



St. Johns County ended 2017 with lowest unemployment in Florida

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St. Johns County ended 2017 with the lowest unemployment rate in the state.

According to information released Friday by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, St. Johns County had an unemployment rate of 2.8 percent in December.

After sharing the state's lowest unemployment rate in September and October, St. Johns County had the lowest rates in both November and December.

For December, the county saw a drop of 0.2 of a percentage point from November. It also dropped compared to December 2016 when the rate was 3.6 percent.

In the last 12 months, the county's labor force increased from 116,567 to 118,844 while number of people employed increased by about 3,000 to 115,522.

For December, St. Johns County's rate was followed by Monroe, Okaloosa and Wakulla counties (3.0 percent each); and Orange and Seminole counties (3.1 percent each). Hendry County had the highest unemployment rate (6.5 percent) in December, followed by Hardee County (5.5 percent) and Citrus County (5.4 percent).

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.7 percent in December, up 0.1 of a percentage point from November but down 1.2 percentage points from a year ago. The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.1 percent in December.

Individual county rates are not seasonally adjusted.

The number of jobs in Florida was 8,705,900 in December, up 213,500 jobs compared to a year ago.

The industry gaining the most jobs was professional and business services (up 47,200 jobs, 3.6 percent). Second was construction (up 43,900 jobs, 9.1 percent).

As for the surrounding counties, Clay County fared the best with an unemployment rate of 3.2 percent.

That was followed by Duval (3.6 percent), Flagler (4 percent) and Putnam (4.6 percent) counties.