

Regional unemployment rate shows slight uptick in July

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OCALA – The jobless rate in the CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion (CLM) region was 4.0 percent in July, up 0.2 percentage point over the month and 0.3 percentage point greater than the region's rate from the previous year.

The labor force was 221,628, expanding by 7,232 for a 3.4 percent increase over the year.

According to preliminary employment data released today by the Florida Department of Commerce, formerly the Department of Economic Opportunity, there were 212,716 employed across the region, a decrease of 743 over the month but up 6,328 compared to July 2022. There were 8,912 unemployed residents, 375 more than the previous month and 904 more than a year ago when the rate was 3.7 percent.

Levy County tied with Marion County with an unemployment rate of 3.8 percent, up 0.3 percentage point over the month with 666 unemployed. With 5,883 unemployed, Marion County's jobless rate increased 0.1 percentage point compared to June's rate.

Citrus County had 2,363 unemployed and posted a 0.3-point increase to 4.6 percent. Florida's not seasonally adjusted jobless rate, which matches how the county rates are measured, ticked up 0.1 percentage point to 3.1 percent.

Rusty Skinner, CareerSource CLM's chief executive officer, said, "The report shows the continued impact of summer workforce transitions- students graduating and other seasonal adjustments."

Skinner said that there are plenty of employment opportunities in the region and noted that job fairs will take place in Citrus County on Aug. 31 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Realtor's Association of Citrus County in Lecanto and on Sept. 27 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the College of Central's Florida's Klein Conference Center in Ocala.

In July, nonfarm employment in the Ocala Metropolitan Statistical Area, which covers all of Marion County, was 117,700, an increase of 2,400 jobs (+2.1 percent) over the year.

The Ocala MSA was tied for the highest and fastest annual job growth compared to all the metro areas in the state in Information. Government and Other Services sectors grew as fast or faster in the metro area than elsewhere in the state as well.

Other industries gaining jobs over the year were Education and Health Services; Trade, Transportation, and Utilities; Professional and Business Services; and Leisure and Hospitality.

Mining, Logging and Construction, as well as Manufacturing, lost jobs over the year and Financial Activities remained unchanged.

Nonfarm jobs in the Homosassa Springs metro area, which covers all of Citrus County, hit 35,300, an increase of 1,400 jobs (+4.1 percent) over the year. Government jobs grew faster than statewide over the year.

The employment summary for August is scheduled to be released on Friday, Sept. 15.