



Alabama Department of Labor

News Release

For Immediate Release: April 19, 2013

Alabama's March Unemployment Rate Steady at 7.2% *Both Employment and Labor Force Showing Growth*

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's preliminary March unemployment rate remained unchanged at 7.2%. March 2012's rate was also 7.2%. March's rate represents 155,071 unemployed persons, compared to 154,790 last month, and 156,224 last year.

“This month we continued to see the labor force grow, which tells us that more people are regaining confidence in the job market. We also saw the number of people with jobs grow by nearly 7,000, with only a slight increase in the number of unemployed,” said Surtees. “Even though the rate didn't decrease, these are still positive signs.”

The civilian labor force increased in March to 2,164,497, up from 2,157,556 in February and 2,156,362 last year. The number of employed persons rose to 2,009,426, up from 2,002,766 in February and 2,000,138 last year.

“We always urge people to look at trends in the unemployment numbers, rather than simply looking at only the monthly data in order to get a better picture of the job market,” continued Surtees. “For example, we've seen consistent increases in the number of people employed since August of last year - with the exception of January, which is to be expected as holiday hiring winds down.”

“Additionally,” said Surtees, “sixty-six of 67 counties, along with all of the state's metropolitan areas, saw their unemployment rates drop this month. Lamar County saw a drop as large as 1.9 percentage points, which is great news.”

Eight Alabama counties saw decreases in their unemployment rates of 1.5 percentage points or greater. These counties are: Barbour, Bullock, Choctaw, Cleburne, Conecuh, Lamar, Marion, and Winston.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates were: Shelby County at 4.7%, Blount County at 5.6%, and Lee County at 5.8%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates were: Wilcox County at 16.4%, Lowndes County at 13.4%, and Dallas County at 12.8%.

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Members of the media seeking more information should contact Communications Director Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.