

Oregon unemployment rate drops to 4%

Oregon's Employment Department says the state's unemployment rate dropped to 4.0% in February, from 4.2%, as revised, in January. Oregon's unemployment rate dropped rapidly from its peak in April 2020 through late 2021, and is now at its lowest level since prior to the pandemic-induced recession in March 2020 when it was 3.5%. The U.S. unemployment rate was 3.8% in February and 4.0% in January.

In February, 59,000 Oregonians had been unemployed for less than six months, which was near the lowest number in two decades. Meanwhile, 24,000 Oregonians had been unemployed for more than six months, as the number of long-term unemployed decreased rapidly since hitting a

recent peak of 65,000 in April 2021.

In February, Oregon's non-farm payroll employment rose by 12,300 jobs, following a revised gain of 5,100 jobs in January. This was the largest monthly gain since July 2021 when 34,800 jobs were added.

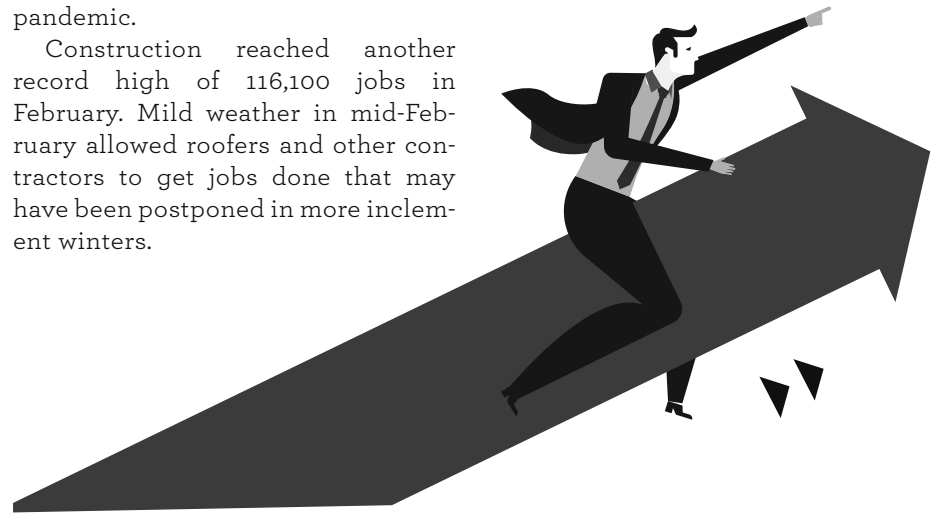
In February, gains were largest in leisure and hospitality (+3,500 jobs), construction (+2,300), health care and social assistance (+1,600), and professional and business services (+1,200). Eight other industries each added between 200 and 900 jobs. None of the major industries had a substantial job loss in February.

Leisure and hospitality rapidly added jobs all of this year and last year. It added 51,700 jobs, or 34.4%, since February 2021. Despite these

gains, leisure and hospitality still accounts for a large share of the jobs Oregon has not recovered since early 2020, with 14,600 jobs left to recover to reach the prior peak month of February 2020. The industry has regained 87% of jobs lost early in the pandemic.

Construction reached another record high of 116,100 jobs in February. Mild weather in mid-February allowed roofers and other contractors to get jobs done that may have been postponed in more inclement winters.

Professional and technical services employed 106,000 in February and continued its rapid expansion. It added 4,700 jobs, or 4.6%, since its pre-recession peak in February 2020.



Liberty House to hold auction, raffle

Liberty House Child Abuse Assessment Center is holding a raffle, dinner and auction dubbed Cherish the Children at the Salem Convention Center, April 30. This is their most significant annual fundraiser, and they are asking the local community to come out and offer support.

More than 180 different raffle prizes will be awarded, including international trips, weekend vacations, recreation opportunities, food items and home improvement resources. The total value

of the prizes exceeds \$50,000.

The event features a social hour, a three-course meal, and a silent auction.

Liberty House provides critical services to more than 1,200 children and their families in Marion and Polk counties who are facing concerns of abuse, neglect, trauma or grief.

Go to libertyhouse.ejoinme.org to find out all the details and to purchase raffle tickets and/or dinner admissions.

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