



Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

News Release

For Immediate Release: August 20, 2010

Alabama's July Unemployment Rate Drops to 9.7% *Lowest Rate Recorded in 15 Months*

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Department of Industrial Relations Director Tom Surtees announced today that Alabama's July unemployment rate fell to 9.7%, down from 10.3% in June.

July's rate represents 202,539 unemployed persons, down from 216,501 in June and 221,509 in July 2009.

"We are happy to announce a drop in our unemployment rate," said Surtees. "This is the lowest rate we have seen in over a year. We've seen our rate stabilizing over the past several months, and, hopefully, July's rate will be the beginning of a continual drop in Alabama's unemployment."

The last time Alabama's unemployment rate was at or below 9.7%, was in April 2009, when the rate was 9.7%.

"We are also seeing even more encouraging signs in our monthly data. The number of first payments made to unemployment compensation claimants is now below 2007 levels. In July, we also saw the lowest number of weeks claimed so far this year," Surtees continued.

First payments in July were 12,774, compared to July 2007's level of 13,454. Average number of weeks claimed in July was 193,502, compared to this year's high of 273,448 in March.

Wage and salary employment declined 11,200 over the month of July with the majority of the loss resulting from seasonal losses in government.

The counties with the lowest unemployment rates were: Shelby at 6.8%, Madison at

7.3%, and Coffee at 7.4%. Counties with the highest unemployment rate were Wilcox at 21.9%, Greene at 19.0% and Dallas at 18.3%.

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Members of the media needing more information should contact Public Information Officer Tara Hutchison at (334) 242-8616.