

Governor Glenn Youngkin Announces Unemployment Rate at Pre-pandemic Level, Nearly 2,000 Fewer Virginians Unemployed

Richmond, VA— Governor Glenn Youngkin announced the number of employed Virginians remained above 4.2 million workers in August 2022. Throughout the month, the number of unemployed residents fell by 1,956, and Virginia's unemployment rate fell to 2.6 percent. This continues to be below the national rate, which increased to 3.7 percent.

According to BLS household survey data, the labor force decreased by 7,142 to 4,346,858, and the number of employed residents fell by 5,186 to 4,232,755 while the number of unemployed workers contracted by 1,956 to 114,103.

"While jobs added since January and unemployment levels continue to be strong, I am focused on labor participation amidst this slight pull back in job numbers," said Governor Glenn Youngkin. "Virginia is battling hard against the economic headwinds coming from Washington, and our mission to generate economic growth and investment continues to be a top priority for the Commonwealth."

Despite the decline in employment in the month, employment growth throughout the year remains strong, averaging 14,000 a month, over three times the 2021 average, and nearly double the pre-pandemic average in 2019.

The Commonwealth's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate of 2.6 percent is 1.0 percentage point below the rate from a year ago.

The Commonwealth's labor force participation rate, measuring the proportion of the civilian population age 16 and older that is employed or actively looking for work, decreased slightly to 63.7 percent in August from July's revised 63.8 percent rate.

"While employment levels contracted in the month, the unemployment level continued to improve," said Secretary of Labor Bryan Slater. "The unemployment rate has returned to pre-pandemic levels, and we see job openings still exceeding the number of those unemployed. We continue to pursue efforts to get more Virginians back in the labor market to satisfy the current employment opportunities."

"On a year-to-date basis, we have seen employment pick up substantially compared to 2021," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Caren Merrick. "We remain on pace to achieve the highest level of annual job growth in the last five years."

Virginia nonfarm payrolls rose by 16,700 jobs in August to 4,085,300. From August 2021 to August 2022, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia gained 118,100 jobs, an

increase of 3.0%. In August, the private sector recorded an over-the-year gain of 110,600 jobs, while employment in the public sector increased by 7,500 jobs.

Compared to a year ago, on a seasonally adjusted basis, ten of eleven major industry divisions experienced employment increases while one saw an employment decrease. The largest over-the-year job gain occurred in leisure and hospitality, up 41,900 jobs (+11.4%). The second-largest over-the-year job gain occurred in education and health services, up 30,600 jobs (+5.7%). The third largest over-the-year job gain occurred in professional and business services, up 16,300 jobs (+2.1%). Other job gains occurred in trade, transportation, and utilities (+15,200 jobs), government (+7,500 jobs), information (+4,400 jobs), miscellaneous services (+3,300 jobs), manufacturing (+2,600 jobs), mining and logging (+500 jobs), and construction (+100 jobs). The only job loss occurred in finance, with a decrease of 4,300 jobs.

Within government, local government (+3,400 jobs), state government (+3,000 jobs), and federal government (+1,100 jobs) all saw increases in employment. For more details, visit the Virginia Employment Commission's website at vec.virginia.gov.