



JobWatch
September 20, 2019

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More of the same: Job growth slows

Ohio added 3,700 jobs in August, according to seasonally adjusted data released today by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). For the third month in a row monthly job growth is due to data revisions. Today's numbers show there were 5,000 fewer jobs in July than initially reported. Based on the revised numbers, Ohio lost jobs in February, May, June, and July. Ohio had 10,700 fewer jobs in August than it did in January.

"Monthly job data are always reported as preliminary and subject to revision. Longer-term trends are better indicators of Ohio's economic health, and those trends are a growing concern," said Hannah Halbert, project director with Policy Matters Ohio. "Policymakers should be focused on insulating the Ohio economy from the next recession. Promoting the Ohio Workshare program, which helps workers stay on the job during slow-downs, ending wasteful tax breaks to help shore-up state revenues, and investing in ways to make education and training less expensive would be good preparation."

Ohio's job growth rate for the last 12 months is just 0.4 percent. The national average is 1.4 percent. Over that time, Ohio has gained 24,800 jobs, but some industries are showing losses. The biggest are in Administrative, Support and Waste Services (-10,800), Retail (-9,400), and Construction (-3,600).

"The state has experienced a historic economic expansion but policymakers failed to ensure the gains were shared by all Ohioans whose work created the growth. Adjusted for inflation, median wages are lower than they were in 1979 and fewer people are working or looking for work in this long, but shallow economic expansion now than in the year prior to the last recession," said Halbert.

The unemployment rate ticked up in August from 4.0 to 4.1 percent. The bright spot in today's report is that more Ohioans joined the labor force (+9,000), although a portion of this gain is also due to data revisions. Overall, the state has 74,000 more people working or looking for work than it did this time last year. Ohio needs another 161,000 people in the labor force to break even with 2007 numbers.

"Instead of investing in everyday Ohioans, politicians gave tax breaks to the richest among us, and to corporations. Ohio has reduced revenues by [\\$6 billion a year](#) through these cuts. Ohioans were told this strategy would lift all boats. These should be the good years, but instead, Ohio has seen below average job growth, stagnant wage growth, and stubbornly high poverty rates." Halbert said.

"The General Assembly is back at work. Legislators would be wise to seriously review Ohio's tax breaks, end the policies that do not work, and reinvest the savings in ways to help protect the people of this state against the next recession," said Halbert.