



# News Release

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**For Immediate Release**  
March 27, 2015

## North Carolina's February Employment Figures Released

**RALEIGH** — The state's seasonally adjusted February unemployment rate was 5.3 percent, remaining unchanged from January's revised rate. The national rate decreased 0.2 of a percentage point to 5.5 percent.

North Carolina's February 2015 unemployment rate was 1.2 percentage points lower than a year ago. The number of people employed increased 30,562 over the month to 4,429,049, and increased 94,203 over the year. The number of people unemployed decreased 174 over the month to 248,014, and declined 53,370 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, increased 16,800 to 4,221,500 in February. The major industry with the largest over-the-month increase was Education & Health Services at 7,400, followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 7,300; Construction, 3,900; Information, 1,200; Financial Activities, 600; and Professional & Business Services, 200. Major industries experiencing decreases were Government, 2,000; Other Services, 900; Leisure & Hospitality Services, 700; Manufacturing, 100; and Mining & Logging, 100.

*Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates Since February 2015*

	Feb. 2014	Mar. 2014	Apr. 2014	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug. 2014	Sept. 2014	Oct. 2014	Nov. 2014	Dec. 2014	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015
<b>N.C.</b>	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.2	6.1	6.0	5.8	5.7	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.3
<b>U.S.</b>	6.7	6.6	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.1	5.9	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.7	5.5

*\*2014 Numbers Have Been Annually Revised\**

Since February 2014, Total Nonfarm jobs gained 134,600 with the Total Private sector growing by 137,100 and Government decreasing by 2,500. The largest over-the-year increase of major industries was Professional & Business Services at 36,400, followed by Leisure & Hospitality Services, 20,300; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 19,300; Education & Health Services, 18,400; Construction, 15,500; Manufacturing, 13,000; Other Services, 6,100; Financial Activities, 5,200; and Information, 3,000. Major industries experiencing decreases over the year were Government, 2,500; and Mining & Logging, 100.

The next unemployment update is scheduled for **Wednesday, April 8, 2015** when the county unemployment rates for **February 2015** will be released.

— More —

# North Carolina Department of Commerce Labor and Economic Analysis Division

## NORTH CAROLINA and U.S. LABOR FORCE DATA

*North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M., Friday, March 27, 2015*

	February 2015	January 2015	February 2014	Month Ago		Year Ago	
				Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Local Area Unemployment Statistics)</i>							
<i>Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	4,677,063	4,646,675	4,636,230	30,388	0.7	40,833	0.9
Employed	4,429,049	4,398,487	4,334,846	30,562	0.7	94,203	2.2
Unemployed	248,014	248,188	301,384	-174	-0.1	-53,370	-17.7
Unemployment Rate	5.3	5.3	6.5	0.0	xxx	-1.2	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	4,676,726	4,636,367	4,633,504	40,359	0.9	43,222	0.9
Employed	4,412,037	4,364,895	4,313,920	47,142	1.1	98,117	2.3
Unemployed	264,689	271,472	319,584	-6,783	-2.5	-54,895	-17.2
Unemployment Rate	5.7	5.9	6.9	-0.2	xxx	-1.2	xxx
<b>United States</b> <i>(Current Population Survey)</i>							
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	157,002,000	157,180,000	155,688,000	-178,000	-0.1	xxx	xxx
Employed	148,297,000	148,201,000	145,301,000	96,000	0.1	xxx	xxx
Unemployed	8,705,000	8,979,000	10,387,000	-274,000	-3.1	xxx	xxx
Unemployment Rate	5.5	5.7	6.7	-0.2	xxx	xxx	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
Labor Force	156,213,000	156,050,000	155,027,000	163,000	0.1	xxx	xxx
Employed	147,118,000	146,552,000	144,134,000	566,000	0.4	xxx	xxx
Unemployed	9,095,000	9,498,000	10,893,000	-403,000	-4.2	xxx	xxx
Unemployment Rate	5.8	6.1	7.0	-0.3	xxx	xxx	xxx

\*Effective January 2015, updated US population estimates are used in the national labor force estimates. The annual population adjustments affect the comparability of national labor force estimates over time.

