

LA. JOB GROWTH

In St. Landry Parish, the unemployment rate seems to be at the lowest rate it has seen in many years. A recent report released information showing that the unemployment rate was much lower in December, lower than it had been for quite a few years. The report was released by the Louisiana Workforce Commission, which is responsible for tracking and reporting the statistical information on employment data for the state of Louisiana.



In St. Landry Parish, the unemployment rate dropped to 7.1 percent in December from 7.2 percent in November. Of course, while this is not a significantly high drop, it still proves that progress is being made. However, some employment officials say that they do not really see a difference just yet. During the day on Wednesday, just about all of the computers in Acadiana Works office were full with individuals who were making attempts to find employment. In fact, the officials of Acadian Works office were surprised to hear about the decreased in unemployed individuals simply because they still see large crowds of people coming into the office on a daily basis, looking to find employment. A professor of economics at UL, Anthony Greco, says that economists typically consider a 6 percent unemployment rate as full employment. Greco says, "There is always some give and take in the economy." He has pointed out that some people are in between different jobs while others are working on the training they need to increase their job skills and become more employable. Greco says, "Your 7.1 percent rate is not a terrible number." During the same period, the national unemployment rate was at 8.3 percent which means that the rate in Louisiana was much lower than the national average. The executive director for St. Landry Parish Economic and Industrial Development District, Gerard Perron, has agreed the economy in and around the area is making some improvement, especially after dealing with such a crippling recession which basically destroyed the economy in the United States. He points out that during December of the previous year; the unemployment rate in the area was 7.9 percent, which shows progress is being made. Perron says, "That is almost a full percentage point drop over the past year, which is pretty good." The LWC executive director, Curt Eysink, says that even though the drop was not huge, progress has still been made and the month of December did, in fact, mark the 15th month of job growth that has taken place in the state of Louisiana. This is definitely a good sign for the state. Eysink says, "2011 was marked by very consistent and solid job growth, and all of the growth was in the private sector." He concluded by saying, "Those numbers indicate that employers find Louisiana to be a great place to grow and do business."

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