

INITIAL UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS CONTINUE TO FALL



The U.S. Labor Department reports initial claims for state unemployment benefits fell 14,000 last week to a seasonally-adjusted 442,000. The four-week average, which helps smooth volatility, fell to its lowest level since September 2008 when the economic meltdown began to gain steam. Analysts, which expected the number of claims to fall to just 450,000, were encouraged by the news, but said job creation is still too slow to cut into the country's 9.7 percent unemployment rate. "Companies are cutting fewer jobs as sales improve," Jim Baird, chief investment strategist for Plante Moran Financial Advisors told Reuters. "We are still not seeing the degree of job creation that is needed to meaningfully chip away at a persistently high unemployment rate." The four-week average of initial claims was 453,750, which is down 11,000 from the previous week's revised average of 464,750. The Labor Department reports the number of people filing continuing claims came in at 4,648,000, down 54,000 from 4,725,500 the previous week. The four-week moving average of continuing claims was 4,689,000 a decrease of 36,500 from the preceding week's average of 4,725,500.

<https://blog.granted.com/>