2015 estimates for the current month are preliminary. Estimates for the previous month have undergone monthly revision. 2014 estimates have undergone annual revision.

North Carolina Department of Commerce  
 Labor and Economic Analysis Division  
**NORTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT DATA**

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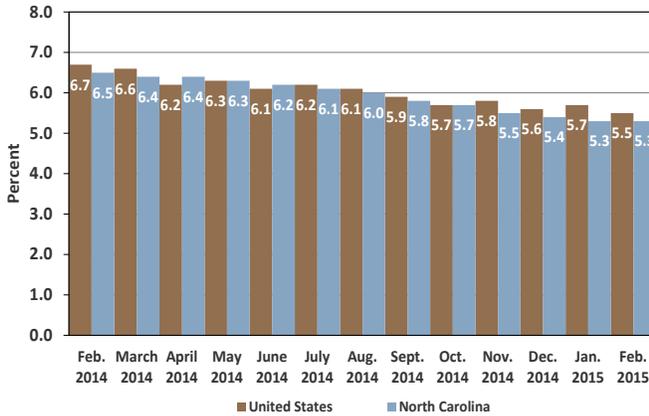
				<i>Month Ago</i>		<i>Year Ago</i>	
	<i>February 2015</i>	<i>January 2015</i>	<i>February 2014</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i>							
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
Total Nonfarm	4,221,500	4,204,700	4,086,900	16,800	0.4	134,600	3.3
Total Private	3,509,800	3,491,000	3,372,700	18,800	0.5	137,100	4.1
Mining & Logging	5,400	5,500	5,500	-100	-1.8	-100	-1.8
Construction	191,500	187,600	176,000	3,900	2.1	15,500	8.8
Manufacturing	458,300	458,400	445,300	-100	<0.1	13,000	2.9
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	785,400	778,100	766,100	7,300	0.9	19,300	2.5
Information	74,600	73,400	71,600	1,200	1.6	3,000	4.2
Financial Activities	214,300	213,700	209,100	600	0.3	5,200	2.5
Professional & Business Services	590,600	590,400	554,200	200	<0.1	36,400	6.6
Education & Health Services	579,700	572,300	561,300	7,400	1.3	18,400	3.3
Leisure & Hospitality Services	456,700	457,400	436,400	-700	-0.2	20,300	4.7
Other Services	153,300	154,200	147,200	-900	-0.6	6,100	4.1
Government	711,700	713,700	714,200	-2,000	-0.3	-2,500	-0.4
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i>							
<b>Not Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
Total Nonfarm	4,178,200	4,151,800	4,040,100	26,400	0.6	138,100	3.4
Total Private	3,452,000	3,431,000	3,312,200	21,000	0.6	139,800	4.2
Mining & Logging	5,300	5,400	5,400	-100	-1.9	-100	-1.9
Construction	184,600	180,900	169,300	3,700	2.0	15,300	9.0
Manufacturing	456,200	456,100	442,600	100	0.0	13,600	3.1
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	776,600	777,000	752,900	-400	-0.1	23,700	3.1
Information	74,200	73,500	71,300	700	1.0	2,900	4.1
Financial Activities	211,200	210,400	207,000	800	0.4	4,200	2.0
Professional & Business Services	583,500	579,200	546,100	4,300	0.7	37,400	6.8
Education & Health Services	580,100	570,000	560,300	10,100	1.8	19,800	3.5
Leisure & Hospitality Services	428,500	427,800	411,800	700	0.2	16,700	4.1
Other Services	151,800	150,700	145,500	1,100	0.7	6,300	4.3
Government	726,200	720,800	727,900	5,400	0.7	-1,700	-0.2
<b>Mfg. Production Workers (PW) Not Seasonally Adjusted</b>							
<i>Mfg. PW Average Hourly Earnings</i>	\$16.86	\$16.91	\$16.52				
<i>Mfg. PW Hours Worked</i>	41.8	42.4	39.9				

All 2015 Labor Force and CES data for the current month are preliminary.  
 All 2014 Labor Force and CES estimates have been benchmarked.  
 Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding.

