



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Terry McAuliffe

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: January 27, 2015

Office of the Governor

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**Virginia's Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate Drops to
Lowest Level Since 2008**

~Rate Decreased 0.2 Percentage Point in December to 4.8 Percent~

Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment was up 6,000 jobs between November 2014 and December 2014 to 3,797,300, surpassing the pre-recession peak

RICHMOND—Governor Terry McAuliffe announced today that Virginia's **seasonally adjusted** unemployment rate decreased 0.2 percentage point in December to 4.8 percent and was down 0.4 percentage point from December 2013.

December's decrease was the third consecutive monthly decline, dropping the unemployment rate to its lowest rate since October 2008.

Speaking about today's announcement, **Governor McAuliffe said**, "I welcome this news about the strength of the new Virginia economy. Unemployment is declining, and we are adding jobs, but we still have challenges to overcome. We must continue to strengthen our infrastructure, our business climate, our workforce, our innovative and entrepreneurial ecosystems and our key growth sectors to keep this momentum going."

In December, the number of those seeking work declined by 9,190, or 4.3 percent, while household employment increased by 3,459, or 0.1 percent. Once again, the labor force contracted, but only by 5,731, or 0.1 percent. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues below the national rate, which fell 0.2 percentage point to 5.6 percent.

Virginia's **seasonally adjusted** nonfarm employment increased by 6,000 jobs in December to a total of 3,797,300, surpassing the April 2008 pre-recession peak of 3,791,900 jobs. December's increase was the second consecutive monthly gain and followed November's upwardly revised job gain of 18,400, which was initially reported as a gain of 11,900 jobs. In December, both the private and public sector experienced employment gains of 3,000 jobs each.

"This news is another testament to the resilience of the Commonwealth's businesses, workers and communities," **said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones**. "Virginia businesses are expanding, firms from all over the world are considering Virginia as a place to locate operations, and visitors from around the globe are travelling to and spending money in Virginia, all contributing to the economic growth of the Commonwealth."

Nonfarm Employment in Virginia* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			November 2014 to December 2014		December 2013 to December 2014	
	December 2014	November 2014	December 2013	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm	3,797,300	3,791,300	3,768,400	+6,000	+0.2%	+28,900	+0.8%
Total Private Sector	3,087,000	3,084,000	3,058,400	+3,000	+0.1%	+28,600	+0.9%
Goods-Producing	421,200	422,300	418,000	-1,100	-0.3%	+3,200	+0.8%
Mining	10,000	9,800	9,900	+200	+2.0%	+100	+1.0%
Construction	178,100	180,300	178,900	-2,200	-1.2%	-800	-0.4%
Manufacturing	233,100	232,200	229,200	+900	+0.4%	+3,900	+1.7%
Service-Providing	3,376,100	3,369,000	3,350,400	+7,100	+0.2%	+25,700	+0.8%
Private Service-Providing	2,665,800	2,661,700	2,640,400	+4,100	+0.2%	+25,400	+1.0%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	646,300	644,900	642,700	+1,400	+0.2%	+3,600	+0.6%
Information	69,600	69,700	69,700	-100	-0.1%	-100	-0.1%
Finance	196,600	196,800	193,100	-200	-0.1%	+3,500	+1.8%
Professional and Business Services	664,300	664,700	666,100	-400	-0.1%	-1,800	-0.3%
Education and Health Services	514,600	513,200	502,900	+1,400	+0.3%	+11,700	+2.3%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	378,100	374,800	371,200	+3,300	+0.9%	+6,900	+1.9%
Miscellaneous Services	196,300	197,600	194,700	-1,300	-0.7%	+1,600	+0.8%
Government	710,300	707,300	710,000	+3,000	+0.4%	+300	+0.0%
Federal Government	170,400	169,800	171,300	+600	+0.4%	-900	-0.5%
State Government	163,200	162,300	161,600	+900	+0.6%	+1,600	+1.0%
Local Government	376,700	375,200	377,100	+1,500	+0.4%	-400	-0.1%

From November 2014 to December 2014, **seasonally adjusted** employment increased in six major industry divisions and decreased in the other five. The largest job increase during December occurred in the **leisure and hospitality** sector, up 3,300 jobs to 378,100, the third consecutive monthly increase.

Three other industries recorded job gains exceeding 1,000. **Total government** employment increased by 3,000 jobs to 710,300, following declines totaling 2,000 jobs the previous three months. Jobs gains occurred in all levels of government: local (+1,500 jobs), state (+900 jobs) and federal (+600 jobs).

The next largest job gain occurred in **trade and transportation** and in **private education and health services**, with an increase of 1,400 jobs each to 646,300 and 514,600, respectively. Other gains were 900 jobs in **manufacturing** to 233,100 and 200 jobs in **mining** to 10,000. The largest job decrease during December occurred in **construction**, down 2,200 jobs to 178,100, the second consecutive monthly decline. Other losses were 1,300 jobs in **miscellaneous services** to 196,300; 400 jobs in **professional and business services** to 664,300; 200 jobs in **finance** to 196,600; and 100 jobs in **information** to 69,600.

