



Job growth keeps St. Johns County's unemployment rate low in May

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Job growth in the area has kept unemployment low in St. Johns County and the entire region, according to statistics released Friday by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

In May, Monroe County had the state's lowest unemployment rate (2.1%), followed by St. Johns and Okaloosa counties (2.5% each), Walton County (2.6%) and Lafayette County (2.7%).

For St. Johns County, the rate is similar to last month (2.4%) and last year (2.6%). But the number of people working here has gone up from 124,819 in May 2018 to 126,009 this year.

Among bordering counties, Clay County had the lowest unemployment rate in May at 2.8 percent, followed by Duval (3.1 percent), Flagler (3.6 percent) and Putnam (4 percent).

In part reflecting the continued impacts from Hurricane Michael; Citrus, Gulf, Hardee and Sumter counties had the highest unemployment rate (4.6%) in Florida in May, followed by Hendry County (4.5%), Highlands County (4.3%) and Hernando County (4.1%).

Individual county rates are not seasonally adjusted.

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.4% in May, down 0.1 of a percentage point from the revised April 2019 rate and down 0.3 of a percentage point from a year ago. There were 353,000 jobless Floridians out of a labor force of 10.3 million. The U.S. unemployment rate was 3.6 percent in May.

The state gained 214,500 jobs over the year, an increase of 2.5%.

The industry gaining the most jobs was education and health services (46,000 jobs, 3.5%). Other industries gaining jobs over the year included professional and business services (38,400 jobs, 2.8%); leisure and hospitality (37,700 jobs, 3.1%); construction (28,000 jobs, 5.2%); and financial activities (21,200 jobs, 3.7%).