

## COLORADO ADDS 19,500 WORKERS IN JAN, WHILE EMPLOYMENT CONTINUES TO GROW



According to figures released by the Colorado state administration on Tuesday, employers added 19,500 workers in January, including 5,100 employees in the weak construction sector. The figures show the highest non-farm employment levels in the past three years in Colorado. The state also reported the fifth consecutive month of reducing unemployment rates. The current unemployment has been reported at 7.8%, well below the federal target of 8% unemployment. Colorado has been successful in recovering at least half the number of jobs it lost since the recession. While the state lost 151,600 recorded jobs between April 2008 and January 2010, since then at least 75,600 jobs have been recovered. Alexandra Hall, the economist of Colorado Department of Labor and Employment commented, "We are seeing solid progress in the recovery." She also mentioned: "This is the first time in four years that the construction is showing growth over the year ... That is positive news. It tells us we are seeing a turnaround in construction. We've been waiting a long, long time for that." While before the downturn in the economy, there were at least 170,100 construction jobs in July 2007, the figures fell dismally through the recession. The state has been able to return to modest but tolerable figures of 117,800 jobs in the construction industry with 5,100 added in January. Home sales have picked up as has leisure and entertainment. Christina Presley, Colorado division president of Meritage Homes informed the media that "Home sales for the first quarter of this year have been far beyond our expectations. We have open positions, including a couple of construction managers." The positive figures came amidst reports of attrition and Tuesday's report mentioned that the active labor force had decreased by 3,900 head counts in January. This also contributed to decline in reported unemployment. According to the survey of establishments undertaken for preparing the report, private-sector payroll jobs rose by 22,500 while government payroll jobs decrease by 3,000 in January.

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