# North Carolina Labor Market Conditions

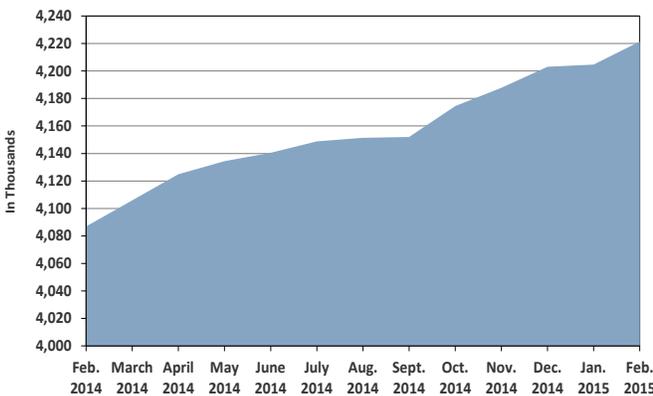
## February 2015\*

**United States/North Carolina Unemployment Rates**  
February 2014–February 2015  
(Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted\*\*)

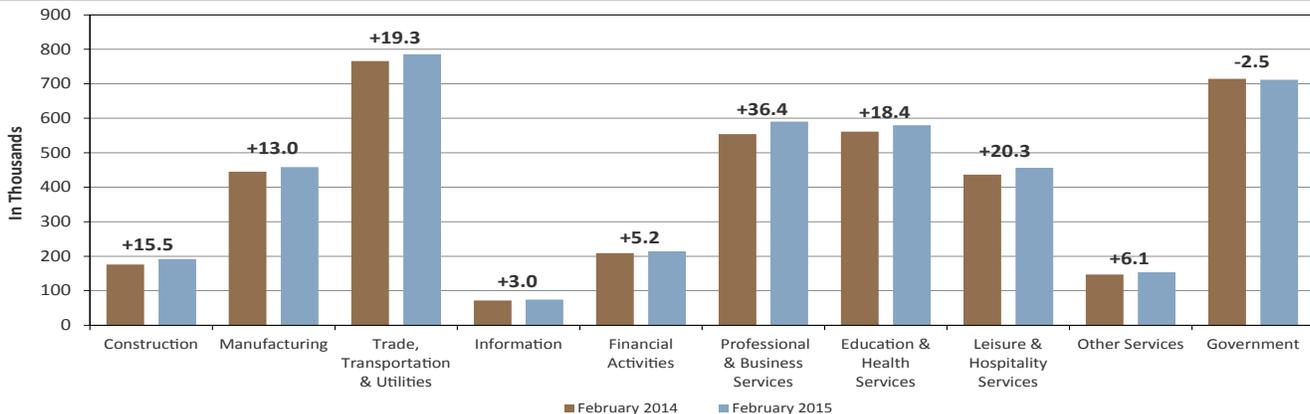


\*\* US data are not smoothed.

**North Carolina Total Nonfarm Employment**  
February 2014–February 2015  
(Seasonally Adjusted)



**Changes in Employment by NAICS Industries**  
February 2014 Compared to February 2015  
(Seasonally Adjusted)



\*NC current month data are preliminary, while all other 2015 data are revised and 2014 data have undergone annual revision. US data have undergone annual revision.

The North Carolina smoothed seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.3 percent in February, remaining unchanged from the revised January 2015 rate, and falling 1.2 percentage points from February 2014. Over the month, the number of persons unemployed fell by 174 (0.1%). The civilian labor force increased by 30,388 (0.7%) to 4,677,063.

Nationally, February's unemployment rate was 5.5 percent. The number of persons unemployed was 8,705,000, while the civilian labor force was 157,002,000.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment (4,221,500) increased 16,800 (0.4%) since January 2015, and 134,600 (3.3%) since February 2014.<sup>1</sup> Private sector employment grew over the month by 18,800 (0.5%), and increased by 137,100 (4.1%) over the year.

