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Idaho Job Growth and Unemployment Hold Steady in February

Idaho's labor market conditions in February were little changed from January as the unemployment rate remained at 3.9 percent.

Month over month, Idaho's nonfarm payrolls grew by a seasonally adjusted 0.2 percent in February with only slight decreases in wholesale trade, financial activities, leisure and hospitality, and total government.

Year over year, seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs grew by 26,400, or 4.0 percent, the largest increase since 2006. Industries with the greatest over-the-year gains were leisure and hospitality; transportation, warehousing and utilities; construction; and other services. Mining and logging was the only sector to show a decline.

Nationally, the unemployment rate also remained unchanged at 4.9 percent. This is the third consecutive month that Idaho's unemployment rate has remained at 3.9 percent.

Idaho's February seasonally adjusted labor force remained essentially unchanged at 806,670. Total employment also remained relatively flat with an increase of 640 to 775,600, and the number of unemployed dropped by 320 to 31,080.

February's labor force participation rate - the percentage of people 16 years and older with jobs or looking for work - remained at 64.1 percent for the third consecutive month. Based on online job posting data from The Conference Board, there is just over one out-of-work Idahoan per job listing.

Annually, unemployment benefit payments were down from February 2015 by just 1.6 percent - from \$3.317 million a year ago to \$3.264 million for February 2016. The number of weeks compensated dropped 5.2 percent over the year.

Eighteen of Idaho's 44 counties had unemployment rates at or below the state rate. Clark and Madison counties experienced the lowest rates in the state with 2.6 percent and 2.7 percent respectively. Lewis County had the highest rate at 8.0 percent.

Among the Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the Idaho Falls MSA reported the lowest unemployment rate of 3.4 percent. The Coeur d'Alene MSA experienced the highest rate of 5.1 percent.

Details on Idaho's unemployment picture can be found at lmi.idaho.gov.

Seasonally Adjusted Data	2/16	1/16	2/15
Civilian Labor Force	806,700	806,400	789,100
Unemployment	31,100	31,400	32,900
% Labor Force Unemployed	3.9	3.9	4.2
Total Employment	775,600	775,000	756,200

Unadjusted Forecast Data			
Civilian Labor Force	799,200	796,500	785,100
Unemployment	36,000	37,700	38,800
% Labor Force Unemployed	4.5	4.7	4.9
Total Employment	763,200	758,800	746,300

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