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State Unemployment Rate Inches Upward to 4.3 Percent in December

West Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate inched upward one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.3 percent in December 2023. The number of unemployed state residents climbed 800 to 33,700. Total employment slipped 300 over the month. The national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 3.7 percent in December.

Total nonfarm payroll employment climbed 2,700 in December, with gains of 900 in the goods-producing sector and 1,800 in the service-providing sector.

Within the goods-producing sector, a substantial gain of 1,000 in construction easily offset a slight decline of 100 in mining and logging. Manufacturing employment was unchanged over the month.

Within the service-providing sector, employment gains included 1,100 in leisure and hospitality, 400 in government, 300 in private education and health services, and 300 in trade, transportation, and utilities. Employment declines included 200 in other services and 100 in financial activities. Employment in both information and in professional and business services was unchanged over the month.

Since December 2022, total nonfarm payroll employment has risen 18,000. Employment gains include 4,800 in government, entirely within the local and federal sectors, 4,600 in private education and health services, 2,900 in professional and business services, 2,200 in leisure and hospitality, 1,500 in other services, 1,000 in mining and logging, 600 in construction, 400 in financial activities, and 200 in trade, transportation, and utilities. Manufacturing employment slipped 200, while employment in information was unchanged over the year.

West Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate climbed four-tenths of a percentage point to 4.0 percent.

The state's seasonally adjusted labor force participation rate inched upward one-tenth of a percentage point to 55.3 percent in December 2023.

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