

[back to article](#)



Polk jobless rate hits 10.4 percent

News Chief staff report

Published: Friday, March 27, 2009 at 11:10 a.m.

Polk County's unemployment rate hit 10.4 percent in February, the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation reported today.

Unemployment in Florida reached 9.4 percent, which is 1.3 percent higher than the national jobless rate of 8.1 percent, according to the agency report. It marks the highest Florida unemployment rate since April 1976, when the rate was also 9.4 percent.

The Polk County jobless rate last month was an increase from a revised January unemployment rate of 10 percent. Earlier this month, the state agency originally reported that Polk had a 9.9 percent unemployment rate.

In February 2008, Polk County's jobless rate was almost 6 percentage points lower, at 4.9 percent.

In a ranking of unemployment rates in Florida counties, Polk has the 20th highest rate, tied with Taylor County, which also has a jobless rate of 10.4 percent. The county with the highest unemployment rate is Flagler County, at 14.2 percent.

Gov. Charlie Crist recently announced the allocation of \$165 million from the federal stimulus package to help state training and job placement services. Polk County also offers the Ready to Work Pilot Program, a training program for professional skills that awards certificates to participants. For details about the program, call 866-429-2334.
