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NEWS RELEASE

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Unemployment Rate Falls and Payrolls Down in August *Illinois Payroll Jobs Increase by 15,000 Over the Year*

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate was 4.7 percent in August, down -0.2 percentage point from July, and up +0.4 percentage point from the same month, one year ago, based on data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The revised July unemployment rate was 4.9 percent.

Total nonfarm payrolls decreased over-the-month in August, down -4,400 (-0.1%) to 6,175,600. The July monthly change in payrolls was revised from the preliminary report, from +11,700 to +15,300. The August payroll jobs estimate and unemployment rate reflect activity for the week including the 12th.

The industry sectors with the largest monthly payroll jobs increases included: Leisure and Hospitality (+1,800), Construction (+1,500), and Professional and Business Services (+1,000). The sectors with the largest over-the-month jobs decreases included: Private Education and Health Services (-6,100), Financial Activities (-1,700), and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-1,000).

Compared to a year ago, total nonfarm payroll jobs were up +15,000 jobs. The industry groups with the largest jobs increases included: Construction (+13,400), Private Education and Health Services (+9,600), and Other Services (+4,000). The industry groups with the largest jobs decreases included: Financial Activities (-15,800), Information (-2,900) and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-700). In August, total nonfarm payrolls were up +0.2% over-the-year in Illinois and up +0.4% in the nation.

“While Illinois continues to add jobs over the year, August’s report reflects the uncertainty workers and employers face from the federal governments inconsistent trade policies,” **said Deputy Governor Andy Manar**. “Those policies are making it harder for businesses to plan and invest with confidence. While Washington creates instability, Illinois will remain focused on supporting employers, preparing workers for good-paying jobs and strengthening our economy for the long term.”

“The monthly unemployment rate is one of many factors DCEO relies on to understand labor market dynamics and inform the work we do to support business development and job growth in all regions of the state,” **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “The decline in the unemployment rate from August coupled with positive payroll growth year-over-year is data that reinforces why the state must continue investing in workforce programming and remain focused on supporting key sectors, many of whom are facing economic headwinds resulting from inconsistent federal policies affecting supply chains and trade.”

The number of unemployed persons in August was 306,800, down -2.8% from July, and up +8.1% over the same month one year ago. The labor force was down -0.3% from July and down -1.3% over-the-year. The unemployment rate identifies those individuals who are out of work and seeking employment. An individual who exhausts or is ineligible for benefits is still reflected in the unemployment rate if they actively seek work.

IDES helps connect jobseekers to employers who are hiring in a number of ways, including hosting and co-hosting job fairs and hiring events with statewide workforce partners, and through maintaining [Illinois JobLink](#) (IJL), the state’s largest job search engine. IJL is a tool used by jobseekers to look for work, and by employers who can post open and available positions for hire and browse resumes. Recently, IJL showed 59,629 posted resumes with 76,517 jobs available.

Additionally, in partnership with IDOL and DCEO, IDES published resources to [assist federal employees and contractors](#) impacted by recent terminations or deferred resignations.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

	Aug-26	Jul-26	Aug-25	3-month Average	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
Illinois	4.7%	4.9%	4.3%	4.9%	-0.2	0.4
U.S.	4.1%	4.1%	4.3%	4.1%	0.0	-0.2

Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry

	Aug-26 Current *	Jul-26 Prior month**	Aug-25 Year Ago	Over-the- Month	Over-the- Year	3-month Moving Avg	Change from Previous 3-month Moving Avg
IL - Total Nonfarm	6,175,600	6,180,000	6,160,600	-4,400	15,000	6,173,400	4,200
IL - Mining	7,300	7,300	6,900	0	400	7,300	100
IL - Construction	254,100	252,600	240,700	1,500	13,400	252,400	1,600
IL - Manufacturing	571,400	571,300	568,200	100	3,200	571,200	0
IL - Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,217,500	1,218,500	1,218,200	-1,000	-700	1,216,300	100
IL - Information	87,100	87,800	90,000	-700	-2,900	87,600	-800
IL - Financial Activities	377,000	378,700	392,800	-1,700	-15,800	378,800	-1,600
IL - Professional and Business Services	908,700	907,700	909,100	1,000	-400	906,300	3,700
IL - Private Education and Health Services	1,036,700	1,042,800	1,027,100	-6,100	9,600	1,038,600	100
IL - Leisure and Hospitality	606,900	605,100	605,900	1,800	1,000	606,900	-300
IL - Other Services	250,800	250,900	246,800	-100	4,000	250,600	500
IL - Government	858,100	857,300	854,900	800	3,200	857,300	700
* Preliminary							
**Final							

- Monthly 2021-2025 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, outlier specifications, 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 Current Population Survey (CPS) and national benchmarking. For these reasons, the comments and tables citing unemployment rates in previous news releases/materials may no longer be valid.
- Monthly seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for Illinois and the Chicago-Naperville-Schaumburg Metropolitan Division are available [here](#).
- Monthly 2021-2025 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.
- Not seasonally adjusted jobs data with industry detail are available [here](#). “Other Services” include activities in three broad categories: personal and laundry; repair and maintenance; and religious, grant making, civic and professional organizations. Seasonally adjusted data for subsectors within industries are not available.

About the Department of Employment Security

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) provides vital employment services to Illinois workers, jobseekers, and employers with resources including [Job Fairs](#), [IllinoisJobLink.com](#), and [Workshare IL](#), analyzes and disseminates actionable [Labor Market Information](#), and administers the [Unemployment Insurance Program](#). To see the full range of services provided by IDES, and for the latest news concerning the department, visit [IDES.Illinois.gov](#).

Disclaimer on statewide data: The data contained in the statewide press releases are seasonally adjusted, which eliminates seasonal fluctuations in monthly employment data. Many economic data series have seasonal patterns, which means they tend to occur at the same time each year. For example, construction employment declines in winter, tourism employment rises in summer, and retail employment peaks in January. Seasonal adjustment helps to describe the underlying economic trends in the monthly data. When data are seasonally adjusted, as are the data in this release, the seasonal adjustment permits comparisons of data from one month to the next (January 2026 data compared to December 2025 data).