



## Unemployment rate for St. Johns County lowest in almost a decade

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The non-seasonally adjusted rates for individual counties were released Friday by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, and the unemployment rate for St. Johns County reached its lowest level in April since 2007, falling to 3 percent.

St. Johns County's unemployment rate fell 0.3 of a percentage point from March and was 0.5 of a percentage point lower than April 2016. In the last year, the county's labor force has grown by more than 4,000 people, and the number of people working has increased by about 4,600.

The 3-percent unemployment rate was second-lowest in the state, behind only Monroe County at 2.6 percent. Monroe's labor force is less than half the size of St. Johns County.

April's rate marked the county's lowest recorded unemployment rate since May 2007 when it was 2.9 percent. St. Johns County hasn't had an unemployment rate above 5 percent since July 2014. Since 1990, the highest rate in St. Johns County was 9.3 percent in January 2010.

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.5 percent in April, down 0.3 of a percentage point from March and down 0.4 of a percentage point from a year ago. There were 460,000 jobless Floridians out of a labor force of 10.1 million. The U.S. unemployment rate was 4.4 percent in April.

Unemployment was relatively low for all of North Florida. The Jacksonville Metropolitan Statistical Area, which includes St. Johns County, had an unemployment rate of 3.8 percent.

Duval County had a rate of 4.1 percent. Of the counties bordering St. Johns, Clay County had the lowest rate at 3.6 percent, followed by Flagler (4.5) and Putnam (4.9). Putnam's rate was tied for the eighth-highest in the state but was still almost a full percentage point lower than April 2016.

Hendry County (6.0 percent), Sumter County (5.7) and Citrus County (5.5) reported the highest unemployment rates in the state.