



DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

News Release

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**HAWAII'S UNEMPLOYED POPULATION DROPPED 12.1 PERCENT
SINCE APRIL 2003**

Hawaii's job growth the highest in the nation during the month of April as the statewide unemployment declines to 3.6 percent

HONOLULU - The Hawaii State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations announced today that Hawaii posted the highest job growth in the nation for the month of April, representing an increase of 0.8 percent. Over the year, Hawaii ranks fourth highest in the nation in job growth, creating 13,100 new jobs, an increase of 2.3 percent. Since April 2003, Hawaii's unemployed population declined by 12.1 percent from 29,500 to 22,700.

The statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in April was 3.6 percent, a decline of 0.2 percentage point over March. One year ago, Hawaii's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 4.2 percent. In comparison, the national seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dipped slightly, going from 5.7 percent in March to 5.6 percent in April.

In April, Hawaii's seasonally adjusted labor force totaled 628,700, of which 606,000 are employed. In contrast, in April 2003, Hawaii's seasonally adjusted labor force totaled 613,700, of which 587,900 were employed.

In another measure of employment, total seasonally adjusted non-agricultural jobs in Hawaii increased in April over March by 4,600 to 578,000. The employment gains were somewhat split between the private and public sectors, with the private sector expanding by 2,400 jobs and the public sector adding 2,200 jobs. The bulk of the gain in government employment occurred in the Department of Education primarily due to retaining more support staff during the spring break period. Last year, more staff were released due to the overlapping of both spring and intersession breaks. In the private sector, the Trade, Transportation, & Utilities industry and the Leisure & Hospitality group, each added 800 jobs, while the balance of private nonfarm industries also combined for a net increase of 800 jobs.

"Hawaii's strong economy has created over 13,000 new jobs and significantly lowered our unemployed population by 12.1 percent since April 2003, " said Nelson B. Befitel, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations. "This is particularly good news for many of our young adults as they transition from Hawaii's high schools and colleges to the workforce."

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