

## FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT FALLS, EXPECTED TO FALL FURTHER



The US Federal government is following in the footsteps of private companies, state and local governments, and has begun reducing its workforce, bringing to an end many years of volatile growth that was marked by dispute and debate. Federal employment has been showing a decline for the seven of the last eight months. Never in the last 10 years has the fall lasted for such a lengthy period. In May, last year, the Labor Department figures had reported a mere 9,900 workers more than the figures this year. However, this number excludes postal and temporary Census workers. That is a minuscule amount, considering that there are 2.2 million civilian workers in the federal workforce. Nonetheless, the turnaround signals the end of the huge employment growth, between the last years of George W. Bush's presidency and the beginning of President Barack Obama's term. Labor Statistics reveal that Federal employment grew by 13 percent, adding 250,000 jobs, spanning the beginning of the recessions to September last year, when it was at its best. Federal employees remained secure and protected whilst private employment fell 5 percent and state and local governments cut staff by 2 percent. John Palguta, vice president of the Partnership for Public Service said, that political and financial strains have curtailed federal hiring growth, "Budget challenges are becoming real," he says. He foresees the federal workforce depleting even more through 2013, a trend that could become even more prolonged. In contrasting opinions, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney has proposed cutting the federal work force by 10 percent. Obama's budget however, calls for a small increase in their numbers. The Internal Revenue Service was amongst the worst-hit, and cut employment 6 percent last year to 90,904. The IRS says that they had to do this owing to a low budget and a stalled hiring. The Environmental Protection Agency and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission also trimmed its workforce. However, all three still have more employees than they had before the hiring boom. Reports show that Federal lawyers, boosted by 6,000 of their numbers added during the boom, held firm at 35,600 last year. The number of prison guards, park rangers and librarians fell a little. The number of doctors, dentists and nurses rose at a slower pace than in past years. The Federal government does not layoff workers. Their method of trimming is that they employ fewer people to replace the outgoing ones, thereby reducing their numbers without having to layoff someone.