



March 2019 Labor Market Report - Workforce Solutions Lower Rio

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) released the March 2019 Labor Market and Employment reports. The seasonally adjusted Texas and National unemployment rates held steady at 3.8%.

Statewide Overview for March Texas had a net gain of 22,600 nonagricultural jobs in March, and has added 271,000 in the past year (seasonally adjusted). This represents a 2.2% annual employment growth rate.

Goods-Producing employment increased by 2,300 jobs in March, and a total of 71,600 jobs were added in the past twelve months. The Construction sector had the best performance last month, with a gain of 5,100 jobs, and total employment of 759,500 in Texas. The Goods Producing sector has seen a 3.9% growth rate over the past twelve months.

The Service sectors in total gained 20,300 jobs in March and a total of 199,400 jobs in the past year. This sector is growing at a 1.9% annual rate. The Leisure & Hospitality sector led in March, with an estimated 8,600 employees added.

Regional Unemployment Recap: The March data shows the unemployment rates decreasing across our region at the county and city levels. This is a normal trend in March, as shown on the attached unemployment trend graph.

Counties:

- Hidalgo County decreased by 1.0%, to 5.7%
- Cameron County decreased by .8 %, to 5.5%
- Starr County decreased by 1.5%, to 9.0%
- Willacy County decreased by 1.3% to 8.2%
- Webb County decreased by .4% to 3.8%

Cities:

- McAllen had the lowest unemployment rate in the RGV with 4.1%, a decrease of .5%
- Edinburg was second, at 4.2%, a decrease of .6%
- Harlingen was third at 5.0%, a decrease of .8%
- Laredo again had the lowest rate in our border region, at 3.8%, a decrease of 0.4% from February

*We typically experience a steady decline in our city and county unemployment rates from February to May. **However, most of our cities and counties are experiencing significant improvements in their unemployment rates ranging from 1% to 2% lower than a year ago.**

Many businesses here continue to report challenges recruiting and retaining employees, and we continue to see upward wage pressure.

Hidalgo, Cameron, and Webb County MSA Regional Employment Change Estimates for March 2019:

Employment Sectors	McAllen MSA	Brownsville MSA	Laredo MSA	Total Region
Healthcare & Private Education	2,100	400	200	2,700
Leisure & Hospitality	500	600	100	1,200
Government (Public Ed, Law Enforcement)	400	300	100	800
Professional & Business Services	100		100	200
Mining & Construction				
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	400	100	200	700
Manufacturing	-100			-100
Information			100	100
Financial Activities		100		100
Other Services	-100			-100
Total All Non-Agriculture Sectors:	3,300	1,500	800	5,600

The primary contributor to the February employment gains in our region was the Healthcare sector with an estimated 2,700 more jobs, followed by Leisure & Hospitality with a gain of 1,200 jobs.

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