



Gulf Coast Workforce Board  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **UNEMPLOYMENT UNEXPECTEDLY RISES TO 9.6-PERCENT IN SEPTEMBER DESPITE BEST MONTHLY JOB GROWTH ON RECORD**

(HOUSTON) The Houston region's September not-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate rose to 9.6 percent from 8.1 percent in August, according to data released this morning by Workforce Solutions. The statewide unemployment rate also rose from 7.0 percent to 8.3 percent while nationally the rate fell from 8.5 percent to 7.7 percent resulting in an unforeseen divergence from recent national trends.

Despite the unexpected rise, Houston MSA Total Nonfarm (seasonally adjusted) employment was up 20,300 jobs over the month, or 0.7 percent. The primary drivers of (NSA) growth for September included Government, which added 29,200 jobs or 7.6-percent due to the return of workers in public education with the start of the academic year. Leisure and Hospitality continued its recovery over the month adding 4,400 jobs with Accommodation and Food Services as the largest contributor to the overall sector's increase. Mining and Logging posted its best month for job growth this year adding 2,400 jobs.

"The rise in the unemployment rate contradicts multiple related indicators that all pointed towards a decline, even modest a one, between August and September," said Workforce Solutions Economist, Parker Harvey. "Historically the rate falls in September with only a few minor exceptions over the past three decades. The largest September increase prior to this one at 0.4 percentage points was in 2005 and may have been the result of Hurricane Katrina evacuees arriving in the region." Harvey further explained, "The sharp rise in this September's rate also stands in contrast to falling numbers of new claims for unemployment insurance throughout the month, which reached their lowest levels since March, as well as continuing claims which saw a drop of nearly 48,000. While they don't capture all announced layoffs, there were no significant WARN notices reported for the region either. Ultimately, until I see more agreement between the indicators, I'm not inclined to believe that the recovery has started to falter yet."

(more)

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The Texas Workforce Commission will reinstate the work-search requirement for individuals receiving unemployment benefits effective November 1. With many still seeking solid employment during the pandemic, Workforce Solutions will expand its annual Hiring Red, White & You job fair celebrating Veterans Day to welcome anyone looking for work. Thursday, November 5 is exclusively for veterans and military families. Beginning Friday, November 6 and continuing through the weekend, the event opens to all job candidates.

“Houston is home to more than 282,000 veterans, and the annual Hiring Red, White & You virtual job fair is our chance to honor the contributions of military veterans to our country and the civilian workforce,” said Strategic Manager with Workforce Solutions, Michelle Castrow. “Thanks to new virtual technology, Workforce Solutions is expanding the event to include anyone looking for work.”

For more information about the ninth annual Hiring, Red, White & You virtual job fair for veterans and their families, go to [www.wrksolutions.com/hrwy](http://www.wrksolutions.com/hrwy).

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

Additional labor market information including the detailed September report can be found at [wrksolutions.com/localstats](http://wrksolutions.com/localstats). The Texas Workforce Commission will release employment data for September on November 20, 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](http://WorkInTexas.com).