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BLS Data: Wisconsin Unemployment Rate Declines to New Record Low of 2.8 Percent

State labor force participation rate increases by 0.2 percent to 68.9 percent

MADISON – Today, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) released the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) revisions for March 2018 and preliminary estimates for April covering the employment and job statistics for the state of Wisconsin. The data showed that Wisconsin's historically low unemployment rate declined to 2.8 percent in April, setting another record low for the state. Additionally, Wisconsin's labor force participation rate increased to 68.9 percent, which outpaces the national rate of 62.8 percent by more than six percentage points.

In brief, the seasonally adjusted estimates show:

- **Place of Residence Data:** Wisconsin's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2018 was 2.8 percent, a decline of 0.1 percent from the March rate of 2.9 percent. The April decline is the 3rd straight month that Wisconsin's unemployment rate has declined or stayed the same. Wisconsin's labor force participation rate also increased over the month by 0.2 percent to 68.9 percent. The number of people employed in Wisconsin also increased by 8,100 people setting a new record for the state with 3,086,100 individuals employed. The year over year increase of 42,700 people employed is statistically significant according to BLS methodology.
- **Place of Work Data:** Based on preliminary data, Wisconsin has gained 11,000 total non-farm jobs and 8,800 private sector jobs over the last three months. Over the month, Wisconsin's total non-farm job number declined by 1,000, and private sector jobs declined by 3,100. Over the year, Wisconsin has gained 27,900 total non-farm jobs and 26,100 private sector jobs, including a statistically significant 13,700 manufacturing jobs according to BLS.

DWD Secretary Allen released the following statement about today's report:

"Wisconsin's record-low unemployment rate is both great news for our economy and a reminder that we need to continue doing everything we can to keep growing the pool of available talent," Secretary Allen said. "That includes developing the skills of Wisconsinites who are currently out of work and searching, attracting out-of-state talent through innovative marketing, and helping veterans, ex-offenders and others facing employment barriers skill up and skill in to good-paying jobs. At DWD, we will continue delivering our nationally recognized workforce development solutions that build on Wisconsin's economic momentum."

The BLS uses three data sets to measure employment and unemployment:

- **Current Employment Statistics (CES):** compiled from a monthly survey sent to about 5,500 employers (3.5% of Wisconsin employers). CES data has been shown to be subject to significant revision.
- **Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS):** compiled from a monthly survey of 985 households and unemployment insurance claims. Measures the labor force, employment, unemployment, and the

unemployment rate.

- **Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW):** compiled on a quarterly basis from Unemployment Insurance records from some 96 percent of Wisconsin business establishments. Considered by most economists to be the most accurate measure of jobs, the QCEW includes data from almost all employers in Wisconsin.

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 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."

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Wisconsin Employment and Unemployment Report
MARCH – APRIL 2018

1. REVISIONS TO ESTIMATES FROM MARCH 2018

Place of Residence Data	Seasonally Adjusted			Not Seasonally Adjusted		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,168,500	3,168,600	100	3,177,900	3,178,100	200
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	68.7%	68.7%	0.0%	68.9%	68.9%	0.0%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	3,078,100	3,078,000	-100	3,076,800	3,076,600	-200
UNEMPLOYMENT	90,400	90,500	100	101,100	101,500	400
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	2.9%	2.9%	0.0%	3.2%	3.2%	0.0%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.1%	4.1%	0.0%	4.1%	4.1%	0.0%
Place of Work Data						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,973,900	2,973,500	-400	2,929,700	2,930,400	700
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,566,700	2,566,000	-700	2,512,200	2,513,000	800
GOODS PRODUCING	606,800	606,100	-700	589,500	589,400	-100
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	4,600	4,600	0	4,300	4,300	0
CONSTRUCTION	122,000	121,700	-300	109,200	109,200	0
MANUFACTURING	480,200	479,800	-400	476,000	475,900	-100
Durable Goods	291,600	291,200	-400	289,400	289,300	-100
Nondurable Goods	188,600	188,600	0	186,600	186,600	0
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,367,100	2,367,400	300	2,340,200	2,341,000	800
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,959,900	1,959,900	0	1,922,700	1,923,600	900
TRADE	433,200	433,200	0	423,200	423,400	200
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	111,500	111,600	100	109,300	109,600	300
INFORMATION	46,700	46,700	0	46,300	46,300	0
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	150,700	150,700	0	149,300	149,300	0
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	329,000	329,600	600	323,200	323,700	500
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	452,800	453,000	200	454,500	454,800	300
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	283,000	282,400	-600	264,600	264,300	-300
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	153,000	152,700	-300	152,300	152,200	-100
GOVERNMENT	407,200	407,500	300	417,500	417,400	-100
Federal Government	29,000	29,000	0	28,900	28,900	0
State Government	92,700	92,900	200	97,800	97,800	0
Local Government	285,500	285,600	100	290,800	290,700	-100

