



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2024 ENDS ON A POSITIVE NOTE WITH 5,700 NEW JOBS ADDED

(HOUSTON, Texas, January 24, 2025) Houston area employers added 5,700 new jobs in December, which - while substantially below the long-term average - is still in line with more recent trends, according to figures released Friday by Workforce Solution Gulf Coast.

As is typical for December, hiring in Trade, Transportation and Utilities sector led growth across the eleven sectors tracked by the workforce development agency. The bulk of jobs added were in the retail trade sub-sector (+3,900) as retailers staffed up for the final weeks of the holiday shopping season. Warehouse operators also grew their payrolls, adding 1,400 new jobs last month. The Financial activities, manufacturing, Information, and Other Services (a catchall for several unrelated subsectors including auto repair and maintenance and personal services like barbers and dry cleaning services among others), contributed a combined 3,600 jobs combined December's total.

For the second December in a row, the Leisure and Hospitality sector shed jobs, cutting 2,100 position. Also posting job losses December: Private Education & Health Services (-1,400), Professional & Business Services (-600), construction (-400), and mining and logging (-300).

As for the overall trend? "While we have added jobs each December since 2020, it's been a seesaw of weak growth one year followed by strong growth the next, with an average of 4,700 jobs added between December 2020 and December 2023," said Parker Harvey, the manager for regional economic analysis at the workforce development agency.

Something else to keep in mind," Harvey added, "is job growth during the holidays continues to get pulled forward earlier in the season with each passing year, with October and November posting larger and larger gains. Hence, we may need to adjust our expectations for all Decembers going forward."

The not-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for December stood at 4.1 percent, down nearly one-half of one percent from November. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November rose 0.1 percent to 4.6 percent from October.

Additional labor market information, including the detailed December report, can be found online at www.wrksolutions.com/localstats. The Texas Workforce Commission will release January employment data on March 14, 2025, which will also include the annual benchmark revisions.

ABOUT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS: Workforce Solutions is dedicated to keeping the Texas 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 – www.WorkInTexas.com.

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