



City of New Bedford  
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

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Date: January 9, 2017  
For Immediate Release

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **New Bedford Area Sees Sharpest Drop in Unemployment in the United States**

#### **Local Unemployment Rate Now At Lowest Level in Sixteen Years**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts**--According to the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the New Bedford area achieved the largest unemployment rate decline among 387 metropolitan areas in the U.S. over the past year.

From November 2015 to November 2016 the New Bedford area unemployment rate saw a decline of nearly 3 percentage points (-2.8), with the rate falling from 6.5 percent to 3.7 percent.

It has been more than 16 years since the New Bedford area enjoyed an unemployment rate as low as 3.7 percent. In October 2000 the area unemployment rate briefly fell to 3.5 percent.

This is the second time in two years that New Bedford's drop led the nation. In May 2014 the New Bedford area's unemployment rate fell dramatically to 7.6 percent, down from 10.4 percent from the year prior.

New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell said that the jobs progress reflects many factors, including the competitiveness of local companies, the hard work of their employees, and the efforts of the public sector to establish general conditions for employment growth. He noted, "We know that the private sector performs best when the public sector creates a positive climate by being fiscally responsible and pursuing a well-defined economic strategy."

Mitchell added: "The last thing we should do is take today's positive news for granted. There are still too many area residents who are underemployed or don't have the skills to fill positions that are available. We need to stay committed to our economic development strategy and keep pushing forward with the policies and projects that have brought us this far."

For the full BLS announcement, go to  
[https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/metro\\_12292016.pdf](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/metro_12292016.pdf)

For Commonwealth Magazine's recent report on the announcement visit:  
<http://commonwealthmagazine.org/economy/jobless-rates-dropping-all-over-ma/>

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