2. MONTHLY ESTIMATES FOR APRIL 2018

Place of Residence Data	Apr-18 (P)	Mar-18 (R)	Net Change	Apr-18 (P)	Mar-18 (R)	Net Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,175,600	3,168,600	7,000	3,171,200	3,178,100	-6,900
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	68.9%	68.7%	0.2%	68.8%	68.9%	-0.1%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	3,086,100	3,078,000	8,100	3,085,900	3,076,600	9,300
UNEMPLOYMENT	89,500	90,500	-1,000	85,200	101,500	-16,300
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	2.8%	2.9%	-0.1%	2.7%	3.2%	-0.5%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	3.9%	4.1%	-0.2%	3.7%	4.1%	-0.4%
Place of Work Data						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,972,500	2,973,500	-1,000	2,958,700	2,930,400	28,300
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,562,900	2,566,000	-3,100	2,533,000	2,513,000	20,000
GOODS PRODUCING	604,600	606,100	-1,500	597,700	589,400	8,300
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	4,600	4,600	0	4,500	4,300	200
CONSTRUCTION	119,700	121,700	-2,000	115,600	109,200	6,400
MANUFACTURING	480,300	479,800	500	477,600	475,900	1,700
Durable Goods	291,400	291,200	200	290,400	289,300	1,100
Nondurable Goods	188,900	188,600	300	187,200	186,600	600
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,367,900	2,367,400	500	2,361,000	2,341,000	20,000
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,958,300	1,959,900	-1,600	1,935,300	1,923,600	11,700
TRADE	432,500	433,200	-700	425,100	423,400	1,700
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	110,600	111,600	-1,000	109,000	109,600	-600
INFORMATION	46,700	46,700	0	46,300	46,300	0
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	151,500	150,700	800	150,800	149,300	1,500
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	330,700	329,600	1,100	327,200	323,700	3,500
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	452,500	453,000	-500	454,100	454,800	-700
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	282,000	282,400	-400	271,100	264,300	6,800
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	151,800	152,700	-900	151,700	152,200	-500
GOVERNMENT	409,600	407,500	2,100	425,700	417,400	8,300
Federal Government	29,000	29,000	0	29,000	28,900	100
State Government	93,500	92,900	600	100,900	97,800	3,100
Local Government	287,100	285,600	1,500	295,800	290,700	5,100

*Differences in total may occur as a result of rounding. (1) Includes Labor Market Disputes (P) = Prelim; (R) = Revised Blue changes are outside margin of error.
Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Bureau of Workforce Information and Technical Support.

Cautionary note to users: Revised methodological procedures mandated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) force individual state estimates of employment into closer alignment with the national estimate. This change results in larger month-to-month employment change for the states and the information reported by DWD.

3. HISTORY OF REVISIONS OF ESTIMATES FROM PLACE OF WORK SURVEY

Month-Over-Month Changes	TNF			Private		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
January 2018	+9,200	+8,200	(1,000)	+8,000	+7,100	(900)
February 2018	+1,500	+5,600	+4,100	(300)	+3,700	+4,000
March 2018	+6,800	+6,400	(400)	+8,900	+8,200	(700)
April 2018						
May 2018						
June 2018						
July 2018						
August 2018						
September 2018						
October 2018						
November 2018						
December 2018						

Note: Prelim = original month-over-month change. Revised = updated month-over-month change. The "Change" column represents the difference between the prelim month-over-month change and the revised month-over-month change.

4. LATEST QUARTERLY DATA: CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

	2016 Employment			2017 Employment			Sep-Sep Change		Total Wages*		Change	
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Jul	Aug	Sep	Number	Percent	Q3:2016	Q3:2017	Number	Percent
TOTAL	2,843,463	2,852,537	2,851,903	2,859,873	2,861,791	2,866,859	14,956	0.5%	\$32,792,507	\$32,599,507	-\$193,000	-0.6%
Total Private	2,503,778	2,504,600	2,472,158	2,524,754	2,525,136	2,489,828	17,670	0.7%	\$28,617,717	\$28,506,813	-\$110,904	-0.4%
Natural Resources & Mining	32,376	32,507	33,161	33,363	33,752	34,185	1,024	3.1%	\$296,639	\$312,977	\$16,338	5.5%
Construction	121,938	121,987	119,458	127,497	127,109	124,387	4,929	4.1%	\$1,817,251	\$1,896,205	\$78,954	4.3%
Manufacturing	470,962	469,840	463,548	474,952	474,321	468,164	4,616	1.0%	\$6,511,793	\$6,449,516	-\$62,277	-1.0%
Trade, Transportation, Utilities (Total)	539,309	539,218	535,537	540,423	541,419	537,407	1,870	0.3%	\$5,246,468	\$5,246,758	\$290	0.0%
Information	49,348	49,564	48,447	47,886	47,737	46,965	-1,482	-3.1%	\$821,025	\$830,868	\$9,843	1.2%
Financial Activities	149,991	149,858	148,094	150,988	150,774	148,878	784	0.5%	\$2,313,566	\$2,267,481	-\$46,085	-2.0%
Professional & Business Services	326,189	327,456	325,361	329,481	329,858	326,815	1,454	0.4%	\$4,483,344	\$4,408,845	-\$74,499	-1.7%
Education & Health Services	422,140	422,493	423,581	427,000	427,785	429,083	5,502	1.3%	\$5,136,053	\$5,111,762	-\$24,291	-0.5%
Leisure & Hospitality	299,084	299,397	283,777	304,719	304,048	286,764	2,987	1.1%	\$1,289,355	\$1,309,537	\$20,182	1.6%
Other Services	85,567	85,224	84,360	85,366	85,132	84,054	-306	-0.4%	\$614,188	\$617,080	\$2,892	0.5%
Unclassified	6,874	7,056	6,834	3,079	3,201	3,126	-3,708	-54.3%	\$88,035	\$55,784	-\$32,251	-36.6%
Total Government	339,685	347,937	379,745	335,119	336,655	377,031	-2,714	-0.7%	\$4,174,790	\$4,092,693	-\$82,097	-2.0%

* Total wages are in thousands (Totals may not equal due to rounding)

Data as published by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, subject to revision.

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages counts are published 6 months after the quarter they describe.

Data from the latest published quarter and a year prior are included here.