

OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ROBERT BENTLEY  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2012

**\*\* The attached map shows individual county unemployment rates. Also attached is a detailed list of county unemployment data. \*\***

## **Alabama's Unemployment Rate Drops to 7.5%**

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Friday announced that Alabama's preliminary November unemployment rate is 7.5%, down from October's rate of 8.1% and below the November 2011 rate of 8.3%.

Alabama's November 2012 unemployment rate is also below the national rate of 7.7%. The state's November rate represents 162,182 unemployed persons, compared to 174,867 in October and 180,003 in November 2011.

"We're going to continue on the same path of working hard every day to recruit and attract more jobs for this state," Governor Bentley said. "The unemployment rate can fluctuate given the time of year. We are encouraged that the overall trend shows a decreasing unemployment rate, and I will continue my efforts to create more jobs until everyone who wants a job is able to find one."

"November's rate indicates that Alabama's employers are expecting a strong holiday season," said Alabama Department of Labor Commissioner Tom Surtees. "The increase in retail hiring means that many people have jobs this Christmas that may otherwise have not. Even if some of the jobs are temporary, that still means that thousands of Alabamians will be able to provide for their families during the holiday season."

Retail trade employment increased by 3,700 in November, with the bulk of that increase coming from hiring in general merchandise and department stores.

"We also continue to see positive indicators in other areas," Surtees added. "We are consistently seeing initial claims and benefits payments at pre-recession levels, and record numbers of active job orders on [www.joblink.alabama.gov](http://www.joblink.alabama.gov). Sixty-six of 67 counties experienced a drop in their unemployment rate this month."

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.6%, Lee County and Madison County at 5.6%, and St. Clair County, Coffee County, Blount County, and Limestone County at 5.7%. The counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 15.9%, Bullock County at 14.1%, and Dallas County at 13.2%.

###

*The Governor's Press Office can be reached at 334-242-7150.*