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Alabama's November Unemployment Rate is 6.0%

Fewer Than 25,000 Jobs Away from Pre-Recession Employment

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted November unemployment rate is 6.0%.

“We are coming closer and closer to hitting that golden wage and salary employment number of two million jobs,” Governor Robert Bentley said. “We are less than 25,000 jobs shy of attaining pre-recession employment levels in Alabama. We haven't seen wage and salary employment at two million since June 2008, prior to the recession's effects in our state. Our economy is strong, and my goal is that every Alabamian who wants a job can obtain one.”

“The very slight uptick in November's unemployment rate is due to the fact that more people entered the workforce, perhaps looking for seasonal employment,” Alabama Labor Department Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. “Additionally, more people are employed both over the month and over the year, so this small increase is not necessarily bad news.”

The Civilian Labor Force (CLF) increased in November to 2,146,294 from 2,141,221 in October and from 2,130,131 in November 2014 (seasonally adjusted). CLF employment also increased to 2,018,189 from 2,014,056 in October and from 1,999,222 in November 2014.

Wage and salary employment increased in November by 12,800 to 1,975,700. Monthly gains were seen in the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+9,100), the education and health services sector (+2,800), and the government sector (+1,800), among others. Over the year, wage and salary employment increased by 24,900, with gains in the leisure and hospitality sector (+6,400), the education and health services sector (+5,900), the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+4,800), and the construction sector (+4,700), among others.

“The fact that the construction sector continues to show improvement over the year is another good sign for Alabama's economy,” Washington added. “Construction employment hasn't been this healthy since 2010. If construction is occurring, then confidence in the economy is generally optimistic.”

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.0%, Lee County at 4.7%, and Elmore, Cullman, and St. Clair Counties at 4.8%.

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“Seasonal adjustment” refers to BLS’s practice of anticipating certain trends in the labor force, such as hiring during the holidays or the surge in the labor force when students graduate in the spring, and removing their effects to the civilian labor force.

The Current Population (CPS), or the household survey, is conducted by the Census Bureau and identifies members of the work force and measures how many people are working or looking for work.

The establishment survey, which is conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), a division of the U.S. Department of Labor, surveys employers to measure how many jobs are in the economy. This is also referred to as wage and salary employment.