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September Unemployment Rate Holds Steady at 4.2%

As September's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate held steady at 4.2 percent, Idaho's labor force reached a historical record high by exceeding 800,000 for the first time ever.

A monthly increase of 5,000 nonfarm jobs - the result of 9,800 education workers returning to work for the start of a new school year - offset general seasonal declines across Idaho's economy, including a stronger-than-average seasonal shedding of 1,000 construction jobs as heavy and civil projects were completed.

Year over year, Idaho nonfarm payrolls remained 3 percent ahead of 2014 due to an across-the-board gain of 19,300 jobs, underscoring 12 months of continued economic growth. Virtually all other Idaho industry sectors enjoyed yearly gains in September, including construction with an increase of 9.1 percent, the largest annual increase for construction since 2006.

September's addition of 1,400 people into the workforce marked nine straight months of growth, pushing the state's labor force to a record high of 800,800 people.

Idaho's labor market remained tight in September as the number of unemployed workers increased by less than 100 and the number of unemployed individuals available per job listing remaining at 1.2, according to job opening estimates by The Conference Board.

The state's labor force participation rate - the percentage of people 16 years and older with jobs or looking for work - remained unchanged at 64.1 percent for the fourth consecutive month.

Nationally, the unemployment rate also went unchanged, remaining at 5.1 percent in September while the participation rate declined to 62.4 percent from August's 62.6 percent.

The state's unemployment benefit payouts were down from August by 20 percent - from \$1.4 million a year ago to \$1.1 million for September of this year - while the number of claimants dropped by 22 percent from a weekly average of 5,200 a year ago to 4,000.

Twenty-three Idaho counties experienced higher unemployment rates than the state average during September. Madison County claimed the lowest unemployment rate in the state at 2.9 percent, while Adams, Clearwater and Shoshone counties reported the highest rates.

Almost all of Idaho's Metropolitan Statistical Areas had unemployment rates below the state average except for the Coeur d'Alene MSA at 5 percent. The Boise MSA was 3.7 percent, down from 3.9 percent in August. The Idaho Falls MSA fell from 3.7 percent to 3.6 percent - maintaining the lowest unemployment rate of all the MSAs.

For additional insight into Idaho's current labor market situation, visit lmi.idaho.gov.

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Seasonally Adjusted Data	9/15	8/15	9/14
Civilian Labor Force	800,800	799,400	778,200
Unemployment	33,400	33,300	36,700
% Labor Force Unemployed	4.2	4.2	4.7
Total Employment	767,4000	766,100	741,500

Unadjusted Forecast Data			
Civilian Labor Force	801,400	803,400	777,000
Unemployment	29,700	32,100	32,400
% Labor Force Unemployed	3.7	4.0	4.2
Total Employment	771,700	771,300	744,600

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