The Fourth District’s unemployment rate remained at 5.8% in November. Over the month, both the number of employed people and the size of the labor force fell 0.1%. Over the year, employment increased 0.6% and the labor force increased 0.3%. The U.S. unemployment rate fell from 5.0% in November to 4.9% in December.

Unemployment rates in almost all Fourth District counties continue to exceed the national average. However, there are signs of improvement: From October to November, unemployment rates fell in 89 counties, stayed the same in 19, and rose in 61. Compared to November 2004, rates fell in 103 counties, stayed the same in six, and rose in 60. In every major metropolitan area in the District, unemployment rates were equal to or greater than the U.S. average; in most of them, rates changed only slightly from October to November. In Columbus, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Toledo, unemployment rates fell by 0.1%; however, rates rose 0.4% in Pittsburgh and 0.2% in Lexington.

In some industries, the District’s major metro areas experienced employment growth trends similar to the nation’s. However, this was not the case in some other industries. For instance, like the nation, every major metro area in the District enjoyed increased employment in both the education and health services and the other services industries over the year. However, in the trade, transportation, and utilities and the information industries, where the U.S. posted gains over the year, most of the District’s major metro areas lost employment.