

News Release



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Arkansas' Unemployment Rate Decreases to 3.7 Percent

Arkansas Civilian Labor Force Summary:

Labor force data, produced by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and released today by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, show Arkansas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate declined one-tenth of a percentage point, from 3.8 percent in January to 3.7 percent in February. Arkansas' civilian labor force rose 1,436, a result of 2,464 more employed and 1,028 fewer unemployed Arkansans. The United States' jobless rate decreased from 4.8 percent in January to 4.7 percent in February.

BLS Program Operations Manager Susan Price said, "Arkansas' unemployment rate declined one-tenth of a percentage point in February, breaking last month's record low of 3.8 percent. Dropping to 3.7 percent, this month's unemployment rate is a new record low for Arkansas."

ARKANSAS CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY
(Seasonally Adjusted)

	February 2017	January 2017	February 2016	Change From January 2017	Change From February 2016
Civilian Labor Force	1,337,882	1,336,446	1,345,280	1,436	-7,398
Employment	1,288,217	1,285,753	1,289,620	2,464	-1,403
Unemployment	49,665	50,693	55,660	-1,028	-5,995
Unemployment Rate	3.7	3.8	4.1	-0.1	-0.4
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.7	4.8	4.9	-0.1	-0.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Note: Data for Metropolitan Statistical Areas and minorities and youth will be available online April 5, 2017.

Arkansas Nonfarm Payroll Job Summary:

Arkansas' nonfarm payroll employment rose 15,600 in February to total 1,233,800. Seven major industry sectors posted gains, while three sectors declined. **Professional and business services** added 6,300 jobs. A majority of the increase was in administrative and support services (+5,800). Jobs in **government** rose 5,000. Gains in state (+4,600) and local (+500) government were attributed to the re-opening of public schools after the winter break. **Educational and health services** added 2,600 jobs, mostly in health care and social assistance (+1,600). **Leisure and hospitality** increased 2,000, due in part to expansions in food services (+1,100). Employment in **construction** rose 1,200, with reported hiring in specialty trade contractors (+1,000).

Compared to February 2016, nonfarm payroll jobs in Arkansas increased 17,400. Growth was posted in seven major industry sectors, with minor declines in four sectors. Jobs in **educational and health services** rose 8,400. Sizable gains were reported in health care and social assistance (+6,600). **Professional and business services** added 5,100 jobs, spread throughout all three subsectors. The largest growth was in administrative and support services (+3,300). **Manufacturing** increased 2,100, with hiring in nondurable goods (+3,500) more than offsetting the losses in durable goods (-1,400). Employment in **leisure and hospitality** rose 1,700, all in accommodation and food services. **Government** posted the largest decrease (-1,600), with losses in both local (-1,000) and state (-600) government.

ARKANSAS NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS

Not Seasonally Adjusted

(In Thousands)

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Group 2012	February 2017	January 2017	February 2016	Change From January 2017	Change From February 2016
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	1233.8	1218.2	1216.4	15.6	17.4
Goods Producing	211.7	210.3	209.7	1.4	2.0
Mining, Logging, & Construction	55.3	54.0	55.4	1.3	-0.1
Mining & Logging	6.0	5.9	6.8	0.1	-0.8
Construction	49.3	48.1	48.6	1.2	0.7
Specialty Trade Contractors	31.8	30.8	31.0	1.0	0.8
Manufacturing	156.4	156.3	154.3	0.1	2.1
Durable Goods	73.5	73.7	74.9	-0.2	-1.4
Nondurable Goods	82.9	82.6	79.4	0.3	3.5
Service Providing	1022.1	1007.9	1006.7	14.2	15.4
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	249.9	250.6	249.0	-0.7	0.9
Wholesale Trade	45.5	45.3	46.1	0.2	-0.6
Retail Trade	139.6	140.7	139.6	-1.1	0.0
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	64.8	64.6	63.3	0.2	1.5
Information	13.1	13.1	13.6	0.0	-0.5
Financial Activities	50.7	51.2	50.8	-0.5	-0.1
Finance & Insurance	37.8	38.3	37.8	-0.5	0.0
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	12.9	12.9	13.0	0.0	-0.1
Professional & Business Services	146.3	140.0	141.2	6.3	5.1
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	44.6	44.3	43.1	0.3	1.5
Management of Companies	34.6	34.4	34.3	0.2	0.3
Administrative & Support Services	67.1	61.3	63.8	5.8	3.3
Educational & Health Services	187.1	184.5	178.7	2.6	8.4
Educational Services	17.0	16.0	15.2	1.0	1.8
Health Care & Social Assistance	170.1	168.5	163.5	1.6	6.6
Ambulatory Health Care	56.3	55.5	52.6	0.8	3.7
Social Assistance	39.5	39.7	39.3	-0.2	0.2
Leisure & Hospitality	112.5	110.5	110.8	2.0	1.7
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	9.7	9.2	9.7	0.5	0.0
Accommodation & Food Services	102.8	101.3	101.1	1.5	1.7
Accommodation Services	10.4	10.0	10.5	0.4	-0.1
Food Services	92.4	91.3	90.6	1.1	1.8
Other Services	48.0	48.5	46.5	-0.5	1.5
Government	214.5	209.5	216.1	5.0	-1.6
Federal Government	20.3	20.4	20.3	-0.1	0.0
State Government	79.5	74.9	80.1	4.6	-0.6
Local Government	114.7	114.2	115.7	0.5	-1.0

Source: Monthly Survey of Employers.

Notes: Estimates are based on the first quarter 2016 benchmark.

Current month's data are preliminary; previous month's data are revised.