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Economic News Release

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Employment Situation Summary

Transmission of material in this release is embargoed until 8:30 a.m. (EDT) **Friday, May 4, 2012**

USDL-12-0816

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THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION -- APRIL 2012

Nonfarm payroll employment rose by 115,000 in April, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 8.1 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Employment increased in professional and business services, retail trade, and health care, but declined in transportation and warehousing.

Household Survey Data

Both the number of **unemployed persons (12.5 million)** and the unemployment rate (8.1 percent) changed little in April. (See table A-1.)

Among the major worker groups, the **unemployment rates** for adult men (7.5 percent), adult women (7.4 percent), **teenagers (24.9 percent)**, whites (7.4 percent), and **Hispanics (10.3 percent)** showed little or no change in April, while the rate for **blacks (13.0 percent)** declined over the month. The jobless rate for Asians was 5.2 percent in April (not seasonally adjusted), little changed from a year earlier. (See tables A-1, A-2, and A-3.)

The number of **long-term unemployed** (those jobless for 27 weeks and over) was little changed at **5.1 million** in April. **These individuals made up 41.3 percent of the unemployed.** Over the year, the number of long-term unemployed has fallen by 759,000. (See table A-12.)

The civilian labor force participation rate declined in April to 63.6 percent, while the employment-population ratio, at 58.4 percent, changed little. (See table A-1.)

The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons (sometimes referred to as involuntary part-time workers) was essentially unchanged in April at 7.9 million. These individuals were **working part time because their hours had been cut back or because they were unable to find a full-time job.** (See table A-8.)

In April, **2.4 million persons were marginally attached to the labor force**, essentially unchanged from a year earlier. (The data are not seasonally adjusted.) **These individuals were not in the labor force, wanted and were available for work, and had looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months. They were not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey.** (See table A-16.)

Among the marginally attached, there were 968,000 discouraged workers in April, about the same as a year earlier. (The data are not seasonally adjusted.) Discouraged workers are persons not currently looking for work because **they believe no jobs are available for them.** The remaining 1.4 million persons marginally attached to the labor force in April had not searched for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey for reasons such as school attendance or family responsibilities. (See table A-16.)

Establishment Survey Data

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 115,000 in April. This increase followed a gain of 154,000 in March and gains averaging 252,000 per month for December to February. In April, employment rose in professional and business services, retail trade, and health care. Transportation and warehousing lost jobs over the month. (See table B-1.)

Employment in professional and business services increased by 62,000 in April. Since a recent low point in September 2009, employment in this industry has grown by 1.5 million. In April, employment in **temporary help**

services edged up by 21,000. Employment grew in architectural and engineering services (+7,000) and in computer systems design and related services (+7,000).

Retail trade employment rose by 29,000 over the month. General merchandise stores added 21,000 jobs in April but has shown no definitive trend in recent months. Employment in building material and garden supply stores continued to trend up; the industry has added 19,000 jobs since December.

Health care continued to add jobs (+19,000) in April. Within the industry, employment in ambulatory health care services, which includes home health care and offices of physicians, rose by 15,000.

Within leisure and hospitality, employment in food services and drinking places continued to trend up (+20,000) in April. Since February 2010, food services and drinking places has added 576,000 jobs.

Manufacturing employment continued to trend up (+16,000) in April, with job growth in fabricated metal products (+6,000) and machinery (+5,000). Since its most recent employment low in January 2010, manufacturing has added 489,000 jobs, largely in durable goods manufacturing.

Transportation and warehousing lost 17,000 jobs in April, with employment declines in transit and ground passenger transportation (-11,000) and in couriers and messengers (-7,000).

Employment in other major industries, including mining and logging, construction, wholesale trade, information, financial activities, and government changed little in April.

The average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls was unchanged at 34.5 hours in April. The manufacturing workweek edged up by 0.1 hour to 40.8 hours, and factory overtime rose by 0.1 hour to 3.4 hours. The average workweek for production and nonsupervisory employees on private nonfarm payrolls was unchanged at 33.8 hours. (See tables B-2 and B-7.)

In April, average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 1 cent to \$23.38. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased by 1.8 percent. In April, average hourly earnings of private-sector production and nonsupervisory employees rose by 3 cents to \$19.72. (See tables B-3 and B-8.)

The change in total nonfarm payroll employment for February was revised from +240,000 to +259,000, and the change for March was revised from +120,000 to +154,000.

The Employment Situation for May is scheduled to be released on Friday, June 1, 2012, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).

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