	271	4.6	5,420	334	5.8
Concordia Parish (Natchez MS-LA, MC)	6,568	429	6.1	6,531	477	6.8	6,561	585	8.2
East Carroll Parish, LA	1,859	189	9.2	1,851	194	9.5	1,779	266	13.0
Evangeline Parish, LA	11,914	592	4.7	11,842	654	5.2	11,738	769	6.1
Franklin Parish, LA	6,705	478	6.7	6,672	512	7.1	6,579	571	8.0
Jackson Parish, LA	6,703	259	3.7	6,649	274	4.0	6,660	336	4.8
Jefferson Davis Parish, LA	13,305	530	3.8	13,137	587	4.3	12,747	696	5.2
La Salle Parish, LA	5,913	231	3.8	5,908	254	4.1	5,771	318	5.2
Lincoln Parish (Ruston, MC)	21,159	882	4.0	20,705	978	4.5	20,420	1,135	5.3
Madison Parish, LA	3,535	272	7.1	3,506	271	7.2	3,392	321	8.6
Morehouse (Bastrop, MC)	9,725	765	7.3	9,617	791	7.6	9,564	918	8.8
Natchitoches (Natchitoches, MC)	15,962	761	4.6	15,144	906	5.6	15,579	991	6.0
Red River Parish, LA	3,697	165	4.3	3,684	183	4.7	3,567	210	5.6
Richland Parish, LA	7,923	468	5.6	7,843	485	5.8	7,687	561	6.8
Sabine Parish, LA	8,270	381	4.4	8,233	442	5.1	8,094	495	5.8
St. Landry (Opelousas, MC)	30,152	1,681	5.3	29,913	1,862	5.9	29,560	2,290	7.2
St. Mary (Morgan City, MC)	18,524	1,236	6.3	18,500	1,276	6.5	18,617	1,869	9.1
Tensas Parish, LA	1,383	97	6.6	1,382	106	7.1	1,388	147	9.6
Vernon (Fort Polk South, MC)	15,472	821	5.0	15,329	1,016	6.2	15,456	988	6.0
Washington (Bogalusa, MC)	16,485	772	4.5	16,301	837	4.9	15,964	979	5.8
West Carroll Parish, LA	3,624	391	9.7	3,591	417	10.4	3,521	538	13.3
Winn Parish, LA	4,738	265	5.3	4,721	290	5.8	4,628	356	7.1
<b>Louisiana, Seasonally Adjusted</b>	<b>2,032,834</b>	<b>95,099</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>2,024,116</b>	<b>96,568</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>1,990,792</b>	<b>119,694</b>	<b>5.7</b>