



Bruce Rauner, Governor  
Jeffrey D. Mays, Director

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Illinois Unemployment Rate Dips in March** *State has lowest number of unemployed in more than a decade*

**CHICAGO**—The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today the unemployment rate decreased by -0.1 percentage point to 4.6 percent in March and nonfarm payrolls decreased by -2,100 jobs over-the-month, based on preliminary data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and released by IDES. The February job gain was virtually unchanged from its initial report. (+15,300 jobs versus +15,200 jobs).

Job growth improved in the January to March period posting average monthly gains of +4,000 jobs, an increase over the prior three-month period (October to December 2017) with average monthly gains of +2,200 jobs.

“The number of unemployed in Illinois is at its lowest level since December 2006 and the unemployment rate dipped to its lowest level since March 2007,” said IDES Director Jeff Mays. “The stabilization of the labor force is also an encouraging sign.”

“Professional and Business Services have produced the largest recovery in Illinois, albeit at a lesser rate than the national average,” said DCEO Director Sean McCarthy. “The difference between Illinois and the nation is partly due to significantly slower growth in management of companies and enterprises in the state. This is why the governor and I are on this trade mission to Poland and Germany as we work to improve that standing.”

Over-the-year, nonfarm payroll employment increased by +39,200 jobs with the largest gains in these industry sectors in March: Manufacturing (+18,200); Financial Activities (+7,800); and Government (+6,800). The industry sectors with the largest over-the-year declines include: Information Services (-4,600); Professional and Business Services (-2,700); and Other Services (-1,200). Illinois nonfarm payrolls were up +0.6 percent over-the-year in sharp contrast to the nation’s +1.5 percent over-the-year gain in March.

The state’s unemployment rate is +0.5 percentage points higher than the national unemployment rate reported for March 2018, which held at 4.1 percent. The Illinois unemployment rate is down -0.4 percentage points from a year ago when it was 5.0 percent. The Illinois jobless rate last stood at 4.6 percent in March 2007.

The number of unemployed workers decreased -2.5 percent from the prior month to 297,700, down -7.5 percent over the same month for the prior year. The labor force was unchanged over-the-month, but it was up +0.1 percentage points over the prior year. The unemployment rate identifies those individuals who are out of work and are seeking employment.

An individual who exhausts or is ineligible for benefits is still reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work. To help connect jobseekers to employers who are hiring, IDES’ maintains the state’s largest job search engine, IllinoisJoblink.com (IJL), which recently showed 59,539 posted resumes with 184,089 jobs available.



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### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

	Mar-18	Feb-18	Mar-17	3-month Moving Average	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
<b>Illinois</b>	4.6%	4.7%	5.0%	4.7%	-0.1	-0.4
<b>U.S.</b>	4.1%	4.1%	4.5%	4.1%	0.0	-0.4

### Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry

	Mar-18 Current *	Feb-18 Prior mnth**	Mar-17 Year Ago	Over the Month	Over the Year	3-month Moving Avg	Change from Previous 3-month Moving Avg
<b>IL - Total Nonfarm</b>	6,093,100	6,095,200	6,053,900	-2,100	39,200	6,089,400	4,000
<b>IL - Mining</b>	7,600	7,600	8,100	0	-500	7,600	0
<b>IL - Construction</b>	224,700	224,100	220,900	600	3,800	223,600	700
<b>IL - Manufacturing</b>	586,500	585,600	568,300	900	18,200	585,900	200
<b>IL - Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	1,218,200	1,218,300	1,214,500	-100	3,700	1,216,200	1,100
<b>IL - Information</b>	94,200	94,500	98,800	-300	-4,600	94,500	-600
<b>IL - Financial Activities</b>	398,000	396,900	390,200	1,100	7,800	396,800	2,000
<b>IL - Professional and Business Services</b>	936,100	939,700	938,800	-3,600	-2,700	938,000	-1,800
<b>IL - Educational and Health Services</b>	925,100	925,300	922,300	-200	2,800	925,200	500
<b>IL - Leisure and Hospitality</b>	615,300	615,600	610,200	-300	5,100	616,100	500
<b>IL - Other Services</b>	250,600	250,400	251,800	200	-1,200	250,800	-400
<b>IL - Government</b>	836,800	837,200	830,000	-400	6,800	834,900	2,000

\* preliminary  
\*\*Final

- 1976-2017 seasonally adjusted labor force data for Illinois, and all other states, have been revised as required by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The monthly historical revisions to state labor force estimates reflect new national benchmark controls, state working-age population controls, seasonal factors, as well as updated total nonfarm jobs and unemployment benefits claims inputs. Illinois labor force data were also smoothed to eliminate large monthly changes as a result of volatility in the monthly Census Population Survey (CPS) and national benchmarking. In February 2018, the BLS also introduced a new seasonal adjustment procedure for state labor force estimates which resulted in the entire monthly historical series for Illinois and all other states being replaced. For all of these reasons, the comments and tables citing unemployment rates in previous state news releases/materials may no longer be valid.
- Monthly seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for Illinois and the Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights Metropolitan Division are available here: [Illinois & Chicago Metropolitan Area Unemployment Rates](#)
- Monthly 2013-2017 seasonally adjusted nonfarm payroll employment data for Illinois have been revised. To control for potential survey error, the estimates are benchmarked annually to universal counts derived primarily from unemployment insurance tax reports. Effective with January 2018 estimates, the BLS introduced concurrent seasonal adjustment for monthly state nonfarm payroll employment estimates
- Not seasonally adjusted jobs data with industry detail are available at [Not Seasonally Adjusted Jobs](#). “Other Services” include activities in three broad categories: Personal and laundry; repair and maintenance; and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations. Seasonally adjusted employment data for subsectors within industries are not available

**About IDES :** IDES encourages employment by connecting employers to jobseekers, provides unemployment insurance benefits to eligible individuals, produces labor market data and protects taxpayers from unemployment insurance fraud. Visit the Department’s website at [www.ides.illinois.gov](http://www.ides.illinois.gov) for more information. You can also follow IDES on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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