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NEWS RELEASE

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Unemployment Rate Down for Third Consecutive Month *Illinois Payroll Jobs Increase by Nearly 14,000 Over the Year*

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) announced today that the unemployment rate was 4.6 percent in September, down -0.1 percentage point from August, and up +0.1 percentage point from the same month, one year ago, based on data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The revised August unemployment rate was 4.7 percent.

Total nonfarm payrolls decreased over-the-month in September, down -7,200 (0.1%) to 6,164,500. The August monthly change in payrolls was revised from the preliminary report, from -4,400 to -8,300. The September 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 (+5,700), Construction (+1,300), and Financial Activities (+400). The sectors with the largest over-the-month jobs decreases included: Government (-4,600), Private Education and Health Services (-3,700), and Professional and Business Services (-2,400).

Compared to a year ago, total nonfarm payroll jobs were up +13,800 jobs. The industry groups with the largest jobs increases included: Construction (+14,300), Leisure and Hospitality (+8,500), and Private Education and Health Services (+5,400). The industry groups with the largest jobs decreases included: Financial Activities (-13,500), Information (-3,000) and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (-2,800). In September, total nonfarm payrolls were up +0.2% over-the-year in Illinois and up +0.3% in the nation.

“Despite continued economic uncertainty driven by federal policies, Illinois’ unemployment rate declined for the third consecutive month—a sign of the resilience of Illinois businesses and workers,” **said Deputy Governor Andy Manar**. “There is more work to do, and the state remains focused on providing stability where we can, supporting businesses, and connecting Illinoisans with good-paying jobs.”

"The decline in unemployment coupled with the increase in payroll jobs reinforces the importance of investing in our state's biggest asset - our workforce," **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. "DCEO is committed to building upon this momentum by continuing to implement initiatives and programs that create jobs."

The number of unemployed persons in September was 297,700, down -3.0% from August, and up +1.8% over the same month one year ago. The labor force was down -0.1% from August 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 60,977 posted resumes with 75,535 jobs available.

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Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

	Sep-26	Aug-26	Sep-25	3-month Average	Over-the- Month Change	Over-the- Year Change
Illinois	4.6%	4.7%	4.5%	4.7%	-0.1	0.1
U.S.	4.2%	4.1%	4.4%	4.1%	0.1	-0.2

Illinois Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Jobs – by Major Industry

	Sep-26 Current *	Aug-26 Prior month**	Sep-25 Year Ago	Over-the- Month	Over-the- Year	3-month Moving Avg	Change from Previous 3-month Moving Avg
IL - Total Nonfarm	6,164,500	6,171,700	6,150,700	-7,200	13,800	6,172,100	0
IL - Mining	7,300	7,300	6,900	0	400	7,300	0
IL - Construction	254,500	253,200	240,200	1,300	14,300	253,400	1,300
IL - Manufacturing	571,100	571,500	566,200	-400	4,900	571,300	0
IL - Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,214,300	1,215,900	1,217,100	-1,600	-2,800	1,216,200	400
IL - Information	86,500	86,200	89,500	300	-3,000	86,800	-500
IL - Financial Activities	378,700	378,300	392,200	400	-13,500	378,600	-600
IL - Professional and Business Services	907,400	909,800	908,300	-2,400	-900	908,300	1,600
IL - Private Education and Health Services	1,032,400	1,036,100	1,027,000	-3,700	5,400	1,037,100	-1,300
IL - Leisure and Hospitality	612,200	606,500	603,700	5,700	8,500	607,900	1,100
IL - Other Services	247,900	250,100	246,400	-2,200	1,500	249,600	-800
IL - Government	852,200	856,800	853,200	-4,600	-1,000	855,400	-1,500
* 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).