



For Release: 9:00 a.m.
Date: September 15, 2023

Contact: Jesse Dougherty (515) 725-5487
communications@iwd.iowa.gov

Iowa's Unemployment Rate Rises to 2.9 Percent in August

Iowa Adds New Workers and 2,400 Jobs

DES MOINES, IOWA – Iowa's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose from 2.7 percent to 2.9 percent in August, tying the year-ago rate, while the U.S. unemployment rate increased from 3.5 percent to 3.8 percent in August.

Despite the rise in unemployment, Iowa gained 2,400 jobs and Iowa's workforce grew by 500 people in August.

"Iowa employers appear to have acted cautiously last month amid ongoing worry about the national economy and rising inflation," said Beth Townsend, Executive Director of Iowa Workforce Development. "However, we saw Iowa's pool of available workers increase, meaning that more and more Iowans continue to show a strong desire to find new careers across the state."

The number of unemployed Iowans increased to 50,200 in August from 47,700 in July. The state's overall labor force participation rate decreased slightly from 68.8 to 68.7 percent in August.

The total number of working Iowans decreased to 1,692,400 in August. This figure is 2,000 lower than July and 24,300 higher than one year ago.

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Iowa businesses, responding to a federal survey measuring jobs (a different survey from the one used to measure unemployment), reported adding 2,400 jobs in August, raising total nonfarm employment to 1,588,000. Private service industries were responsible for most of the growth, as goods-producing industries edged down (-200). The August gain halts job losses over the prior three months (-11,000). Private sectors combined advanced by 1,800 jobs while government added the remaining 600 jobs. This month's gain leaves government up 4,500 jobs annually, while total nonfarm employment has advanced by 15,700 jobs versus one year ago.

Leisure and hospitality led all sectors in jobs gained in August (+2,600). The increase stemmed from accommodations and food service industries; arts, entertainment and recreation saw little movement compared to last month. Education and healthcare combined for an increase of 2,400 jobs. Most of these gains stemmed from health care and social assistance, which has gained 4,800 jobs so far in 2023. Smaller increases included manufacturing (+600) and information services (+400). Conversely, trade and transportation shed 2,200 jobs to lead all super sectors. Wholesale trade fueled most of the loss (-1,600), although there was some decline in retail (also -800). This sector has lost jobs in three of the last four months (-1,600). Professional and business services also trended down this month with 1,100 jobs shed. This loss marks the fifth-consecutive decline for this super sector, which has now shed 6,600 jobs during that span. Losses have been evident in both professional, scientific, and technical services along with administrative support and waste management firms.

Annually, education, health care, and social assistance has added the most jobs (+10,600) over the past twelve months. Almost two-thirds of the jobs stemmed from health care services. Leisure and hospitality gained 7,300 jobs with 5,200 being within accommodations and food services. While most sectors have advanced relative to last year, professional and business services continue to trail last year's mark due mostly to sluggishness in administrative and support services and is now down 8,100 jobs.

Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

	August 2023	July 2023	August 2022	Change from	
				July 2023	August 2022
Civilian labor force	1,742,600	1,742,100	1,718,700	500	23,900
Unemployment	50,200	47,700	50,700	2,500	-500
Unemployment rate	2.9%	2.7%	2.9%	0.2	0.0
Employment	1,692,400	1,694,400	1,668,100	-2,000	24,300
Labor Force Participation Rate	68.7%	68.8%	68.2%	-0.1	0.5
U.S. unemployment rate	3.8%	3.5%	3.7%	0.3	0.1

Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data

Total Nonfarm Employment	1,588,000	1,585,600	1,572,300	2,400	15,700
Mining	2,300	2,300	2,200	0	100
Construction	81,000	81,800	80,800	-800	200
Manufacturing	226,800	226,200	225,200	600	1,600
Trade, transportation and utilities	311,000	313,200	311,300	-2,200	-300
Information	19,900	19,500	19,200	400	700
Financial activities	107,200	107,800	108,200	-600	-1,000
Professional and business services	139,000	140,100	147,100	-1,100	-8,100
Education and health services	238,700	236,300	228,100	2,400	10,600
Leisure and hospitality	143,900	141,300	136,600	2,600	7,300
Other services	56,000	55,500	55,900	500	100
Government	262,200	261,600	257,700	600	4,500

Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa

	August 2023	July 2023	August 2022	% Change from	
				July 2023	August 2022
Initial claims	8,476	9,173	5,529	-7.6%	53.3%
Continued claims					
Benefit recipients	11,317	11,138	9,591	1.6%	18.0%
Weeks paid	34,296	31,094	30,930	10.3%	10.9%
Amount paid	\$15,950,144	\$13,949,999	\$13,314,211	14.3%	19.8%

Visit www.iowalmi.gov for more information about current and historical data, labor force data, nonfarm employment, hours and earnings, and jobless benefits by county.

###

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request for individuals with disabilities.

www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov • www.iowajobs.gov

MEDIA ALERT: Local data for August 2023 will be posted to the IWD website on Tuesday, September 19, 2023. Statewide data for September 2023 will be released on Thursday, October 19, 2023.