

Unemployment rate at 7.4 percent in March

Written by
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Employers cut 1,800 jobs last month~

ST. PAUL - The state unemployment rate edged up 0.1 percent to a seasonally adjusted 7.4 percent in March, according to figures released today by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

The U.S. rate remained unchanged at 9.7 percent in March for the third consecutive month.

The state lost 1,800 jobs in March. February's employment count was revised to reflect 1,600 jobs lost instead of the 3,400 jobs that were previously reported lost. Over the past year, Minnesota has lost 1.6 percent of its jobs, while the U.S. lost 1.7 percent of its jobs during that period.

"The March figures demonstrate that economic recoveries are not smooth processes, with some months stronger than others," said DEED Commissioner Dan McElroy. "Still, we're seeing some positive trends in Minnesota's employment picture, including an increase in the labor force and the length of the average work week, and steady declines in year-over-year job losses."

In March the average work week increased to 32.8 hours after holding steady at 32.6 hours over the past three months. In addition, the labor force participation rate increased 0.2 percent to 72.8 percent.

Five of the state's 11 major sectors added jobs in March, led by manufacturing and by leisure and hospitality, which each added 1,500 jobs. The manufacturing sector has now added jobs for three consecutive months, growing by 6,100 positions since the start of the year.

Other gains occurred in March in government (up 1,200), construction (up 300) and financial activities (up 300). Logging and mining held steady during the month.

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Job losses occurred in trade, transportation and utilities (down 3,000), professional and business services (down 1,200), education and health services (down 1,000), other services (down 800) and information (down 600).

In the past year, education and health services has gained 3,200 jobs, while professional and business services has added 1,000 jobs.

Jobs losses have occurred in the past year in manufacturing (down 14,000), construction (down 9,800), trade, transportation and utilities (down 9,100), other services (down 3,700), leisure and hospitality (down 3,700), financial activities (down 3,100), information (down 1,800), logging and mining (down 1,000), and government (down 500).

In the state Metropolitan Statistical Areas, the St. Cloud MSA held steady over the past year. Job losses occurred in the Rochester MSA (down 0.9 percent), Duluth-Superior MSA (down 2.2 percent), Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA (down 2.4 percent) and Mankato MSA (down 3.1 percent).

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Unemployment Rate	Seasonally adjusted		Not seasonally adjusted	
	March 2010	February 2010		
Minnesota	7.4	7.3		
U.S.	9.7	9.7		
Employment	March 2010	February 2010	March '09-March '10 Level Change	March '09-March '10 % Change
Minnesota	2,634,000	2,635,800	-42,500	-1.6
U.S.	129,750,000	129,588,000	-2,249,000	-1.7

Over The Year Employment Growth By Industry Sector (NSA)			
	OTY Job Change	OTY Growth Rate (%)	U.S. OTY Growth Rate (%)
Total Non-Farm Employment	-42,500	-1.6	-1.7
Logging and Mining	-1,000	-19.0	-3.8
Construction	-9,800	-12.3	-11.3
Manufacturing	-14,000	-4.6	-5.2
Trade, Trans. and Utilities	-9,100	-1.8	-1.8
Information	-1,800	-3.2	-4.7
Financial Activities	-3,100	-1.8	-3.2
Prof. and Bus. Services	1,000	0.3	-1.2
Ed. and Health Services	3,200	0.7	1.8
Leisure and Hospitality	-3,700	-1.6	-0.7
Other Services	-3,700	-3.2	-1.3
Government	-500	-0.1	-0.3

Metropolitan Statistical Area	OTY Employment Change (#, NSA)	OTY Employment Change (% , NSA)
Minneapolis-St. Paul MN-WI MSA	-40,100	-2.4
Duluth-Superior MN-WI MSA	-2,900	-2.2
Rochester MSA	-900	-0.9
St. Cloud MSA	50	0.0
Mankato MSA	-1,700	-3.1

- All labor force data are subject to revision.
- The unemployment rate is the percentage of people actively seeking work compared with those in the labor force (employed plus unemployed).