Of the major industries for which payroll data are seasonally adjusted, Education & Health Services had the largest over-the-month gain in jobs (7,400; 1.3%), followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities (7,300; 0.9%), Construction (3,900; 2.1%), Information (1,200; 1.6%), Financial Activities (600; 0.3%), and Professional & Business Services (200; <0.1%). Government (2,000; 0.3%) had the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Other Services (900; 0.6%), Leisure & Hospitality Services (700; 0.2%), Manufacturing (100; >-0.1%), and Mining & Logging (100; 1.8%).

Since February 2014, Professional & Business Services added the largest number of jobs (36,400; 6.6%), followed by Leisure & Hospitality Services (20,300; 4.7%), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (19,300; 2.5%), Education & Health Services (18,400; 3.3%), Construction (15,500; 8.8%), Manufacturing (13,000; 2.9%), Other Services (6,100; 4.1%), Financial Activities (5,200; 2.5%) and Information (3,000; 4.2%). Government reported the largest loss over the year at 2,500 (0.4%), followed by Mining & Logging 100 (1.8%).

<sup>1</sup>It is important to note that industry employment estimates are subject to large seasonal patterns. Seasonal adjustment factors are applied to the data. However, these factors may not be fully capturing the seasonal trend. Therefore, when interpreting the changes in industry employment, it is advisable to focus on over-the-year changes in both the seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted series.

# North Carolina Labor Market Conditions

The February 2015 not seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment level of 4,178,200 was 26,400 (0.6%) more than the January 2015 revised employment level of 4,151,800. Among the major industries in North Carolina, Education & Health Services had the largest over-the-month increase in employment at 10,100 (1.8%), followed by Government (5,400; 0.7%), Professional & Business Services (4,300; 0.7%), Construction (3,700; 2.0%), Other Services (1,100; 0.7%), Financial Activities (800; 0.4%), Information (700; 1.0%), Leisure & Hospitality (700; 0.2%) and Manufacturing (100; <0.1%). Trade, Transportation & Utilities reported the largest over-the-month decrease in employment at 400 (0.1%), followed by Mining & Logging at 100 (1.9%).

Over the year, the Service Providing sector (all industries except Mining & Logging, Construction, and Manufacturing) showed an increase of 109,300 (3.2%) jobs. Professional & Business Services experienced the largest employment increase with 37,400 (6.8%), followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities (23,700; 3.1%), Education & Health Services (19,800; 3.5%), Leisure & Hospitality Services (16,700; 4.1%), Other Services (6,300; 4.3%), Financial Activities (4,200; 2.0%), and Information (2,900; 4.1%). Government (1,700; 0.2%) had the only over-the-year decrease.

The Goods Producing sector grew by 28,800 (4.7%) jobs over the year. Construction experienced the largest employment increase with 15,300 (9.0%), followed by Manufacturing (13,600; 3.1%). Mining & Logging decreased by 100 (1.9%) over the year.

Food had the largest amount of manufacturing employment with 51,100 in February 2015. Fabricated Metal Product had the largest net over-the-year increase at 2,900. Other manufacturing industries with gains were: Transportation Equipment, 2,100; Plastics & Rubber Products, 1,500; Furniture & Related Product, 1,100; Machinery, 1,100; Wood Product, 800; Chemical, 700; Electrical Equipment, Appliance & Component, 300; and Printing & Related Support Activities, 200.

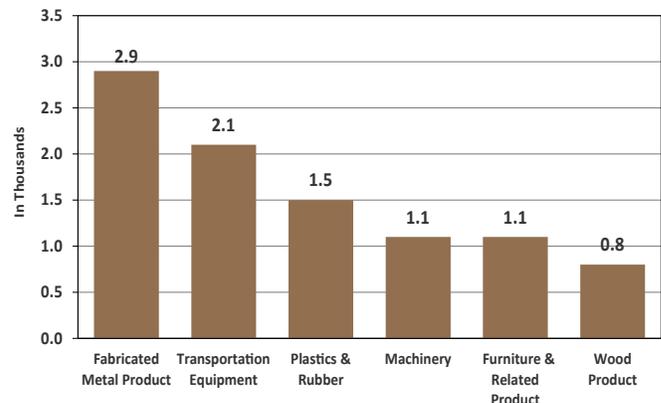
Average Weekly Hours for manufacturing production workers in February decreased 36 minutes from January's revised rate of 42.4. Average Hourly Earnings fell by \$0.05 to \$16.86, as Average Weekly Earnings dropped \$12.23 to \$704.75.

