



March 2022 Labor Market Report - Workforce Solutions (Serving the Lower Rio Grande Valley)

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) released the March Labor Market and Employment reports. The seasonally adjusted national unemployment rate decreased by -0.2% to 3.6%. Texas seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased by -0.3% to 4.4%.

Statewide Overview: Texas had a gain of 30,100 non-agricultural jobs in March and a gain of 731,600 jobs in the past year (seasonally adjusted). This represents an annual employment increase rate of 5.9%.

Goods-Producing employment increased by 14,700 jobs in March and a total of 91,900 jobs were gained in the past twelve months, equaled to a 5.2% annual growth rate. Manufacturing employment grew by 5,600 jobs over the month and reached 99.2 percent of the February 2020 pre-pandemic level. The Manufacturing job growth in the past twelve months equaled to a 4.1 percent growth rate.

The Service-Providing sector increased by 15,400 jobs in March and has a total gain of 639,700 jobs in the past year. This sector increased at a 6.0% annual rate. The Financial Activities sector led all major industries with the most job growth adding 7,800 jobs increasing at a 6.9% annual rate. The Education and Health Services sector had the second most job gains in March with an estimated 5,500 employees hired and an annual increasing rate of 3.6%.

Regional Unemployment Recap: The March unemployment rates had significant changes across the region showing decreasing rates in Hidalgo (-1.4%), Starr (-2.5%) and Willacy (-1.7%) counties.

Counties:

- Hidalgo County decreased by -1.4% to 7.0%
- Cameron County decreased by -1.2% to 6.1%
- Starr County decreased by -2.5%, to 13.4%
- Willacy County decreased by -1.7% to 8.4%
- Webb County decreased by -1.0% to 4.3%

Cities:

- McAllen has the lowest unemployment rate in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) at a rate of 4.4%.
- Edinburg has the second lowest unemployment rate in the RGV at a rate of 4.8%
- Laredo unemployment rate decreased by -1.0% to 4.3%
- Mission unemployment rate decreased by -1.4% to 6.2%
- Harlingen unemployment rate decreased by -1.3% to 5.2%.
- Brownsville unemployment rate decreased by -1.4% and a rate of 6.1%.

Hidalgo, Cameron, and Webb County MSA Regional Employment Change Estimates:

Employment Sectors	McAllen MSA	Brownsville MSA	Laredo MSA	Total Region
Mining, Logging & Construction				
Manufacturing		100		100
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	100			100
Information				
Financial Activities				
Professional & Business Services	100	100		200
Education (Private) & Health Services	-1,100	200	-100	-1,000
Leisure & Hospitality	400	400	100	900
Other Services	100			100
Government (Public Ed, Law Enforcement)	1,100	100		1,200
Total All Non-Agriculture Sectors:	700	900	0	1,600

The March 2022 Employment Change Estimates reflect a decrease for the border region from last month's employment estimates. The primary sector with the largest job growth in the border region is the Government sector with an estimated 1,200 new jobs. The Education (Private) & Healthcare sectors reflect significant job loss reported at -1,000. The March total non-agricultural job growth for the border region is an estimated 1,600 jobs.

RGV Economy:

In March, the RGV (Lower Rio and Cameron Workforce Development Areas) unemployment rate was at 7.0% reflecting a decrease of -1.4% from February. Over the month, Workforce Solutions (WFS) partnered with employers to host 12 hiring events with 69 participating employers and 530 job seekers in attendance, which resulted in 99 hires. Additionally, WFS was able to serve a total of 1,777 employers representing 2,353 job openings, which resulted in a total of 531 hires for the month of March.

Healthcare:

The nursing shortage in the RGV continues to be a challenge due to the loss of critical care specialty nurses nationally, shortage of nursing educators, and limited nursing program capacity. With many healthcare facilities struggling to recruit and retain employees the shift has been towards upskilling their current workforce with training needed to create another talent pipeline for nursing occupations.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has dedicated \$15 million to expand apprenticeships in healthcare and to address the critical shortage of healthcare professionals. As such, TWC Commissioner Representing Labor, Julian Alvarez, convened the 2022 Nurse Apprenticeships meeting on 3/30/22. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the essential and critical need for apprenticeships in nursing education and how to implement within the acute care centers. The meeting was comprised of Higher Education leaders from the Texas State Board of Education, Texas Education Agency, and statewide Workforce Solutions partners.

Information Technology (IT):

WFS continues to engage the IT Industry of the region through the efforts of the WFS IT Taskforce, which was established to address industry challenges and leverage resources to promote industry growth. The IT Taskforce will convene in May 2022, to discuss funding and training opportunities for the IT workforce. WFS is also currently offering over 6,000 courses with over 200 career paths in all industries through Skillup RGV, powered by Metrix Learning. The online portal has over 100 certifications in IT in the areas of cybersecurity, Amazon, Microsoft, and more. There are also skills tracks with over 300 trainings in Coding/Programming, Hardware/Software, Mobile Apps, and more. The portal can also be used to find local jobs in the IT related fields. Trainings can be accessed at wfsrgv.skillupamerica.org and for further information regarding the WFS IT Taskforce initiative you may contact Aaron Gonzalez at aaron@wfsolutions.org.

As always, thanks again for your support and participation!

Texas Labor Market Review from TWC: <https://texaslmi.com/api/GetHomeLinks/TLMR>

Local Labor Market Reports and Data Request: <https://www.wfsolutions.org/workforce-intelligence.html>