



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HOUSTON'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DIPS TO 8.1% IN AUGUST FROM 9.4% IN JULY
RATE IMPROVES BUT ALMOST DOUBLE COMPARED TO 2019**

(HOUSTON) The Houston region's August not-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate fell to 8.1-percent, an improvement from July's 9.4-percent rate yet still high compared to 4.1-percent in 2019, according to data released this morning by Workforce Solutions. The Houston region's MSA August unemployment rate is above the statewide rate of 7-percent but below the national rate of 8.5-percent.

Houston-area employers added more than 5,300 new jobs on a not-seasonally-adjusted basis in August. On a seasonally-adjusted basis, the MSA saw an increase of 11,000 jobs. The primary drivers of (NSA) growth for August included Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, Other Services, and Professional and Business Services

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities was the largest gaining sector over the month adding 5,100 jobs, the majority of which came from Retail Trade signaling continued recovery of this segment from mandatory stay-at-home orders issued earlier in the year. Similar trends were found in Other Services, likely driven by further reopening among personal care businesses, such as salons and barbershops. Mining and Logging, Durable Goods and Manufacturing, and Oil and Gas-related sectors continued to show weakness reflecting the recent dramatic fall in the rig count and persistently low oil prices.

"The month of August showed improvements across the national, state, and local levels, as we witnessed many businesses re-engaging in the economy and bringing employees back to work," said Workforce Solutions Economist, Parker Harvey. "About 282,000 individuals were unemployed in Houston in August, down from July's 323,000. This can be attributed to employers recalling workers who were temporarily laid off when the pandemic erupted in the spring." Harvey further explained, "We see the economy rebounding from the depths of the coronavirus-triggered shutdown, but a lot of work still needs to be done to return to a healthy labor market."

Across the region, weekly initial claims for unemployment insurance continued to hover around 15,000 in early September, down from nearly 77,000 in April while continuing claims fell by roughly 47,000 from July to August. Both reaffirm continued improvement in the local economy.

www.wrksolutions.com 1.888.469.JOBS (5627)

Workforce Solutions is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. (Please request reasonable accommodations a minimum of two business days in advance.) Relay Texas: 1.800.735.2989 (TDD) 1.800.735.2988 (voice) or 711

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As individuals seek employment and prepare to return to work, Workforce Solutions has launched job search seminars online. Individuals have free access to both on-demand videos and live seminars to learn and improve job search skills. Individuals can go to www.wrksolutions.com/onlinelearning.

In efforts to continue to serve the community with valuable job search resources and tools, Workforce Solutions depends on accurate census data.

“Workforce Solutions continues to help connect career and job seekers to opportunities in these uncertain times,” said Strategic Manager with Workforce Solutions, Michelle Castrow. “Completing the census is essential for local workforce development efforts. An accurate census count is crucial to ensuring that programs like ours receive federal funding for not only the next decade, but for the next time we face an economic crisis, as we are seeing now from the impact of COVID-19.”

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 August report can be found at wrksolutions.com/localstats. The Texas Workforce Commission will release employment data for September on October 16, 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.