Regular Initial Claims for Unemployment Insurance (UI) totaled 18,542 in February, decreasing 8,475 from January. Less than 1 percent of Initial Claims for February 2015 were "attached" to a payroll, meaning that employees expect to be recalled to their jobs.

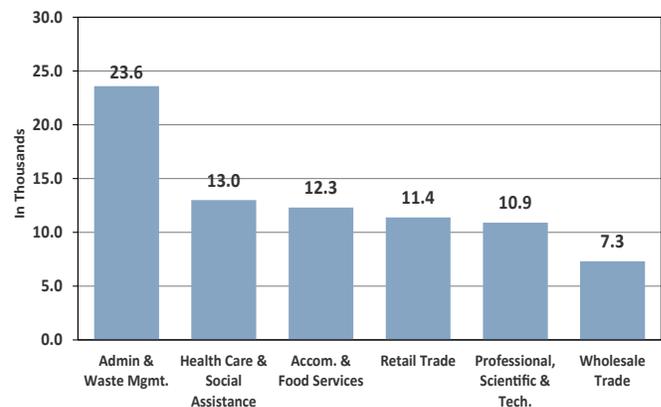
A total of \$26,075,292 in regular UI benefits was paid in February to 33,506 claimants statewide — a decrease of 3,394 claimants since January 2015.

For the 12-month period ending February 2015, \$396,611,051 was paid under the Regular UI Program. The UI Trust Fund balance at the end of February was in the red (\$297,275,619). The State Reserve Fund balance was \$38,969,015.

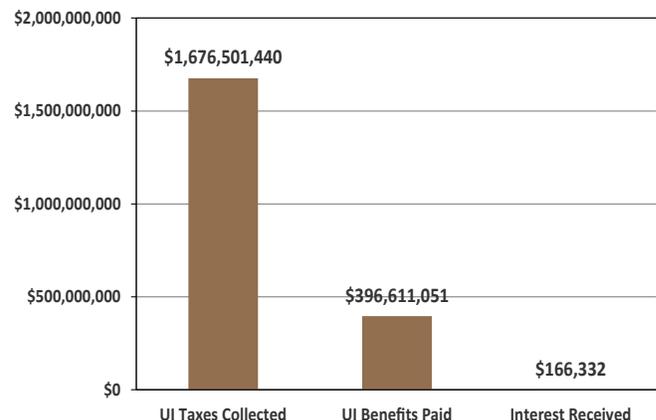
Selected Manufacturing Industries With Job Gains  
February 2014–February 2015  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Selected Service Industries With Job Gains  
February 2014–February 2015  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



UI Taxes Collected and NC Regular UI Benefits Paid  
March 2014–February 2015



## — Special Note: Annual Revisions —

### *Geography changes*

On February 28, 2013, OMB announced revised delineations of Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Micropolitan Statistical Areas, and Combined Statistical Areas. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) programs have implemented these new delineations effective March 17, 2015. Data have been revised back to the series beginnings based on the new delineations.

### *National estimates from the Current Population Survey*

National data from the Current Population Survey (CPS)—including estimates of labor force, employed, unemployed, and the unemployment rate—have been revised by the BLS to reflect updated seasonal factors. These revisions affect seasonally adjusted CPS data from January 2010 – December 2014.

### *State estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program*

Statewide data from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program (LAUS)—including estimates of labor force, employed, unemployed, and the unemployment rate—have undergone annual revisions. These revisions affect both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data from January 1976 – December 2014. The LAUS annual revisions are described in more detail in the Technical Notes below.

In addition, the LAUS program is now using a new estimation methodology. More information about the “LAUS Redesign” is available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/2015redesignqa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/2015redesignqa.htm).

