

NEWS RELEASE

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Idaho Jobless Rate Up Two-Tenths to 6.6% as July Hiring Slows

Hiring slipped below normal in July and seasonal government layoffs ran slightly higher, driving Idaho's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate up two-tenths to 6.6 percent.

It was the third straight monthly increase in the rate, which has risen a half percentage point since April. The number of workers without jobs rose over 1,600 from June to July, exceeding 50,000 for the first time since last November.

Total employment dropped for the second month in a row, falling 800 to just over 723,000 - the lowest total employment since October 2012.

While employment remained 5,700 ahead of July 2012, the year-over-year gap has been steadily shrinking for the past 13 months. A slight dip in typical employer hiring in nearly all sectors during July aggravated the moderate increase in the number of people looking for work, causing the second straight two-tenths percentage point increase in the jobless rate. The rate was 7.2 percent a year earlier.

Nationally, the unemployment rate went in the opposite direction in July, dropping two-tenths to 7.4 percent. Still, Idaho's rate has been lower than the nation's for 142 months, almost 12 years.

With labor force, employment and unemployment totals essentially the same as they were seven or eight months ago, department analysts believe employers still seem to be concerned about the future of the state - and national - economies. New hiring during the month approached 23,500, the highest July level since before the recession began, primarily to replace workers who left jobs for retirement or other work. That resulted in Idaho's nonfarm jobs running 2.7 percent ahead of July 2012, down a tenth of the 2.8 percent margin for June over June 2012.

Despite the unemployment rate moving higher, unemployment benefit payments and the number of claimants in July were both down 41 percent from July 2012. A total of almost \$13.3 million in state and federal benefits was paid to an average of 11,100 claimants. Just over a quarter of the payments were federally financed extended benefits, which will cease at the end of the year. An average of 3,200 people a week received federal extended benefits in July.

A year ago, over \$22 million in state and federal benefits were paid to a weekly average of 18,900 claimants. Almost half the payments were federally financed extended benefits.

At the depth of the recession in March 2009, an average of 50,000 workers a week received \$54 million in state and federal benefits.

While the statewide jobless rate rose from June, the effect across the state was mixed. Unemployment rates in the five metro areas declined while higher rates were posted in many rural counties. Only 10 counties had higher rates in July than a year earlier.

The same six resource-dependent counties that reported double-digit rates in June did so again in July with Adams County the highest at 15.4 percent, up nine-tenths from June. Sixteen counties had rates under 6 percent, up from 13 in June. Franklin had the lowest rate at 3.6 percent followed by Oneida at 3.7 percent. They were the only two counties under 4 percent. No county was under 4 percent in June.

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Seasonally Adjusted Data

	7/13	6/13	7/12
Civilian Labor Force	774,200	773,300	772,800
Unemployment	51,100	49,400	55,400
% Labor Force Unemployed	6.6	6.4	7.2
Total Employment	723,100	723,900	717,400

Unadjusted Forecast Data

Civilian Labor Force	784,300	785,500	781,300
Unemployment	48,800	50,200	53,700
% Labor Force Unemployed	6.2	6.4	6.9
Total Employment	735,500	735,300	727,600

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