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More mixed signals for Ohio's job market in April

Data from two separate surveys released by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) today continue to portray a mixed picture of Ohio's economy. The state's unemployment rate continued to fall in April, landing at 7.4 percent according to seasonally adjusted data released from ODJFS's survey of households for March 2012.

However, a separate survey of employers also released today by ODJFS showed that Ohio lost jobs in March (5,200) and April (3,400). The surge in job gains earlier in the year appears to have come to an end. Month-to-month data is highly subject to revision, though, and it is ill advised to make too much of month-to-month comparisons, particularly when the surveys express mixed and contradictory messages.

"Though the short-term picture remains cloudy, Ohio jobs will need to grow much faster to recover from the losses of the last two recessions," said Hannah Halbert, policy liaison with Policy Matters Ohio.

Since April 2011, the state job total has only grown by only 47,200, or 0.9 percent. At that rate, it will take nearly six years to generate the additional 282,500 jobs needed to return Ohio to pre-2007 recession levels of employment. Over the past 12 months, Ohio's relative job growth has trailed the United States as a whole. The nation gained more than 1.8 million jobs, or 1.4 percent, over that time.

Key findings

- From April 2011-April 2012, Ohio has added only 47,200 jobs, growing at the painfully slow rate of 0.9%.
- At this rate of growth, it will take nearly six years for the state to regain the jobs lost during the recession.
- Over the same time period, the nation gained more than 1.8 million jobs, growing at 1.4%
- Ohio manufacturing jobs declined by 1,400 jobs in April, the first monthly loss since September 2011.