



Gulf Coast Workforce Board  
P.O. Box 22777 • Houston, Texas 77227-2777  
MAIN: 713.627.3200 FAX: 713.993.4578  
www.wrksolutions.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACTS:**

Tricia Bentley  
832.247.6539

[tricia.bentley@wrksolutions.net](mailto:tricia.bentley@wrksolutions.net)

Michelle Castrow  
713.993.4571

[michelle.castrow@wrksolutions.net](mailto:michelle.castrow@wrksolutions.net)

**HOUSTON-AREA EMPLOYERS STEP UP HIRING IN FEBRUARY**

*Regional economist “skeptical” due to “out of character” hiring for this time of the year.*

(HOUSTON) Houston-area employment came roaring back in February with 45,500 people finding work last month, according to an analysis released by Workforce Solutions on Friday. It’s also the third-largest, one-month increase in employment in the last thirty years. January data was also revised upward by 4,700 jobs for a smaller, yet typical for the end of the holiday season, net loss of 47,000 jobs.

“The Professional and Business Services sector saw the most growth in February adding more than 10,000 workers,” said Parker Harvey, regional economist for Workforce Solutions – Gulf Coast. “This sector is where we find a lot of white-collar professional and administrative support jobs among others.” He points out that one-third of the jobs in this sector were added in the Employment Services subsector, which includes temporary and temp-to-hire jobs that traditionally lead to permanent hiring several months later.

The Mining and Logging sector, which encompasses exploration and production and oilfield support, also set a record month-over-month increase, adding 1,700 new jobs while manufacturers, entirely in the durable goods subsector, added a record 1,600 people to their payrolls. Wholesale trade of durable goods, another area driven by growth in the oil and gas industry, also added 1,900 jobs. Harvey says that while it’s possible hiring in the three sectors is related to the recent spike in oil prices, he’s not sold, yet. “The total rig count is still below where it was just prior to the pandemic, and well-below the post-bust recovery in 2018,” he said. “I’d expect some growth, even above-average growth, but I’m skeptical of numbers that are out of character for Houston this time of year. Don’t be surprised if we see revisions down to more reasonable levels next month and even next year.”

Unemployment in the Houston-Sugar Land-The Woodlands area fell 0.2 percent, from January, to a not-seasonally-adjusted average 5.3 percent. January’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stands at 5.4 percent. One year ago, unemployment in both categories was 7.8 percent.

Additional labor market information including the detailed February report can be found at [wrksolutions.com/localstats](http://wrksolutions.com/localstats). The Texas Workforce Commission will release February employment data on April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

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**ABOUT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS:** Workforce Solutions is dedicated to keeping the Gulf Coast region a great place to do business, work, and live. Our employer-driven, people-focused approach elevates the economic and human potential of \_\_\_\_\_

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the region to attract and retain the best employers, afford everyone the dignity of a job, and remain indispensable to the global economy. As the public workforce system for 13 counties in the Houston-Galveston region, we work in tandem with the Texas Workforce Commission and the statewide Workforce Solutions network to maintain the state's largest job-match database - WorkInTexas.com.

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