

Contact: Grace Johnson • Phone: 402-471-4189 • E-mail: grace.johnson@nebraska.gov

Nebraska Monthly Unemployment Rate for December Holds at 2.9 Percent

LINCOLN- The Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) announced today that Nebraska’s preliminary unemployment rate for December is 2.9 percent, seasonally adjusted. The jobless rate is the same as the November 2015 rate and down 0.2 percentage points from the December 2014 rate of 3.1 percent.

“Nebraska’s average unemployment rate for 2015 was 2.8 percent and has been dropping since 2009,” said Commissioner of Labor John H. Albin. “December saw another month-to-month increase in Nebraska’s labor force employment.”

Total nonfarm employment in December was 1,014,529, up by 14,499 compared to December 2014. Private industries with the most growth year over year were education and health services (up 6,910); trade, transportation and utilities (up 3,227); and financial activities (up 2,576). Month to month, the largest gains were seen in education and health services (up 1,479) and trade, transportation and utilities (up 306).

The seasonally-adjusted national unemployment rate for December is 5.0 percent, the same as the November 2015 rate and down 0.6 percentage points from the December 2014 rate of 5.6 percent.

Due to the start of the benchmark process, January 2016 data is scheduled for release Monday, March 14 followed by February data on Friday, March 25. The 2014 and 2015 benchmarked data will be published Friday, April 15. Benchmarking is the annual process of aligning estimated data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) programs with known employment numbers from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data. It is a necessary step in ensuring the data released by the NDOL is of the highest quality.

Labor Force Estimates - National, State, Omaha MSA, Lincoln MSA, Grand Island MSA

Labor Force Estimates - National (Seasonally Adjusted)					
	Prelim	Revised		Changes Since	
	Dec-15	Nov-15	Dec-14	Nov-15	Dec-14
Unemployment Rate	5.0	5.0	5.6	0.0	-0.6

Labor Force Estimates - Nebraska (Seasonally Adjusted)					
	Prelim	Revised		Changes Since	
	Dec-15	Nov-15	Dec-14	Nov-15	Dec-14
Unemployment Rate	2.9	2.9	3.1	0.0	-0.2
Labor Force	1,015,102	1,012,714	1,020,889	2,388	-5,787
<i>Unemployment</i>	29,715	29,641	31,139	74	-1,424
<i>Employment</i>	985,387	983,073	989,750	2,314	-4,363

Labor Force Estimates - Omaha MSA (Not Seasonally Adjusted)					
	Prelim	Revised		Changes Since	
	Dec-15	Nov-15	Dec-14	Nov-15	Dec-14
Unemployment Rate	3.0	2.8	3.2	0.2	-0.2
Labor Force	480,064	480,932	478,096	-868	1,968
<i>Unemployment</i>	14,311	13,304	15,287	1,007	-976
<i>Employment</i>	465,753	467,628	462,809	-1,875	2,944

Labor Force Estimates - Lincoln MSA (Not Seasonally Adjusted)					
	Prelim	Revised		Changes Since	
	Dec-15	Nov-15	Dec-14	Nov-15	Dec-14
Unemployment Rate	2.3	2.1	2.6	0.2	-0.3
Labor Force	181,051	181,330	179,760	-279	1,291
<i>Unemployment</i>	4,196	3,757	4,615	439	-419
<i>Employment</i>	176,855	177,573	175,145	-718	1,710

Labor Force Estimates - Grand Island MSA (Not Seasonally Adjusted)					
	Prelim	Revised		Changes Since	
	Dec-15	Nov-15	Dec-14	Nov-15	Dec-14
Unemployment Rate	3.2	2.8	3.2	0.4	0.0
Labor Force	44,033	43,808	44,952	225	-919
<i>Unemployment</i>	1,407	1,243	1,434	164	-27
<i>Employment</i>	42,626	42,565	43,518	61	-892

NOTE: Data is revised on a monthly basis. Data for previous years is benchmarked annually and is subject to change. MSAs represent Metropolitan Statistical Areas. Seasonally-adjusted data for the Omaha MSA and the Lincoln MSA is available about two weeks following this release. The seasonally-adjusted data can be obtained at <http://www.bls.gov/lau/metrossa.htm> or <http://networks.nebraska.gov/analyzer>.

Micropolitan Statistical Areas (MC)	Counties included	Dec-15	Nov-15
		(Preliminary)	(Revised)
Beatrice MC	Gage	3.0	2.7
Columbus MC	Platte	3.2	3.3
Fremont MC	Dodge	3.0	2.7
Hastings MC*	Adams	2.9	2.5
Kearney MC	Buffalo, Kearney	2.2	1.9
Lexington MC	Dawson, Gosper	2.8	2.7
Norfolk MC	Madison, Pierce, Stanton	2.5	2.2
North Platte MC	Lincoln, Logan, McPherson	2.6	2.4
Scottsbluff MC	Scotts Bluff, Banner, Sioux	3.1	3.1
Red Willow SA (Small Labor Market Area)	Red Willow, Hitchcock	2.7	2.4

*Hastings MC is a single county MC. (Clay County was dropped).

Prepared and distributed by Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL)
The next scheduled release is January 2016 data on Monday, March 14, 2016.
NDOL press releases are accessible on the Internet at: dol.nebraska.gov.