

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROBERT BENTLEY
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

STATE OF ALABAMA

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Alabama's January Unemployment Rate is 6.0%

Largest Number of Jobs Supported in January Since 2008

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley on Tuesday announced that Alabama's preliminary, seasonally adjusted January unemployment rate is 6.0%, down from December 2014's revised rate of 6.1%, and below January 2014's rate of 7.2%.*

"January's rate marks 14 months with no increase in our unemployment rate," Governor Robert Bentley said. "For the past two months, more than two million people are working in this state, which hasn't happened since November 2008. We continue to remain hopeful that our economy is turning around and Alabamians are gaining employment."

The number of people reported as employed by the Current Population Survey (CPS) in January is 2,006,903, and 2,001,069 in December 2014. The last time this number was equal to or higher was November 2008, when the number of people reported working was 2,007,253.

"Our economy is supporting the largest number of jobs since 2008," Alabama Labor Commissioner Fitzgerald Washington said. "The annual increase in jobs, year over year, is the second highest we've experienced in the past decade. That's certainly great news and shows that Alabama's employers are continuing to hire."

According to the establishment survey, over the year, wage and salary employment increased by 37,400, with gains in the professional and business services sector (+9,700), the leisure and hospitality sector (+6,900), and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (+6,600), among others. Wage and salary employment decreased in January by 25,400. Monthly gains were seen in the information sector, the financial activities sector, and the "other services" sector.

The only time the year over year growth was higher was January 2006, when growth was 45,100.

JobLink, the state's online free jobs database (www.joblink.alabama.gov), registered 19,777 active job orders in January.

Sixty six of 67 counties experienced drops in their unemployment rates over the year. Only Colbert County saw an increase of 0.2. Wilcox County, which traditionally has a high unemployment rate, saw a yearly drop of 5.4 percentage points.

Counties with the lowest unemployment rates are: Shelby County at 4.2%, Lee County at 5.2%, and Elmore, Tuscaloosa, and St. Clair Counties at 5.3%. Counties with the highest unemployment rates are: Wilcox County at 14.9%, Clarke and Greene Counties at 11.8%, and Lowndes County at 11.5%.

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**Data has been adjusted due to annual revising, which may result in different statistics than previously reported.*

“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.