From December 2013 to December 2014, Virginia's **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment was up 28,900 jobs, for an over-the-year gain of 0.8 percent. Virginia's seasonally adjusted over-the-year nonfarm employment growth of 0.8 percent was the strongest growth since August 2013. However, Virginia's nonfarm employment growth continues to lag behind the national rate, which was 2.1 percent. In December, over-the-year job gains were recorded by both the private sector (+28,600 jobs) and public sector (+300 jobs).

Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, eight major industry divisions experienced employment gains, while the other three experienced employment losses. **Private education and health services** employment increased by 11,700 jobs, or 2.3 percent, from December 2013, with job gains of 6,000 in health care and social assistance and 5,700 in private education. Employment in the **leisure and hospitality** sector was up 6,900 jobs, or 1.9 percent, from last December. Four other industries experienced over-the-year job gains exceeding 1,000: **manufacturing**, up 3,900 jobs, or 1.7 percent; **trade and transportation**, up 3,600 jobs, or 0.6 percent; **finance**, up 3,500 jobs, or 1.8 percent; and **miscellaneous services**, up 1,600 jobs, or 0.8 percent. Other gains occurred in **total government**, up 300 jobs, and in **mining**, up 100 jobs, or 1.0 percent. For total government employment, the employment gain in state government employment (+1,600 jobs) exceeded the employment losses in federal (-900 jobs) and local (-400 jobs) government employment. The largest over-the-year employment loss occurred in **professional and business services**, down 1,800 jobs, or 0.3 percent. The job losses in professional, scientific, and technical services (-3,900 jobs) and in management of companies (-400 jobs) outweighed the job gain in administrative and support services (+2,500 jobs). Compared to a year-ago December, **construction** employment decreased by 800 jobs, or 0.4 percent, and **information** employment decreased by 100 jobs, or 0.1 percent.

In December, eight of the ten metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains on a **seasonally adjusted** basis. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job gain, with an increase of 2,500 jobs. The remaining metropolitan areas experiencing job gains in December were: Roanoke (+1,100 jobs); Charlottesville (+700 jobs); Richmond (+600 jobs); Lynchburg and Harrisonburg (+300 jobs each); and Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford and Danville (+200 jobs each). The Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News and Winchester metropolitan areas experienced losses of 1,100 jobs and 200 jobs, respectively in December.

Over-the-year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment increased in seven metropolitan areas and decreased in the other three. The Richmond metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute and percentage job gain, up 15,100 jobs, or 2.4 percent. Northern Virginia was ranked second, with a job gain of 12,100 jobs, or 0.9 percent, while Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News was ranked third with a gain of 8,200 jobs, or 1.1 percent. The other metropolitan areas that experienced over-the-year job gains included: Charlottesville (+2,200 jobs), Harrisonburg (+1,200 jobs), Winchester (+800 jobs), and Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford (+600 jobs). The metropolitan areas that experienced over-the-year job losses included: Lynchburg (-500 jobs) and Roanoke and Danville (-400 jobs each).

**Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia*
Seasonally Adjusted**

Area	Employment			November 2014 to December 2014		December 2013 to December 2014	
	December 2014	November 2014	December 2013	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
Virginia	3,797,300	3,791,300	3,768,400	+6,000	+0.2%	+28,900	+0.8%
Blacksburg-Christiansburg- Radford MSA	74,300	74,100	73,700	+200	+0.3%	+600	+0.8%
Charlottesville MSA	107,200	106,500	105,000	+700	+0.7%	+2,200	+2.1%
Danville MSA	39,500	39,300	39,900	+200	+0.5%	-400	-1.0%
Harrisonburg MSA	65,500	65,200	64,300	+300	+0.5%	+1,200	+1.9%
Lynchburg MSA	101,700	101,400	102,200	+300	+0.3%	-500	-0.5%
Northern Virginia MSA	1,382,600	1,380,100	1,370,500	+2,500	+0.2%	+12,100	+0.9%
Richmond MSA	652,100	651,500	637,000	+600	+0.1%	+15,100	+2.4%
Roanoke MSA	159,100	158,000	159,500	+1,100	+0.7%	-400	-0.3%
Virginia Beach-Norfolk- Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA	760,500	761,600	752,300	-1,100	-0.1%	+8,200	+1.1%
Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA	60,300	60,500	59,500	-200	-0.3%	+800	+1.3%

**Current month's estimates are preliminary.*

NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate remained unchanged at 4.5 percent in December, but was 0.3 percentage point below the December 2013 rate. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed dropped by 12,699, while the labor force increased by a slight 5,769, as household employment rose by 18,468. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues below the national unadjusted rate, which decreased 0.1 percentage point in December to 5.4 percent.

Over the month, the December **unadjusted** workweek for Virginia's 177,100 manufacturing production workers decreased by 0.5 hour to 42.6 hours, average hourly earnings increased by \$0.14 to \$19.89, and average weekly earnings decreased by \$3.92 to \$847.31. Compared to last December, the unadjusted workweek increased by 0.3 hour, average hourly earnings increased by \$0.46, and average weekly earnings were higher by \$25.42.

The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of December 7-13, 2014.

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) plans to release the December local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, February 4, 2015. The data will be available on VEC's website, www.VirginiaLMI.com. Follow VEC on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/VirginiaLMI>.

The January statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Tuesday, March 17, 2015.

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