

# Department of Workforce Development: Wisconsin Local Employment & Unemployment Estimates Released

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MADISON - The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today released the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) estimates of unemployment and employment statistics for metro areas, major cities, and counties in Wisconsin. The estimates include updates for February 2017 and the preliminary estimates for March 2017. These numbers are not seasonally adjusted. In brief, the estimates showed:

Metropolitan Statistical Areas: Preliminary March 2017 unemployment rates decreased in all areas over the year when compared over the year to March 2016 and over the month to February 2017. The largest over the year decline was 1.2 percent in Racine. The latest rates ranged from 2.6 percent in Madison to 4.5 percent in Racine.

Municipalities: Preliminary March 2017 rates decreased in all of the state's 32 largest municipalities when compared over the year to March 2016 and over the month to February 2017. The latest rates ranged from 2.3 percent in Madison to 5.7 percent in Beloit.

Counties: Preliminary March 2017 rates decreased in all 72 counties when

compared over the year to March 2016 rates and in 71 of 72 counties when compared over the month to February 2017. The largest over the year decline was 2.3 percent in Bayfield county. The latest rates ranged from 2.5 percent in Dane to 7.9 percent in Iron.

The release of the March 2017 local rates follows last week's release of BLS monthly estimates showing a preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 3.4 percent in March 2017, dropping to its lowest rate since April 2000. Data also showed both total labor force and employment in Wisconsin reached an all-time high in March, while the number of unemployed individuals was its lowest since June 2000.

Other indicators of the state of Wisconsin's economy include:

Wisconsin's labor force participation rate increased to 68.4 percent and continues to outpace the U.S. rate of 63.0 percent in March.

Wisconsin saw a preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 3.4 percent in March 2017, down 0.3 percent from February and at its lowest rate since April 2000.

Initial UI claims ended 2016 at their lowest level in their last 30 years. Year 2017 initial UI claims are running at their lowest levels since 1989.

Continuing unemployment claims ended 2016 at their lowest level since 1973.

Continuing unemployment claims in Wisconsin are running the lowest in at least the past 30 years.