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## **South Florida's Unemployment Rate Now at 8.0 Percent**

**(MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, Fla.)** – Unemployment in the South Florida Workforce Region rose to its highest level in 15 years for the month of April as the full force of the global financial crisis hit home prompting employers to shed additional jobs. The unemployment rate in the South Florida Workforce Region (Miami-Dade and Monroe counties) rose to a seasonally adjusted 8.0 percent during April 2009, an increase of 3.0 percentage points from a year ago (5.0 percent). However, the April 2009 unemployment rate was 1.3 percentage points lower than the state unemployment rate of 9.3 percent.

More specifically, the unemployment rates of the two counties that comprise the South Florida Workforce Region were 8.0 percent in Miami-Dade County and 5.8 percent in Monroe County. The unemployment rate in Miami-Dade County was up 2.9 percentage points over the year while Monroe County was up 2.8 percentage points. Total nonagricultural employment in the Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall metropolitan division was 1,018,700, a decline of 3.9 percent over the year. Total nonagricultural employment in Florida declined 4.8 percent over the year.

In the Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall metro division, education and health services was the only industry that gained jobs over the year (+1,500 jobs) continuing a consistent trend of moderate job growth in that industry sector. Conversely, total nonagricultural employment declined by 41,300 jobs over the year in the Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall metropolitan division. Mining, logging, and construction lost the most jobs (-10,600 jobs), followed by professional and business services (-9,300 jobs); trade, transportation, and utilities (-8,000 jobs); government (-4,100 jobs); manufacturing (-3,500 jobs); leisure and hospitality (-2,700 jobs); financial activities (-1,700 jobs); information (-1,500 jobs); and other services (-1,400 jobs).

April's unemployment data is strong evidence that employers, frustrated by the length of the economic downturn, are letting staff go despite a lengthy battle to retain skilled workers.

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