

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

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Montana's Unemployment Rate Drops Again to 4.1 Percent

HELENA – Montana's unemployment rate dropped 0.2 percentage points in March, down to 4.1 percent. Montana's unemployment rate has not been this low since October 2007. The U.S. unemployment rate was flat over the month at 5.5 percent in March.

"Montana's economy is off to a strong start in 2015, with nearly 9,000 jobs added in the first quarter," Governor Steve Bullock said. "Montana businesses and workers are on the right track to building a stronger economy, and I'm committed to building on this success for our state."

"We are expecting strong wage growth in 2015 as Montana businesses increase wages to recruit workers in this low unemployment environment," said Labor Commissioner Pam Bucy. "The Montana Department of Labor and Industry is continuing our work to reach out to under-utilized workers, recruit them into the labor market, and ensure that our workers are meeting the needs of Montana employers."

Montana's total employment levels surged up by 2,725 jobs in March, for a total of 8,873 jobs added in the first quarter of 2015. Total employment estimates include payroll employment, plus agricultural and self-employed workers. Payroll employment estimates indicate a loss of 500 jobs over the month, but indicated strong job gains last month and continue to show strong upwards job increases over the last quarter.

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased 0.2 percent in March, with increases in energy prices offset by declines in food prices. Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U has declined 0.1 percent, largely due to lower energy prices compared to last year. Prices for both airline fares and groceries declined in March, suggesting that producers of energy-dependent goods are passing on the savings from lower fuel and transportation input costs to consumers. The index for all items less food and energy, also called core inflation, rose 0.2 percent in March.

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*** Unemployment figures are seasonally-adjusted. Seasonally-adjusted numbers remove the effects of events that follow a more or less regular month-to-month pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. The margin of error for the unemployment rate is plus or minus 0.5 percentage points at the 90 percent confidence level. All questions relating to the calculation of unemployment rates should be directed to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau at 1-800-541-3904.*

The next Labor Situation Report for the month of April 2015 will be released on Wednesday, May 27, 2015.

******* INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET *******



Visit our website at www.lmi.mt.gov for additional information and analysis, including industry employment levels, background on the unemployment rate, and annual employment data for Montana's Indian Reservations. This month's Economy at a Glance includes information on who is more likely to be the primary wage earners in Montana's households – males or females.

******* COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT RATES *******

The unemployment rate and ranking for each of Montana's 56 counties is provided below for your convenience. County unemployment rates and employment levels are not seasonally adjusted and should be compared to the unadjusted statewide unemployment rate of **4.7 percent**.

Rank	County	Unemployment Rate		Employment	
		Current Unemployment Rate	Change over Year	Current Employment	Job Change from Last Year
1	Fallon County	2.4	-0.2	2,125	150
2	McCone County	2.7	-0.7	1,098	106
3	Powder River County	2.8	-1.3	1,024	95
4	Sheridan County	3	-0.5	2,056	25
4	Wibaux County	3	-1	546	44
6	Richland County	3.1	0.1	7,460	394
7	Dawson County	3.2	0	4,940	219
8	Gallatin County	3.3	-0.8	55,988	2,235
8	Liberty County	3.3	-1.3	955	105
8	Sweet Grass County	3.3	-1.3	1,723	113
11	Chouteau County	3.4	-0.7	2,519	158
11	Daniels County	3.4	-0.2	929	34
11	Garfield County	3.4	0	720	76
14	Valley County	3.6	-0.5	4,317	249
14	Yellowstone County	3.6	-0.8	78,317	1,708
16	Madison County	3.7	-1.7	4,567	150

16	Meagher County	3.7	-1.5	920	60
18	Custer County	3.8	-0.1	6,422	-32
18	Lewis and Clark County	3.8	-0.7	34,445	396
18	Stillwater County	3.8	-0.6	4,897	67
18	Toole County	3.8	0.1	2,273	34
22	Carbon County	3.9	-0.9	5,306	191
23	Beaverhead County	4.2	-0.5	4,664	167
23	Judith Basin County	4.2	-1.5	918	70
23	Prairie County	4.2	-1.4	503	29
26	Carter County	4.3	-0.4	643	49
27	Deer Lodge County	4.4	-1.1	5,125	115
27	Jefferson County	4.4	-1.2	5,474	112
27	Musselshell County	4.4	-0.5	2,362	93
27	Teton County	4.4	-0.7	2,807	142
31	Cascade County	4.5	-0.7	36,441	-486
31	Missoula County	4.5	-1	59,169	1,836
31	Treasure County	4.5	-0.5	337	30
34	Golden Valley County	4.7	-0.8	385	24
35	Hill County	4.8	-1.8	7,462	57
35	Silver Bow County	4.8	-1.1	16,351	62
37	Pondera County	5.3	-0.6	2,750	171
37	Powell County	5.3	-1.7	2,775	62
39	Fergus County	5.4	-0.3	5,463	108
40	Park County	5.5	-1.4	7,444	234
41	Lake County	5.6	-1.5	11,911	260
41	Rosebud County	5.6	-0.8	3,940	71
41	Wheatland County	5.6	-1.9	740	60
44	Roosevelt County	5.8	-0.3	4,627	32
45	Blaine County	6	-1.2	2,279	41
45	Broadwater County	6	-1.1	2,390	65
45	Ravalli County	6	-1.4	18,047	577
48	Flathead County	6.8	-1.1	40,685	474
49	Phillips County	6.9	-0.3	1,878	104
50	Granite County	7.1	-1.5	1,506	164
51	Big Horn County	7.8	-4.2	5,060	203
52	Petroleum County	7.9	2.8	290	31
53	Mineral County	9.5	-1	1,578	-3
54	Sanders County	10	-2.2	4,225	150
55	Glacier County	10.5	-0.2	4,923	-293
56	Lincoln County	12.1	-1.7	7,032	174

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