



## Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

### News Release

For Immediate Release: September 17, 2010

### Alabama's Unemployment Rate Drops to 9.2%

*Drop Marks the First Time Rate is Below the National Average in 21 Months*

MONTGOMERY -- Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's August unemployment rate dropped to 9.2%, down from 9.7% recorded in July. The comparable rate for August 2009 was 10.6%.

"Today's news is certainly good news," said Surtees. "This marks the first time in nearly two years that Alabama's unemployment rate has been below the national average. That is most definitely a sign that Alabama's economy is slowly but surely recovering from this economic recession."

The national unemployment rate for August 2009 is 9.6%. The last time Alabama's unemployment rate was below the national average was November of 2008, when our rate was 6.7%, compared to the national rate of 6.9%.

August's rate represents 192,825 unemployed persons, down from July's 202,308. In August 2009, there were 223,585 unemployed persons in the state.

"We have been seeing drops in our unemployment rate over the past four months," Surtees continued. "While we are certainly upbeat about the positive signs we are seeing, we cannot forget that there are still over 190,000 Alabamians without work. The Department of Industrial Relations remains dedicated to helping those individuals find jobs and receive the unemployment compensation benefits they are entitled to."

Wage and salary employment declined 2,800 over the month with majority of the losses occurring in the leisure and hospitality industry and the trade, transportation, and utilities industry.

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates were: Shelby at 6.8%, Madison at 7.1%, and Coffee at 7.3%. The counties with the highest unemployment rates were:

Wilcox at 21.3%, Greene at 18.8%, and Dallas at 17.8%.

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*Members of the media needing more information should contact Public Information Officer Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.*