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## **Initial Unemployment Claims Down for March**

**TOPEKA, Kan.** –Overall labor markets in March remained stable with the private sector gaining 3,100 jobs across several industries. Gains in the private sector during March were greatest in construction and leisure and hospitality. Construction added 1,800 jobs, a 3.6 percent increase. Leisure and hospitality gained 1,400 jobs, an increase of 1.2 percent. Kansas gained 3,300 nonfarm jobs since February.

“This month the Kansas labor market remained more stable than the overall national market,” said Lana Gordon, Secretary of Labor. “The U.S. labor force reported a significant decrease while the Kansas civilian labor force remained steady.”

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose minimally to 5.6 percent, as compared to the February rate of 5.5 percent. In March 2012, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.8 percent.

“Over the month the state did not gain as many jobs as usual, given the March seasonal pattern,” said Tyler Tenbrink, Senior Labor Economist. “This muted tone was prevalent throughout the numbers, indicating a slowdown in momentum for the month.”

There were 15,069 initial claims for unemployment benefits in March, down from 16,388 initial claims in February and down from 17,997 last year. There were 128,261 continued claims in March, down from 137,477 the previous month and down from 185,502 in March 2012. These numbers include all available programs.

The April Labor Report will be released on May 16.

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