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## **HOUSTON JOB MARKET SEES SOLID FEBRUARY POST-HOLIDAY SEASON REBOUND** *February 2024 Recorded Robust Growth across Most Sectors*

(HOUSTON, TX) The Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) saw the typical return of post-holiday season jobs this February. Total nonfarm employment climbed to 3,418,800, a rise of 24,600 over the month, marking a 0.7% increase on a not-seasonally-adjusted basis. Key sectors such as Government, Professional and Business Services, and Construction spearheaded this growth, overshadowing typical February losses in other areas like Retail Trade.

Government emerged as the largest gaining sector, adding 7,000 jobs. Professional and Business Services showed remarkable growth with an addition of 5,400 jobs. Construction witnessed a 2.0%-increase, adding 4,500 jobs. “After a year in which we thought Construction was hemorrhaging jobs, before the data got revised last month, it’s encouraging to see sector post February numbers consistent with its historical performance” explained Parker Harvey, regional economist for Workforce Solutions. Gains were also recorded in Private Education and Health Services (+4,300), Leisure and Hospitality (+3,900), Manufacturing (+1,300), Financial Activities (+900) and Other Services (+300).

In contrast, Trade, Transportation, and Utilities declined by -2,500 over the month as a result of continued shedding of holiday season retail jobs. The Mining and Logging sector, which encompasses exploration and production and oilfield services, lost -300 jobs in February in addition to January’s decline of -1,000. Combined, these losses have tipped the sector into negative territory on a year-over-year basis for the first time since October 2021.

Year over year, Total Nonfarm employment across the Houston MSA grew by 79,800 jobs (2.4%) driven by Private Education and Health Services, Government, and Professional and Business Services. February’s not-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate for the Houston MSA was 4.6%, a slight uptick from January’s 4.4% and unchanged from February 2023. This February’s increase over the month contrasts with historical February trends where a decline is typically observed. Harvey noted that “the slight rise in the unemployment rate is something to keep an eye on given what we normally see each February.”

Total Nonfarm employment was revised upward by 3,200 jobs, reducing the net loss from December to January to -47,900 jobs, compared to an initial estimated loss of -51,100 jobs. This revision was led by 1,800 fewer jobs lost in the Government, followed by 1,400 fewer jobs lost among Professional and Business Services, and 500 fewer jobs lost in Manufacturing.

Additional labor market information, including the detailed February report, is available online at: [wrksolutions.com/localstats](http://wrksolutions.com/localstats). The Texas Workforce Commission will release March employment data on April 21, 2023.

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

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