

BUSINESS

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Area joblessness at 3.5%, seen as good sign

Unemployment

June jobless rates for northeast Indiana		Steuben
		3.7%
	Noble	DeKalb
	3.4%	3.3%
Kosciusko		
3.6%	Whitley	Allen
	3.3%	3.5%
	Huntington	
	3.3%	Adams
Wabash		3.6%
3.4%	Wells	
	3.0%	

The Journal Gazette

Source: Indiana Department of Workforce Development

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The Journal Gazette

In a labor force of nearly 238,000, fewer than 8,235 people in the Fort Wayne metro area were without jobs last month, figures released Monday show.

Preliminary data from the Indiana Department of Workforce Development indicates June unemployment for the three-county area of Allen, Wells and Whitley counties was 3.5%. That was down compared to a year ago in June when it was 4%, but higher than the 3.1% in May.

The Fort Wayne area la-

bor force had nearly 3,300 more people last month, up 1.4%, compared to the nearly 234,655 in June 2024. Employment within the labor force was up 2% from the same period a year ago, based on state data, with 4,550 more people, or 229,721 individuals, employed last month than in June 2024.

The increase is a good sign for the local economy because it signals employers are hiring and workers are available, said Rachel Blakeman, director of Purdue University Fort Wayne's Community Research Institute.

Blakeman also said coun-

ty-level numbers for June seemed favorable for job seekers locally and the statewide job market.

State workforce officials say comparing the same month year over year provides the best economic snapshot due to seasonal hiring variations in some sectors, such as education and agriculture.

Howard County, which includes Kokomo, had 6.5% unemployment in June, the highest among Indiana's 92 counties. Union County, south of Indianapolis and bordering Ohio, had the lowest, 2.8%.

Like the Fort Wayne met-

ro area, Huntington County saw an increase in unemployment last month, 3.3%, compared to May when it was 3%. But it was notably lower than the 3.8% in June 2024.

Last month Huntington County had a labor force of nearly 19,610, up from nearly 19,230 in June 2024, according to the state.

Mark Wickersham, executive director of the Huntington County Economic Development Corporation, said the data typically covers from the 11th of the previous month through the 10th of the month the reports are issued.

"My conclusion is that the

report describes a stable job market, with numerous job opportunities available within the region," Wickersham said through email.

"I think it's important for analysts to remember these aren't just statistics. We're talking about people," he said. "While we should celebrate that 97% of the labor force is employed, we shouldn't forget that if a person is among the 3.3% who are unemployed, they need and deserve all the help they can get in connecting with the numerous jobs available in (northeast) Indiana."

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