

WisDWD: Year over year unemployment rates decline or hold steady in all 12 Wisconsin metro areas For 59th consecutive month

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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 August 2018 and preliminary estimates for September 2018. Unemployment rates are not seasonally adjusted. The estimates show:

- **Metropolitan Statistical Areas:** Preliminary September 2018 unemployment rates declined in all 12 of Wisconsin's metro areas over the year from September 2017 to September 2018. This marks the 59th consecutive month in which unemployment rates in the 12 Wisconsin MSAs have dropped or remained unchanged when compared to the same month in the prior year. The last month in which this trend did not occur was October 2013. The La Crosse-Onalaska MSA registered its record low unemployment rate for any month at 2.0 percent. The Janesville-Beloit MSA tied its record low unemployment rate for any month at 2.8 percent. Two other Wisconsin metro areas set or tied their

lowest September unemployment rate on record.

- **Municipalities:** Preliminary September 2018 unemployment rates declined or stayed the same in all 32 of Wisconsin's largest cities over the year from September 2017 to September 2018. The largest declines were registered in Greenfield and Manitowoc (0.7 percentage points) and Superior, Sheboygan, Beloit and Racine (0.6 percentage points). Five of Wisconsin's largest cities, Beloit (3.2 percent), Fond du Lac (2.3 percent), Green Bay (2.6 percent), La Crosse (2.2 percent) and Manitowoc (2.8 percent) registered or tied all-time low unemployment rates for any month. Seventeen of Wisconsin's 32 largest cities set or tied their lowest September unemployment rate on record.
- **Counties:** Preliminary September 2018 unemployment rates declined from September 2017 to September 2018 in 71 of Wisconsin's 72 counties, with 23 counties setting or tying their all-time record low unemployment rate for any month.

The release of September 2018 local rates follows last week's release of BLS monthly statewide estimates which showed that Wisconsin maintained a seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 3 percent or lower for the eighth consecutive month, setting another record. The data also showed that Wisconsin's addition of 22,800 manufacturing jobs from September 2017 to September 2018 ranked 2nd nationally and was No. 1 in the Midwest.

Other highlights of those rankings included:

- Wisconsin's labor force participation rate of 68.6 percent was the seventh highest in the country.
- Wisconsin's historically low unemployment rate of 3 percent was tied for the 10th lowest in the nation.
- Wisconsin ranked 15th nationally and 2nd in the Midwest in number of construction jobs added in the past year.

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 accessed on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website.