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## **BLS Data: Wisconsin Unemployment Rate Reaches an All-Time Low of 2.9% in February**

***Preliminary numbers show state also sets records for number of people employed and number in labor force during month***

MADISON – Today, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) released the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) revisions for January 2018 and preliminary estimates for February 2018 covering the employment and job statistics for the state of Wisconsin. The data showed that Wisconsin's February unemployment rate reached a record low of 2.9 percent, while the number of people employed and considered active in the state's labor force also reached record highs.

In brief, the seasonally adjusted estimates show:

- **Place of Residence Data:** Wisconsin's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February 2018 reached a record low of 2.9 percent, down 0.2 percent from January's rate of 3.1 percent, and 1.2 percentage points lower than the national unemployment rate of 4.1 percent. The previous record-low state unemployment rate of 3.0 percent was reached in July 1999. Wisconsin also reached a record high for the number of people employed in the state, with 3,068,200 people employed, while the state's total civilian labor force also reached a record-setting level, with 3,161,000 people considered actively employed or actively pursuing employment and part of the state's labor force. Wisconsin's labor force participation rate also increased from 68.5 percent in January to 68.6 percent in February 2018.
- **Place of Work Data:** Based on preliminary data, Wisconsin gained 1,500 total non-farm jobs over the month and 19,200 total non-farm jobs over the year. Additionally, the data shows that the state has added a significant 16,800 jobs over the last three months. Private sector employment remained essentially unchanged, with preliminary estimates showing a reduction of 300 private sector jobs over the month, while showing an addition of 18,600 private sector jobs over the year. The state has added a significant 11,800 manufacturing jobs over the year, from February 2017 through February 2018.

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

"Under Governor Walker, Wisconsin workers are experiencing arguably the best labor market in the history of this great state. We have a record-low unemployment rate of 2.9 percent, record numbers of people employed and, buoyed by their confidence in the Wisconsin economy, more people than ever before are

considered active and a part of the state's labor force," Secretary Allen said. "These historic times underscore the importance of a strong talent development, attraction and retention strategy. Employers in Wisconsin continue to demand workers, and no matter their skill level or barriers to employment, we will ensure that workers have access to best-in-class worker training programs and employers have access to the talent they need to grow, right here in Wisconsin."

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 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."

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**Wisconsin Employment and Unemployment Report**  
**JANUARY – FEBRUARY 2018**

**1. REVISIONS TO ESTIMATES FROM JANUARY 2018**

Place of Residence Data	Seasonally Adjusted			Not Seasonally Adjusted		
	Prelim	Revised	Change	Prelim	Revised	Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,157,600	3,157,500	-100	3,126,200	3,125,700	-500
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	68.5%	68.5%	0.0%	67.9%	67.8%	-0.1%
EMPLOYMENT (1)	3,060,900	3,060,800	-100	3,029,700	3,029,200	-500
UNEMPLOYMENT	96,700	96,700	0	96,500	96,500	0
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	3.1%	3.1%	0.0%	3.1%	3.1%	0.0%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.1%	4.1%	0.0%	4.5%	4.5%	0.0%
<b>Place of Work Data</b>						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,962,500	2,961,500	-1,000	2,894,900	2,892,900	-2,000
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,555,000	2,554,100	-900	2,494,000	2,492,100	-1,900
GOODS PRODUCING	597,300	598,000	700	580,500	580,400	-100
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	4,600	4,600	0	4,100	4,100	0
CONSTRUCTION	118,100	118,100	0	105,300	105,000	-300
MANUFACTURING	474,600	475,300	700	471,100	471,300	200
Durable Goods	287,100	287,800	700	285,100	285,200	100
Nondurable Goods	187,500	187,500	0	186,000	186,100	100
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,365,200	2,363,500	-1,700	2,314,400	2,312,500	-1,900
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,957,700	1,956,100	-1,600	1,913,500	1,911,700	-1,800
TRADE	431,900	430,000	-1,900	428,500	425,900	-2,600
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	111,300	111,400	100	109,100	109,300	200
INFORMATION	46,600	46,800	200	46,400	46,600	200
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	151,000	151,100	100	149,800	149,900	100
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	325,600	326,000	400	316,600	317,800	1,200
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	453,200	453,500	300	448,600	448,800	200
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	284,200	283,600	-600	261,800	261,000	-800
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	153,900	153,700	-200	152,700	152,400	-300
GOVERNMENT	407,500	407,400	-100	400,900	400,800	-100
Federal Government	29,100	29,100	0	29,100	29,100	0
State Government	92,300	92,200	-100	87,300	87,300	0
Local Government	286,100	286,100	0	284,500	284,400	-100

**2. MONTHLY ESTIMATES FOR FEBRUARY 2018**

Place of Residence Data	Feb-18 (P)	Jan-18 (R)	Net Change	Feb-18 (P)	Jan-18 (R)	Net Change
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,161,000	3,157,500	3,500	<b>3,165,900</b>	3,125,700	<b>40,200</b>
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE	68.6%	68.5%	0.1%	<b>68.7%</b>	67.8%	<b>0.9%</b>
EMPLOYMENT (1)	<b>3,068,200</b>	3,060,800	<b>7,400</b>	<b>3,060,200</b>	3,029,200	<b>31,000</b>
UNEMPLOYMENT	<b>92,800</b>	<b>96,700</b>	<b>-3,900</b>	105,700	<b>96,500</b>	9,200
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	-0.2%	3.3%	<b>3.1%</b>	0.2%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	4.1%	4.1%	0.0%	4.4%	4.5%	-0.1%
<b>Place of Work Data</b>						
NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,963,000	2,961,500	1,500	2,912,300	2,892,900	<b>19,400</b>
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,553,800	2,554,100	-300	2,491,500	2,492,100	-600
GOODS PRODUCING	601,300	598,000	3,300	581,900	580,400	1,500
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	4,600	4,600	0	4,200	4,100	100
CONSTRUCTION	118,900	118,100	800	105,000	105,000	0
MANUFACTURING	477,800	475,300	2,500	472,700	471,300	1,400
Durable Goods	290,000	287,800	2,200	286,900	285,200	1,700
Nondurable Goods	187,800	187,500	300	185,800	186,100	-300
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,361,700	2,363,500	-1,800	2,330,400	2,312,500	17,900
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,952,500	1,956,100	-3,600	1,909,600	1,911,700	-2,100
TRADE	431,800	430,000	1,800	422,300	425,900	-3,600
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	109,600	111,400	-1,800	107,900	109,300	-1,400
INFORMATION	46,900	46,800	100	46,700	46,600	100
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	151,500	151,100	400	150,300	149,900	400
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	324,400	326,000	-1,600	316,900	317,800	-900
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	453,700	453,500	200	454,500	448,800	<b>5,700</b>
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	282,000	283,600	-1,600	259,000	261,000	-2,000
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	152,600	153,700	-1,100	152,000	152,400	-400
GOVERNMENT	409,200	407,400	1,800	420,800	400,800	20,000
Federal Government	29,100	29,100	0	28,900	29,100	-200
State Government	93,900	92,200	1,700	100,500	87,300	13,200
Local Government	286,200	286,100	100	291,400	284,400	7,000

\*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						
March 2018						
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
<b>TOTAL</b>	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%
<b>Total Private</b>	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%
<b>Total Government</b>	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.