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Idaho's Over-the-Year Job Growth Tops Nation; Unemployment Rate Remains Steady

Idaho led the nation with a seasonally adjusted over-the-year (January 2016 - January 2017) job growth of 27,500 jobs and a growth rate of 4 percent – the fastest growth rate in the country.

Year-over-year, all of Idaho's major industry sectors experienced job gains. Construction led the way with 4,500 new jobs, up 11.3 percent. Financial activities followed with 2,000 new jobs, up 6 percent followed by a 1,300 job increase in other services, up 5.5 percent. The remaining sectors experienced gains above 2 percent.

Month to month, Idaho was second in the nation in job growth at .7 percent between December 2016 to January 2017 with 4,900 new jobs. Construction jobs again led the way with an increase of 1,100, up 2.6 percent. Information followed with a 200 job increase, up 2.2 percent; financial activities added 500 jobs, up 1.4 percent; and education and health services jobs grew by 1,200, up 1.2 percent.

January's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate held steady at 3.6 percent, the same rate reported for December.

An additional 2,400 people entered the workforce, pushing Idaho's January seasonally adjusted labor force number to 823,900. Total employment increased by 2,600 to 794,100, and the number of unemployed dropped by 200 to 29,800.

The state's labor force participation rate – the percentage of people 16 years and older with jobs or looking for work – climbed to 64 percent, up slightly from December's 63.9 percent.

There were more than 19,200 online postings for Idaho jobs in January according to the Conference Board. Of those postings, 4,600 were classified by department analysts as hard-to-fill. Health care-related jobs accounted for 28.5 percent and includes physicians, surgeons, psychiatrists, occupational and physical therapists and support positions. By volume, registered nurses and truck drivers maintained the first and second spots for the largest number of hard-to-fill jobs.

Annually, unemployment insurance benefit payments were up nearly 21 percent - from \$3.1 million a year ago to \$3.7 million for January 2017. The number of claimants grew by 11 percent from a weekly average of 10,300 a year ago to 11,400. Department analysts attributed the larger-than-normal over-the-year increase to the record-breaking snowfall and this winter's deep freeze.

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Idaho's county rates for January and February of 2017 will be included in the February employment release scheduled for Friday, March 24.

Among Idaho's Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Boise experienced the strongest seasonally adjusted over-the-year growth of 14,400 more jobs or 4.8 percent. Month over month, the Idaho Falls MSA was the fastest growing with 0.8 percent growth with 500 added jobs.

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

Seasonally Adjusted Data	1/17	12/16	1/16
Civilian Labor Force	823,863	821,440	806,420
Unemployment	29,786	29,947	31,933
% Labor Force Unemployed	3.6	3.6	4.0
Total Employment	794,077	791,493	774,487

Unadjusted Forecast Data			
Civilian Labor Force	816,461	816,378	798,986
Unemployment	36,407	28,961	38,813
% Labor Force Unemployed	4.5	3.5	4.9
Total Employment	780,054	787,417	760,173

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