

LOUISIANA TOPS THE HIRING FORECAST FOR THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2011



The state of Louisiana topped the Employment Outlook Survey that measures the projected job hiring for the first quarter of the year. According to the survey conducted by Manpower Inc., a Wisconsin-based employment agency, about 21% of the surveyed employers answered that they plan to hire more employees in this quarter. Only 7% expressed a plan to decrease hiring, giving the state a net employment outlook of plus-14%. The survey also said that the national net employment outlook registered at plus-4%, with 14% planning to hire and 10% planning to layoff. The Employment Outlook Survey's data is generated from over 18,000 employers nationwide about their hiring plans between January and March of 2011. Employers were asked if they planned to increase their staff in the first quarter, decrease it, keep it the same or if they didn't know. Manpower has been conducting the survey since 1962.

Louisiana Economic Development Secretary, Stephen Moret, said that the survey suggests that the state economy is slowly picking up after the nationwide recession over the past years. "Since the beginning of the national recession, Louisiana's economy has outperformed the South and U.S. by any reasonable measure. Our state's job performance during the recession was far better than the South and U.S., and Louisiana has been growing jobs at a faster rate than the South and U.S. since the official end of the national recession in June 2009."

Jonas Prising, President of the Americas for Manpower Inc., said that the survey result is a positive manifestation of a recovering economy. "The fact that hiring expectations are trending upward is an encouraging sign. This quarter's survey responses paint a picture of a job market that is easing up, although not as quickly as anyone would like. We are still stuck in first gear, but the ongoing sector-wide improvement we have seen over the last year suggests that the labor market is ready to shift to a higher gear in 2011."