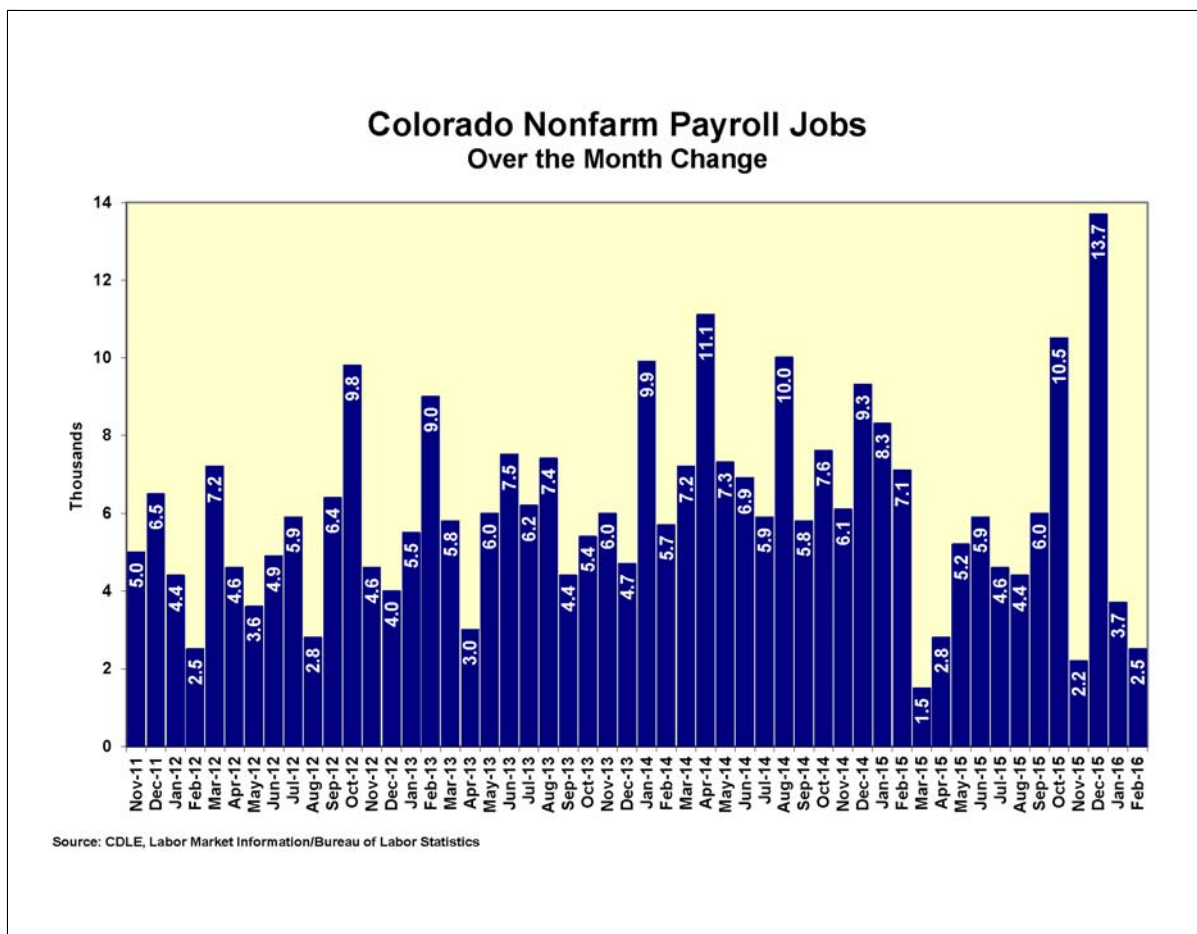


February 2016 Employment Situation

Employers in Colorado added 2,500 nonfarm payroll jobs from January to February for a total of 2,584,800 jobs, according to the survey of business establishments. Private sector payroll jobs increased 900 and government increased 1,600. This is the 52nd month of consecutive nonfarm payroll jobs gains. The last time Colorado experienced this many months or more of consecutive monthly jobs gains was from September 1991 to June 1996 when Colorado added payroll jobs 58 months in a row.



According to the survey of households, the unemployment rate decreased two-tenths of a percentage point in February to 3.0 percent. The number of people actively participating in the labor force increased 17,400 to 2,861,200 and total employment increased 22,900 to 2,776,200 causing the number of unemployed to decrease 5,500 and the unemployment rate to decline to 3.0 percent. The last time the Colorado unemployment rate was 3.0

percent was March 2001. The national unemployment rate remained unchanged over the same period at 4.9 percent.

Over the year, the average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls decreased from 34.4 to 33.2 hours and average hourly earnings increased from \$26.74 to \$27.14.

The largest over the month private sector job gains were in education and health services, leisure and hospitality, and other services. The largest over the month private sector job declines were in professional and business services, financial activities, and manufacturing.

Over the year, nonfarm payroll jobs increased 63,000 with an increase of 53,900 in the private sector and an increase of 9,100 in government. The largest private sector job gains were in leisure and hospitality, education and health services, and construction. Mining and logging declined over the year.

Over the year, the unemployment rate is down one and one-tenth of a percentage point from 4.1 percent and is at the lowest level since it was 3.0 percent in March 2001. The number of Coloradans participating in the labor force increased 40,900, total employment increased 71,000 and the number of unemployed decreased 30,100. The national unemployment rate declined from 5.5 percent in February 2015 to 4.9 percent in February 2016.

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All Colorado estimates from the establishment and household surveys, including greater geographic detail, are available at: <http://www.colmigateway.com>. Estimates for all states and the nation are available at: <http://www.bls.gov>.

The March 2016 Colorado Employment Situation will be released at 8:00 AM on Friday, April 15, 2016. The full schedule of release dates for calendar year 2016 estimates is available at <http://www.colmigateway.com>.

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Nonfarm payroll jobs estimates are based on a survey of business establishments and government agencies, and are intended to measure the number of jobs, not the number

of people employed. Other series based on this survey include private sector average weekly hours, average hourly earnings and average weekly earnings.

The unemployment rate, labor force, labor force participation, total employment and the number of unemployed are based on a survey of households. The total employment estimate derived from this survey is intended to measure the number of people employed.

The business establishment survey covers about seven times the number of households surveyed and is therefore considered a more reliable indicator of economic conditions. Because the estimates are based on two separate surveys, one measuring jobs by worksite and the other measuring persons employed and unemployed by household, estimates based on these surveys may provide seemingly conflicting results.

Date: March 25, 2016/ 8:00 A.M.

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