

N E W S R E L E A S E

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California economy improves slightly; Job growth inches up

SACRAMENTO – California's struggling economy is showing signs of life as job growth returns to most industry sectors and most areas of the state, and unemployment begins inching down from record levels, according to the new 2010 Labor Day Briefing by the state Employment Development Department (EDD).

During the first seven months of 2010, 65,300 jobs were created for an average gain of 9,300 jobs a month. In contrast, the state lost 69,700 jobs a month in 2009 and 44,600 jobs a month in 2008.

Private payrolls grew in six of the first seven months of 2010, and the 13,700-job gain in July 2010 was the state's second largest in the last three years.

"This recession has inflicted severe injury on our state's economy," said Pam Harris, chief deputy director of EDD. "And like any severe injury, it's going to take time to heal. But job growth – no matter how modest – is always encouraging."

In addition to the modest gains, the state's unemployment rate has dropped three of four months from a March 2010 peak of 12.6 percent to the still high current 12.3 percent. The consensus among economic forecasters seems to be that the economy will continue a slow expansion and gradually strengthen over time, but unevenly.

The EDD study projects an overall statewide job gain of 120,200 jobs by 2011, and in a separate projection study, forecasts a 1.5 million job gain by 2018, a growth rate of about 1 percent annually. The upward trend has already begun. Seven of California's 11 major industry sectors added jobs during the first seven months of 2010, led by Professional and Business Services, and Educational and Health Services.

(more)

The Labor Day Briefing also highlights the results of a recent survey showing California is well positioned to lead the country in developing new green and alternative energies technology.

Some 433,000 California workers perform green work at least part time, according to the study. That accounts for 3.4 percent of California's total wage and salary employment. Among California businesses, an estimated 7.9 percent have workers producing green products or supplying green services.

With an eye toward the future, the EDD briefing lists other up-and-coming fields, their salaries and their projected openings. These occupations were selected as ones with the most on-line job listings in the last 90 days, as well as good median wages and forecasted openings through 2011.

These positions require one year of training:

- Executive secretary:
Median Wage \$46,187. Projected openings* 2009-2011: 6,940.
- Sales representative, wholesale and manufacturing, technical:
Median Wage \$78,896. Projected openings* 2009-2011: 2,990.
- Medical assistants:
Median Wage \$29,962. Projected openings 2009-2011: 5,010.

These job opportunities require two years of training:

- Registered nurses:
Median Wage \$83,653. Projected openings* 2009-2011: 17,490.
- Computer specialists, including web developers:
Median Wage \$78,765. Projected openings* 2009-2011: 21,920.
- Office support supervisors:
Median Wage \$53,119. Projected openings* 2009-2011: 8,280.

For more opportunities, see the complete California 2009-2011 Industry Employment Projections online at:

<http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=145>

You can also review the 2010 Labor Day Briefing online at:

<http://www.calmis.ca.gov/specialreports/Labor-Day-Briefing-2010.pdf>

**Openings reflect the number of new jobs and replacements. Replacements reflect when employees permanently leave their occupations or the labor force altogether (for example, when workers retire). Many of these openings are a result of replacements, not growth within an occupation.*

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