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Parkinson: Kan. Jobless Rate 'Discouraging'

The first Kansas unemployment report for 2010 is out, and Gov. Mark Parkinson calls the numbers "discouraging."

In a report being released Wednesday, the state Department of Labor says Kansas' jobless rate in January was 7.1% — up from 6.2% in December and 6.3% in January 2009. It's the highest rate since last August, when unemployment in the state hit 7.2%.

The report also says Kansas has lost 54,100 jobs over the previous 12 months.

Parkinson issued a statement saying the report shows Kansas continues to be affected by the national economic downturn.

A state labor economist says there are signs that the pace of layoffs is slowing, but no indications yet that Kansas employers are starting to hire workers.

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