



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### Virginia Employment Commission

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### Virginia's Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate Decreased 0.1 Percentage Point in February to 5.7 Percent

—Unadjusted February rate was up 0.1 percentage point to 6.1 percent—  
—Nonfarm employment gains 9,000 jobs between January and February—

**RICHMOND**—Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell 0.1 percentage point in February to 5.7 percent and was 0.6 percentage point below the year-ago February rate. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has been trending down since the peak rate of 7.3 percent in January 2010, with the exception of a slight blip upward in June and July of 2011, and February's rate is the lowest rate since 5.8 percent in January 2009. The number of unemployed decreased by 4,315 in February and the labor force expanded by 1,027, as the 5,342 additional people working this month exceeded the decline in those seeking work. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues below the national rate, which remained at 8.3 percent.

Virginia's unadjusted unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage point this month to 6.1 percent, but was 0.5 percentage point below the February 2011 rate. The number of unemployed increased by 5,959, and the labor force increased by 27,008, as more people entered the labor force seeking work and more people reported working (+21,049). Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues below the national unadjusted rate, which decreased to 8.7 percent in February from 8.8 percent in January.

The number of Virginians receiving a regular unemployment benefit payment was 59,658 in February 2012, which was down from 63,508 in January 2012 and down from 68,976 in February 2011. Cumulative initial claims for February 2012 totaled 31,151, compared to 44,319 in January 2012 and 34,577 in February 2011.

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**NONFARM EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY**  
*(Not seasonally adjusted)*

Nonfarm payroll employment increased by 9,000 jobs in February to 3,658,200, following January's typical seasonal employment loss that was revised from 64,500 jobs to 66,200 jobs. From January 2012 to February 2012, six major industry divisions experienced employment gains, four experienced employment losses, and employment in **professional and business services** was unchanged at 655,200. Staffing for the spring semester at public and private schools and colleges accounted for a considerable share of February's job growth. **Total government** increased by 9,200 jobs to 721,200, with job gains of 7,200 in state government and 2,100 in local government. **Private education and health services** employment was up 3,600 jobs to 478,700, with increases of 1,600 jobs in educational services and 2,000 jobs in health care and social assistance. Employment in the **leisure and hospitality** industry grew by 4,600 jobs to 328,700, reflecting strong job gains in the food services and drinking places subsector. **Finance** employment was up 2,700 jobs to 186,200, with growth of 1,700 jobs in finance and insurance and 1,000 jobs in real estate. Other jobs gains occurred in **information**, up 900 jobs to 73,600, and **manufacturing**, up 200 jobs to 226,300.

**Trade and transportation** experienced the largest employment decline over the month. Employment in **trade and transportation** was down 6,900 jobs to a February employment level of 621,700, which is usually its low point for the year. **Construction** employment fell by 3,700 jobs to 172,100, with job losses in all subsectors. Other employment losses were 1,500 jobs to 183,800 in **miscellaneous services** and 100 jobs to 10,700 in **mining**.

In the year-over-year comparison (February 2011 to February 2012), nonfarm payroll employment was up 37,400 jobs, or 1.0 percent. Compared to a year ago, seven major industry divisions experienced employment gains and four experienced employment losses. **Private education and health services** employment increased by 14,500 jobs, or 3.1 percent, from last February, with the job gains in health care and social assistance (+11,700 jobs) and in private education (+2,800 jobs). **Finance** employment increased by 7,600 jobs, or 4.3 percent, from February 2011, with job gains of 4,800 in finance and insurance and 2,800 in real estate. **Trade and transportation** employment increased by 7,200 jobs, or 1.2 percent, from a year ago, with strong gains in both transportation and retail trade employment. **Total government** employment grew by 5,300 jobs, or 0.7 percent, over the year, with the job gains in local (+4,100 jobs) and federal (+1,700 jobs) government outweighing the job losses in state government (-500 jobs). **Leisure and hospitality** employment increased by 5,200 jobs, or 1.6 percent, from February 2011, with employment gains in accommodation and food services (+3,800 jobs) and in arts, entertainment, and recreation (+1,400 jobs). Other gains were 200 jobs, or 0.1 percent, in **construction** and 100 jobs, or 0.9 percent, in **mining**.

The largest employment decline from last February occurred in **manufacturing**, down 1,500 jobs, or 0.7 percent. Employment in the **information** sector decreased by 900 jobs, or 1.2 percent, from

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February 2011. Other losses were 200 jobs in **miscellaneous services** and 100 jobs in **professional and business services**.

### Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\*

Industry	Employment			January 2012 to February 2012		February 2011 to February 2012	
	February 2012	January 2012	February 2011	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	3,658,200	3,649,200	3,620,800	+9,000	+0.2%	+37,400	+1.0%
<b>Mining</b>	10,700	10,800	10,600	-100	-0.9%	+100	+0.9%
<b>Construction</b>	172,100	175,800	171,900	-3,700	-2.1%	+200	+0.1%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	226,300	226,100	227,800	+200	+0.1%	-1,500	-0.7%
<b>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	621,700	628,600	614,500	-6,900	-1.1%	+7,200	+1.2%
<b>Information</b>	73,600	72,700	74,500	+900	+1.2%	-900	-1.2%
<b>Finance</b>	186,200	183,500	178,600	+2,700	+1.5%	+7,600	+4.3%
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	655,200	655,200	655,300	+0	+0.0%	-100	-0.0%
<b>Private Education and Health Services</b>	478,700	475,100	464,200	+3,600	+0.8%	+14,500	+3.1%
<b>Leisure and Hospitality Services</b>	328,700	324,100	323,500	+4,600	+1.4%	+5,200	+1.6%
<b>Miscellaneous Services</b>	183,800	185,300	184,000	-1,500	-0.8%	-200	-0.1%
<b>Government</b>	721,200	712,000	715,900	+9,200	+1.3%	+5,300	+0.7%
<b>Federal Government</b>	175,300	175,400	173,600	-100	-0.1%	+1,700	+1.0%
<b>State Government</b>	158,200	151,000	158,700	+7,200	+4.8%	-500	-0.3%
<b>Local Government</b>	387,700	385,600	383,600	+2,100	+0.5%	+4,100	+1.1%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Virginia's 177,900 manufacturing production workers earned an average weekly wage of \$717.49 this February, which was \$2.34 lower than the January weekly wage and \$30.00 lower than the February 2011 weekly wage. The average production workweek, at 39.1 hours, was unchanged from January, but 0.2 hour shorter than the February 2011 workweek. The average hourly factory pay rate in February was \$18.35, \$0.06 below the January rate and \$0.67 below the February 2011 rate.

The statistical reference week this month was the week of February 12-18, 2012.

*The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the February local area unemployment rates on Tuesday, April 10, 2012. The data will be available on our website, [www.VirginiaLMI.com](http://www.VirginiaLMI.com).*

*The March statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Friday, April 20, 2012.*

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