

News Release



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Arkansas' Unemployment Rate Declines to 3.6 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 decreased one-tenth of a percentage point, from 3.7 percent in February to 3.6 percent in March. Arkansas' civilian labor force gained 3,188, a result of 4,428 more employed and 1,240 fewer unemployed Arkansans. The United States' jobless rate declined two-tenths of a percentage point, from 4.7 percent in February to 4.5 percent in March.

BLS Program Operations Manager Susan Price said, "The unemployment rate decline to 3.6 percent marks a new record low for Arkansas, breaking last month's previous record low of 3.7 percent. Arkansas' jobless rate has fallen each month since December, after remaining fairly stable throughout most of 2016."

ARKANSAS CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY
(Seasonally Adjusted)

	March 2017	February 2017	March 2016	Change From February 2017	Change From March 2016
Civilian Labor Force	1,341,183	1,337,995	1,345,488	3,188	-4,305
Employment	1,292,574	1,288,146	1,290,525	4,428	2,049
Unemployment	48,609	49,849	54,963	-1,240	-6,354
Unemployment Rate	3.6	3.7	4.1	-0.1	-0.5
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.5	4.7	5.0	-0.2	-0.5

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

Note: Data for Metropolitan Statistical Areas and minorities and youth will be available online May 3, 2017.

Arkansas Nonfarm Payroll Job Summary:

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Arkansas increased 7,500 in March to total 1,240,900. Seven major industry sectors posted gains, while two sectors declined and two were unchanged. **Leisure and hospitality** added 2,800 jobs, mostly in accommodation and food services (+2,300). Jobs in **trade, transportation, and utilities** rose 2,300. A majority of the expansion occurred in retail trade (+1,200), typical hiring for the spring shopping season. Employment in **professional and business services** increased 2,000. Most of the gains were in administrative and support services (+2,200). **Educational and health services** decreased 1,300. Losses were reported in health care and social assistance (-1,400), with reported declines at nursing care facilities, hospitals, and physicians' offices.

Compared to March 2016, Arkansas' nonfarm payroll employment is up 16,600. Growth was posted in seven major industry sectors, as four sectors declined. Employment in **educational and health services** rose 7,000, mostly in health care and social assistance (+4,900). **Professional and business services** added 5,800 jobs, with gains posted in all three subsectors. Jobs in **manufacturing** are up 2,600. Hiring in nondurable goods (+3,700) more than offset losses in durable goods (-1,100). Small increases were reported in **trade, transportation, and utilities** (+1,600), **leisure and hospitality** (+1,500), and **other services** (+1,300). Jobs in **government** fell 2,100. Decreases occurred in local (-1,600) and state (-500) government.

ARKANSAS NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS

Not Seasonally Adjusted

(In Thousands)

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Group 2012	March 2017	February 2017	March 2016	Change From February 2017	Change From March 2016
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	1240.9	1233.4	1224.3	7.5	16.6
Goods Producing	211.7	211.7	209.8	0.0	1.9
Mining, Logging, & Construction	55.1	55.2	55.8	-0.1	-0.7
Mining & Logging	6.0	6.0	6.6	0.0	-0.6
Construction	49.1	49.2	49.2	-0.1	-0.1
Specialty Trade Contractors	31.3	31.8	31.5	-0.5	-0.2
Manufacturing	156.6	156.5	154.0	0.1	2.6
Durable Goods	73.6	73.6	74.7	0.0	-1.1
Nondurable Goods	83.0	82.9	79.3	0.1	3.7
Service Providing	1029.2	1021.7	1014.5	7.5	14.7
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	252.0	249.7	250.4	2.3	1.6
Wholesale Trade	46.6	45.7	46.3	0.9	0.3
Retail Trade	140.9	139.7	140.7	1.2	0.2
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	64.5	64.3	63.4	0.2	1.1
Information	13.1	13.1	13.6	0.0	-0.5
Financial Activities	50.9	50.7	50.8	0.2	0.1
Finance & Insurance	37.9	37.8	37.8	0.1	0.1
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	13.0	12.9	13.0	0.1	0.0
Professional & Business Services	148.1	146.1	142.3	2.0	5.8
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	44.3	44.7	43.0	-0.4	1.3
Management of Companies	34.7	34.5	34.4	0.2	0.3
Administrative & Support Services	69.1	66.9	64.9	2.2	4.2
Educational & Health Services	185.8	187.1	178.8	-1.3	7.0
Educational Services	17.1	17.0	15.0	0.1	2.1
Health Care & Social Assistance	168.7	170.1	163.8	-1.4	4.9
Ambulatory Health Care	55.5	56.3	52.6	-0.8	2.9
Social Assistance	39.6	39.5	39.4	0.1	0.2
Leisure & Hospitality	115.3	112.5	113.8	2.8	1.5
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	10.2	9.7	10.4	0.5	-0.2
Accommodation & Food Services	105.1	102.8	103.4	2.3	1.7
Accommodation Services	10.9	10.4	10.9	0.5	0.0
Food Services	94.2	92.4	92.5	1.8	1.7
Other Services	48.2	48.0	46.9	0.2	1.3
Government	215.8	214.5	217.9	1.3	-2.1
Federal Government	20.3	20.3	20.3	0.0	0.0
State Government	80.2	79.5	80.7	0.7	-0.5
Local Government	115.3	114.7	116.9	0.6	-1.6

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.