



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 21, 2020

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HOUSTON'S UNEMPLOYMENT DROPS SLIGHTLY TO 9.4% FROM 9.7% IN JUNE ECONOMISTS NOTE MARGINAL CHANGE DUE TO PROLONGED PANDEMIC UNCERTAINTY

(HOUSTON) The July not-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate fell to 9.4-percent in Houston, marginally down from June's 9.7-percent while up from 4.1-percent in 2019, according to data released this morning by Workforce Solutions. Houston remains above the statewide rate of 8.2-percent but lower than the City's non-seasonally adjusted peak of 14.3-percent in April 2020 and the national rate of 10.5-percent.

Houston-area employers shed approximately 22,000 jobs in July on a not-seasonally-adjusted basis. Excluding typical seasonal losses, employers reduced payrolls by a comparatively smaller 2,700 jobs over the month. Most of the not-seasonally-adjusted decline was attributed to the Government sector (i.e. public education) continuing losses that began the month prior at the conclusion of the school year. However, gains were registered in some industries. The Professional and Business Services sector added 5,400 jobs, and 2,100 jobs were added in the Other Services sector. Based on seasonally or not-seasonally adjusted data, total job growth across May, June, and July indicates that approximately one-third of the roughly 350,000 jobs lost in March and April due to initial impacts of COVID-19 have been recovered to date.

"We're now entering a phase where we're likely to continue seeing at best incremental improvement in the overall job situation given the continued uncertainty of the pandemic and the fact that the most dramatic month-to-month swings are behind us," said Workforce Solutions Economist, Parker Harvey. "Regardless, unemployment remains elevated even compared to the peak of the Great Recession with nearly 320,000 people across the Houston-area looking for a new job." Harvey also pointed out, "... the significant surge in COVID-19 cases increased uncertainty from June to July, and although cases are slowly coming down, this continues to pose a great challenge to bring back jobs at a steady place in the economy."

Workforce Solutions has adapted to this evolving job market by serving the needs of the community remotely and providing job-search services in the form of on-demand videos, live webinars and individual consultations by phone.

To serve the needs of local communities, Workforce Solutions depends on accurate census data. Census numbers also guide the allocation of federal funds for hundreds of public services including education,

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infrastructure planning, and workforce development. Presently, Texas lags behind the country in response rates. Workforce Solutions encourages all residents to complete the census form, so communities can access the much-needed resources based on census population counts.

"Workforce Solutions is better-equipped to serve the needs of the region when we have an accurate assessment of our local needs," said Strategic Manager with Workforce Solutions, Michelle Castrow. "The 2020 Census will help distribute billions of dollars in federal resources to the community. When you're counted in the census, you're helping to build a better community, economy, and a stronger Gulf Coast region."

To connect with Workforce Solutions, call 1-888-469-JOBS [5627] or go online to www.wrksolutions.com.

Additional labor market information including the detailed July report can be found at wrksolutions.com/localstats. The Texas Workforce Commission will release employment data for August on September 18, 2020.

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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 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.