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## **Idaho Unemployment Rate Falls to 3.8% in March**

Idaho's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.8 percent in March, declining one-tenth of a percent from February.

Month over month, the state's nonfarm payrolls increased by one tenth of a percent in March. Job gains in education, health services and leisure and hospitality slightly offset declines in information, professional and business services and trade, transportation and utilities.

Over the year, seasonally adjusted nonfarm jobs grew by 24,000 - or 3.6 percent - the largest March to March increase since 2006. Construction, manufacturing, education, health services, leisure and hospitality and other service industries all experienced annual gains of more than 4 percent. Information, mining and logging - the only industry sectors to show a decline - shed 400 jobs.

Nationally, the unemployment rate increased slightly from 4.9 percent to 5 percent - only the second change in the past six months.

Total employment for Idaho grew by more than 400 to 775,900 as the number of unemployed Idahoans dropped by 500 to 30,560. This is the ninth consecutive month that total unemployment decreased. Idaho's seasonally adjusted labor force dropped by 100 in March to 806,480 - the first labor force decline since January 2013, breaking a 37-month streak of gains.

March's labor force participation rate - the percentage of people 16 years and older with jobs or looking for work remained virtually flat from February.

There are 25,500 open jobs in Idaho according to The Conference Board. Of those listings, 5,100 are classified by department analysts as "hard-to-fill" - jobs continuously posted for 90 days or more. Based on vacancy rates - a high number of openings compared with the total employment for that occupation - healthcare jobs account for almost 14 percent of all total hard-to-fill jobs and include psychiatrists, occupational therapists and physical therapists. Looking at job listings by volume, truck drivers and registered nurses hold the first and second spots for the largest number of hard-to-fill jobs.

Annually, unemployment benefit payments were down from March 2015 by 2.3 percent - from \$2.5 million a year ago to \$2.4 million for March 2016. The number of weeks compensated dropped 7.8 percent over the year from 8,700 to 8,100.

Among Idaho's 44 counties, 26 had unemployment rates above the state rate. Clark and Madison counties experienced the lowest rates in the state at 2.3 percent and 2.6 percent respectively. Adams County had the highest rate at 9.9 percent.

The Idaho Falls metropolitan statistical area reported the lowest unemployment rate of all metros at 3.1 percent, down from 3.6 percent one year earlier. The Coeur d’Alene MSA experienced the highest unemployment rate in the state at 4.7 percent, down from 5 percent the previous March.

Details on Idaho’s unemployment picture can be found at [lmi.idaho.gov](http://lmi.idaho.gov).

<b>Seasonally Adjusted Data</b>	<b>3/16</b>	<b>2/16</b>	<b>3/15</b>
Civilian Labor Force	806,500	806,600	791,300
Unemployment	30,600	31,100	32,800
% Labor Force Unemployed	3.8	3.9	4.1
Total Employment	775,900	775,500	758,500

<b>Unadjusted Forecast Data</b>			
Civilian Labor Force	801,600	799,000	787,400
Unemployment	33,800	36,000	37,000
33,800	4.2	4.5	4.7
Total Employment	767,800	763,000	750,400

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