### *Substate estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program*

Substate data from the LAUS program are also undergoing annual revisions. These revisions affect both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data from January 1990 – December 2014.

The first round of revised substate data were released March 17, 2015. These revisions incorporate new geographic delineations and are ratio-adjusted to sum to revised statewide totals.

The second (and final) round of revised substate data for January 2010 – December 2014, incorporating LAUS Redesign methodology changes, has a tentative release date of April 21, 2015. Annual averages for 2014 will be published at that time.

### *State and metro-area estimates from the Current Employment Statistics program*

Data from the Current Employment Statistics program (CES)—including state and metro-area estimates of Total Non-farm employment—have undergone annual revisions. These revisions affect both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data from January 1990 – December 2014. The CES annual revisions are described in more detail in the Technical Notes below.

## — Technical Notes —

This release presents labor force and unemployment estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Also presented are nonfarm payroll employment estimates the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The LAUS and CES programs are both federal-state cooperative endeavors.

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## ***Labor force and unemployment--from the LAUS program***

**Definitions.** The labor force and unemployment estimates are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as bad weather, labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on lay-off expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

**Method of estimation.** Statewide estimates are produced using an estimation algorithm administered by the BLS. This method, which underwent substantial enhancement at the beginning of 2005, utilizes data from several sources, including the CPS, the CES, and state unemployment insurance (UI) programs. Each month, census division estimates are controlled to national totals, and state estimates are then controlled to their respective division totals. Substate estimates are controlled to their respective state totals. For more information about LAUS estimation procedures, see the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm)

**Revisions.** Labor force and unemployment data for the previous month reflect adjustments made in each subsequent month, while data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year. The monthly revisions incorporate updated model inputs, while the annually revised estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. In most years, historical data for the most recent five years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates.

**Seasonal adjustment.** The LAUS program introduced smoothed seasonally adjusted (SSA) estimates in January 2010. These are seasonally-adjusted data that have incorporated a long-run trend smoothing procedure, resulting in estimates that are less volatile than those previously produced. The estimates are smoothed using a filtering procedure, based on moving averages, to remove the irregular fluctuations from the seasonally-adjusted series, leaving the trend. The same process is used on both historical and current year estimates. For more information about the smoothing technique, see the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/lau/lassaqa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lassaqa.htm).

**Area definitions.** The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget on February 28, 2013. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm).

## ***Employment--from the CES program***

**Definitions.** Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2012 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

**Method of estimation.** CES State and Area employment data are produced using several estimation procedures. Where possible these data are produced using a “weighted link relative” estimation technique in which a ratio of current-month weighted employment to that of the previous-month weighted employment is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are then obtained by multiplying these ratios by the previous month’s employment estimates. The weighted link relative technique is utilized for data series where the sample size meets certain statistical criteria.

For some employment series, relatively small sample sizes limit the reliability of the weighted link-relative estimates. In these cases, BLS uses the CES small domain model (SDM) to generate employment estimates. The SDM combines the direct sample estimates (described above) and forecasts of historical (benchmarked) data to decrease the volatility of the estimates. For more detailed information about the CES small domain model, refer to the BLS Handbook of Methods.

**Annual revisions.** Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports that are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months.

Seasonal adjustment. Payroll employment data are seasonally adjusted at the statewide supersector level. In some states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is computed by aggregating the independently adjusted supersector series. In other states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is independently adjusted. Revisions of historical data for the most recent 5 years are made once a year, coincident with annual benchmark adjustments.

### ***Reliability of the estimates***

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability--that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used. Model-based error measures for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data and for over-the-month and over-the-year changes to LAUS estimates are available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm). Measures of sampling error for state CES data at the total nonfarm and supersector levels are available online at [www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm).

### ***Release Dates***

The next unemployment update is scheduled for ***Wednesday, April 8, 2015*** when the county unemployment rates for ***February 2015*** will be released.

The complete 2015 data release schedule can be accessed at:

***[http://www.nccommerce.com/Portals/47/Documents/2015\\_NC\\_Release\\_Dates.pdf](http://www.nccommerce.com/Portals/47/Documents/2015_NC_Release_Dates.pdf)***