

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Monthly State Unemployment Rate Reaches 8.3 Percent in April

**LINCOLN** - The Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) announced today that Nebraska's preliminary unemployment rate for April was 8.3 percent, seasonally adjusted. The rate was up 4.3 percentage points from the March 2020 rate of 4.0 percent and is up 5.2 percentage points from the April 2019 rate of 3.1 percent. Labor force and total non-farm employment data is based upon a reference week which includes the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month (April 12-April 18).

Unemployment rate data for Nebraska goes back to 1976 and the increase in the unemployment rate of 4.3 percentage points over the month was the largest monthly increase ever. Nebraska's April unemployment rate of 8.3% is well above the previous high of 6.3% on January and February of 1983.

"While Nebraska wasn't impacted as severely as other states, the numbers reflect that COVID-19 dramatically affected our state in April," said Commissioner of Labor John H. Albin. "We have seen new unemployment claims decline in May, but continue to see a high volume of continued weeks of unemployment claimed."

Nonfarm employment was 942,576 in April, a decline of 76,866 jobs (-7.5%) over the month and 81,777 jobs (-8.0%) over the year. The nonfarm employment level had not been below 943,000 since March 2011. Employment had been above 1,000,000 since February 2017 and peaked in November 2019 at 1,037,612. Industries declining the most over the month included leisure and hospitality (-29,854, -33.5%); trade, transportation and utilities (-13,950, -7.0%); and education and health services (-10,846, -6.8%). Mining and construction was the only industry showing growth over the month, gaining 1,698 jobs (+3.2%) in April. Industries decreasing the most over the year included leisure and hospitality (-34,268, -36.7%); trade, transportation and utilities (-17,080, -8.6%); and education and health services (-7,516, -4.8%). The only increases over-the-year were in construction (544, 1.0%) and financial activities (771, 1.0%).

Between March 8 and May 16, more than 120,000 individuals filed initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits. Industries with the highest counts of initial claims were the same as those with the largest declines in nonfarm employment. Occupations showing the highest counts of initial unemployment insurance claims include waiters and waitresses; hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists; and retail salespersons. Spreadsheets showing claims data are available [here](#) and will be updated every Thursday.

The national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was 14.7 percent, an increase of 10.3 percentage points from the March 2020 rate of 4.4 percent and up 11.1 percentage points from the April 2019 rate of 3.6 percent

Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment and unemployment data can be found on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website at [www.bls.gov/bls/bls-covid-19-questions-and-answers.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/bls-covid-19-questions-and-answers.htm). More NDOL press releases are accessible at [dol.nebraska.gov](http://dol.nebraska.gov).