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**N E W S R E L E A S E**

## **Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increases over-the-year for 15<sup>th</sup> straight month, unemployment rate declines**

BATON ROUGE – Data released today by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics shows that seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 21,900 jobs from December 2017 to 1,992,200. This marks the fifteenth straight over-the-year increase for seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment. From November 2018, seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment increased by 700 jobs.

Seasonally adjusted private-sector employment increased by 23,800 jobs from December 2017 to 1,668,500. This also marks the fifteenth straight month that seasonally adjusted private-sector employment has increased over-the-year. From November 2018, seasonally adjusted private-sector employment increased by 1,100 jobs.

“From setting employment record highs to all-time employment records in a variety of sectors, Louisiana’s economy has shown marked improvement from where we were just a year ago,” said Louisiana Workforce Commission Secretary Ava Dejoie. “After now having added jobs now for 15 months in a row over-the-year, we will work with employers and job-seekers to help build upon all the momentum that Louisiana’s economy has built in the coming year.”

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased from 5.0 percent to 4.9 percent in December 2018.

The number of seasonally adjusted unemployed individuals decreased by 862 to 104,350 from November 2018.

Industries that showed the largest gains for seasonally adjusted jobs:

- Construction gained 3,100 jobs from December 2017 and 500 jobs from November 2018.
- Manufacturing gained 5,100 jobs from December 2017 and 400 jobs from November 2018.
- Financial Activities gained 3,000 jobs from December 2017 and 800 jobs from November 2018.
- Leisure and Hospitality gained 2,400 jobs from December 2017 and 100 jobs from November 2018.
- Mining and Logging gained 700 jobs from December 2017, but remained unchanged from November 2018.

## Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)

Among Louisiana's MSAs, seasonally adjusted data shows:

- Alexandria gained 200 jobs from December 2017 and 200 jobs from November 2018.
- Baton Rouge gained 5,200 jobs from December 2017, but lost 500 jobs from November 2018.
- Hammond gained 700 jobs from December 2017 and 100 jobs from November 2018. The Hammond MSA is at an all-time record for employment.
- Houma lost 700 jobs from December 2017 and 100 jobs from November 2018.
- Lafayette gained 2,200 jobs from December 2017 and 800 jobs from November 2018.
- Lake Charles gained 3,900 jobs from December 2017, but remained unchanged from November 2018. The Lake Charles MSA is at an all-time record for employment.
- Monroe gained 600 jobs from December 2017, but remained unchanged from November 2018.
- New Orleans gained 12,600 jobs from December 2017 and 1,800 jobs from November 2018.
- Shreveport gained 100 jobs from December 2017, but lost 500 jobs from November 2018.

## Not Seasonally Adjusted Data

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 4.3 percent from November 2018. As it stands, the 2018 not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate annual average is 4.8 percent. When compared to other historical not-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate annual averages, this is Louisiana's 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest annual average in the series history.

The annual average unemployment rate can only be derived from not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate data. Seasonal adjustments incorporate seasonal employment patterns that are not appropriate when annualizing unemployment rates.

The number of not seasonally adjusted unemployed individuals decreased by 3,938 from November 2018 to 90,463.

December metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and parish unemployment rates will be released on January 29, 2019. For additional state and MSA data release dates, please click [here](#).

## Seasonally Adjusted vs. Not-Seasonally Adjusted Data

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

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

Over the course of a year, the labor force size, available jobs 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 to 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.