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HOUSTON ADDED JOBS IN OCTOBER, BUT SHOWED BIG LOSSES IN THE PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

(HOUSTON, Texas, November 15, 2024) Houston-area employers added 12,100 jobs in October, driven by retail stores and logistics firms beginning to staff up ahead of the holiday shopping season along and hiring in the Government sector, according to numbers released Friday by Workforce Solutions.

The Trade, Transportation and Utilities sector added 4,900 jobs with the bulk of the hiring happening in the retail trade subsector, which alone contributed 3,300 with wholesale traders adding 1,300 jobs. Only 300 jobs were added in the logistics space, which includes warehouse operations. “In recent years, the logistics subsector added around 2,000 jobs heading into the holiday season, so this is significantly at odds with what we expect this time of the year,” said Parker Harvey, Manager of Regional Economic Analysis at the workforce development agency.

The Government sector, which includes public schools and universities, once again led hiring during the month, adding 6,000 jobs, a figure on par with the long-term average.

But it is weakness in the Business and Professional Services sector that is raising alarm bells with a reported loss of 800 jobs in October. “While it doesn’t seem like much, we’ve seen an average of around 5,000 jobs excluding the record-breaking years of 2020 and 2021,” Harvey said, “So, this is substantially in contrast to the long-term average.”

“Even more concerning is the loss of 4,400 jobs – or nearly two percent of the workforce – in the Administrative and Support Services subsector,” he said, adding, “it’s not at all clear where those jobs have gone considering the workforce system doesn’t have a record of any WARN letters being issued that could explain losses of that magnitude.” WARN stands for Workforce Adjustment and Retraining Notification, a required first step when companies are beginning the process of layoffs affecting more than 100 employees.

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the Houston-Sugar Land-The Woodlands MSA ticked slightly higher to 4.5 percent from September’s 4.4 percent. Seasonally-adjusted unemployment for September was unchanged from August 4.4 percent.

Additional labor market information, including the detailed October report, can be found online at www.wrksolutions.com/localstats. The Texas Workforce Commission will release November employment data on December 20, 2024.

ABOUT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS: [Workforce Solutions](http://www.WorkforceSolutions.com) 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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