

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development: Wisconsin local employment and 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 to February 2018 and preliminary estimates for March 2018. These numbers are not seasonally adjusted. In brief, the estimates show:

Metropolitan Statistical Areas: Preliminary March 2018 unemployment rates declined in all twelve Wisconsin metro areas when compared over the year to March 2017. The rates ranged from 2.4 percent in Madison to 3.7 percent in Racine. Janesville-Beloit experienced the largest year over year decline of 1 percent, followed by Racine which dropped 0.7 percent, when compared to March 2017 rates. Ten (10) of Wisconsin's 12 metro areas experienced (or tied) their lowest March unemployment rate on record in 2018 (1990).

Municipalities: Preliminary March 2018 rates decreased in all of state's 32 largest municipalities when compared over the year to March 2017, with Beloit

experiencing the largest year over year decline of 1.5 percent, followed by Superior at 1.1 percent. The rates ranged from 2.0 percent in Fitchburg to 4.6 percent in Racine. Twenty-one (21) of the state's 32 largest cities experienced (or tied) their lowest March unemployment rate on record in 2018 (1990).

Counties: Preliminary March 2018 rates declined in all of Wisconsin's 72 counties when compared over the year to March 2017. Menomonie County had the largest year over year decline, 2.4 percent. The rates ranged from 2.2 percent in Dane County to 6.8 percent in Iron County. Sixty-three (63) of Wisconsin's 72 counties experienced (or tied) their lowest March unemployment rate on record in 2018 (1990).

The release of March 2018 local rates follows last week's release of BLS monthly estimates showing that Wisconsin's statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at the historical low of 2.9 percent in March 2018. The data also showed the state gained 8,900 private sector jobs, which ranked 4th nationally. Additionally, the state gained 2,100 manufacturing jobs in March 2018, which ranked 3rd nationally and 1st in the Midwest and the state's labor force participation rate of 68.7 percent ranked tied for 4th nationally. Other highlights of the statewide release include"

Wisconsin ranked 2nd in the nation in one-month construction job gains, and 1st in the Midwest

Wisconsin ranked 1st in the nation in manufacturing job gains in 2018

Wisconsin's addition of 6,800 total non-farm jobs over the month ranked 5th nationally

Wisconsin's addition of 13,200 manufacturing jobs over the year ranked 3rd nationally, 2nd in the Midwest

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

Initial UI claims ended 2017 at their lowest level in the last 30 years.

Continuing unemployment claims ended 2017 at their lowest level since 1973.

Moody's investor Service recently upgraded the state's credit rating, noting that "(T)he stable outlook reflects the expectation that the state will experience moderate economic growth and will continue its prudent fiscal management practices."

The data included in today's release can be found on DWD's WisConomy [website](#).