

State unemployment rate slides to 7.0 percent

Written by Nancy Spencer
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BY ED GEBERT

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VAN WERT - The unemployment rate for Ohio continued its slow decent in April. The latest report from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services released on Friday show another small drop in the rate — from 7.1 in March to 7.0 in April.

Along with good news about the rate, the number of workers increased while the number of unemployed decreased for the month. The number of unemployed workers seeking employment fell by 7,000 to 400,000. The number of unemployed has fallen by 21,000 in the past 12 months, but has risen by 15,000 since December.

The number of employed workers rose by 7,600 to 5,183,200. That figure is nearly the same as 12 months ago, but the total work force in the state, that is the number of working added to those who are unemployed but seeking work, has fallen by 23,000 in the past 12 months, and is down 71,000 across Ohio in the past two years.

Figures for April in each of the state's 88 counties will be released on Tuesday. Van Wert County saw a four-tenths of a percent decrease in the unemployment rate in March to 7.4 percent. If the county follows the state's lead, expect a slight decrease in the jobless rate. Of special interest will be the job force total, as that number has been steadily decreasing thus far in 2013.

The latest business establishment survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that the state added 2,400 manufacturing jobs in April. Other areas in Ohio showing job growth included leisure and hospitality workers (up 5,300), trade, transportation and utilities (up 3,500), and other services (up 1,500). Job losses were seen in professional and business services (down 2,300), construction (down 1,400), financial activities (down 1,00), and federal government (down 900).

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Over the past 12 months, the state has put on an additional 8,800 positions. Increases were also noted in educational and health services (up 12,300), leisure and hospitality (up 4,200), and trade, transportation and utilities (up 2,600). Decreases since last April were seen in government (down 7,200), professional and business services (down 2,000), and information services (down 1,100).

The U.S. unemployment rate for April was 7.5 percent, down from 7.6 percent in March and down from 8.1 percent in April 2012.