

NEWS RELEASE

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Information Contact: Bob Fick (208) 332-3570 ext 3628 or Georgia Smith (208) 332-3570 ext 2102

Regular Idaho Jobless Benefit Claims Paid Drop Below 2006 Levels

Idaho Unemployment insurance claims paid to jobless workers in the third week of November dropped 34 percent from a year ago while the amount paid out fell 29 percent from \$2.65 million in 2012 to \$1.88 million.

The Idaho Department of Labor paid 7,462 regular unemployment insurance benefit claims during the week, nearly 3,800 fewer than last year and 14 fewer than the same week in 2006. It was the first time since the recession that the number of claims paid dropped below the levels of 2006, when the state economy was in the midst of a strong expansion.

In October, the number of claims paid dropped below the level of 2007 for the first time. The recession officially began in December 2007.

While the number of claims paid during the third week of November was lower than 2006, the amount paid was still 23 percent higher because the average benefit is \$25 higher this year at \$255, reflecting wage increases over the past seven years.

In addition to regular unemployment benefits, the department also paid \$585,000 in federally financed extended benefits to 2,500 long-term unemployed workers during the third week of November. Those extended benefits will end on Dec. 31.

There were no extended benefits paid in 2006.

Regular benefit payments totaled \$104 million in 2006, the lowest payout since 2000.

Through the third week of November, the total regular benefit payout was \$108.1 million compared to \$91.3 million through the same 47 weeks in 2006. The difference is the result of the wage increases that have boosted the average benefit amount over the last seven years.

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