

NEWS RELEASE

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Idaho Jobless Rate Falls to 6.1 Percent in November

Idaho's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped to 6.1 percent in November, the largest one-month decline on record. The November rate matched the postrecession low posted last spring.

Employers across the state maintained payrolls at above average levels during the month. Hiring activity - the highest since 2007 - was 6 percent ahead of a year earlier at nearly 15,000, primarily to fill existing jobs.

November's six-tenths of a percentage point decline in the unemployment rate was twice the national rate decrease, which dropped from 7.3 percent to 7 percent. Before November, the largest one-month swing in the Idaho rate was three-tenths of a percentage point. In early 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics will adjust the 2013 monthly unemployment rates and using more updated statistical information could revise November's decline from October.

About 3,800 more Idahoans were at work in November with total unemployment dropping to 47,300, the lowest level since last spring. Last year, Idaho's unemployment rate was 6.5 percent with over 50,000 people out of work. This year, 1,000 more people were working than in November 2012 when employment growth averaged 1,200 a month over the previous year.

Nonfarm jobs totaled nearly 648,000 in November, up 2.1 percent over last year and four-tenths of a percentage point higher than the national growth rate. Slightly stronger retail hiring in November offset hiring activity at hotels and restaurants, which have been steadily bringing on seasonal workers to handle any rebound in businesses. During the initial recovery, those and other businesses had been relying on their permanent payrolls to handle any postrecession increases in customers.

Idaho's labor force, which has remained essentially flat since January of 2012, declined by 300 in November to 772,200. The state's labor force participation rate - the percentage of adults working or actively looking for work - remained under 64 percent for the second straight month, compared to 63 percent nationally. Historically, labor force participation in Idaho climbed as high as 70.9 percent in October and November 1998 after dropping to a low of 63.9 percent in January 1982.

Unemployment benefit payouts are also on the decline, dropping by 42 percent from last year. Just over \$10.3 million in state and federal benefits were paid to an average of 10,100 jobless workers each week during November, 43 percent fewer than in November 2012. During the worst of the recession in early April 2009, nearly 51,000 workers received a weekly check averaging \$268.

Federally financed extended benefits, which went to about 2,500 long-term unemployed workers in November, will end December 31, 2013.

Every one of Idaho's 44 counties posted declines in unemployment rates from October to November as did all five metropolitan areas. The only city to see an increase was Post Falls, where the rate edged up a tenth to 7.5 percent.

Only one county, Oneida, recorded a rate higher than in November 2012, but the one-tenth increase still left Oneida with a 3.5 percent rate in November, matching Franklin County for the lowest rates in the state.

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Four rural resource-dependent counties reported double-digit rates in November with Adams County posting the highest rate at 11.8 percent, but that was still down nearly two percentage points from October.

Twenty-five counties recorded rates below 6 percent, up from 19 counties in October.

Seasonally Adjusted Data

	11/13	10/13	11/12
Civilian Labor Force	772,200	772,500	774,100
Unemployment	47,300	51,400	50,200
% Labor Force Unemployed	6.1	6.7	6.5
Total Employment	724,900	721,100	723,900

Unadjusted Forecast Data

Civilian Labor Force	771,500	773,700	771,700
Unemployment	41,400	45,100	47,800
% Labor Force Unemployed	5.4	5.8	6.2
Total Employment	730,100	728,600	723,900

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