



Gulf Coast Workforce Board  
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## **COVID-19 PANDEMIC “DISASTROUS” FOR HOUSTON ECONOMY 312,000 LOST JOBS BIGGEST EVER ONE-MONTH DECLINE ON RECORD**

(HOUSTON) The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and resulting stay-at-home orders, had a disastrous effect on Houston’s workforce in April, according to data released by Workforce Solutions Friday morning. Job losses were reported across all eleven economic sectors that make up the local workforce.

“Not surprisingly, customer-facing industries were the hardest hit,” said Parker Harvey regional economist at Workforce Solutions. “Leisure and Hospitality, which includes restaurants, bars and hotels, accounted for one out of every three jobs lost in April.” Harvey pointed out that under normal economic conditions, this industry would have added jobs without fail, “March and April now serve as the first two exceptions to this trend in our records.”

Not-seasonally adjusted unemployment jumped nearly nine points from March to an all-time record high 14.2 percent. More than 452,000 Houston-area workers are now unemployed. “There’s no two ways about it, the pandemic has been disastrous for the local economy,” Harvey said. “The period of seeing big leaps in reported job losses and unemployment claims is probably behind us, when the trend will start to reverse is not at all certain.”

“Despite the pandemic, Workforce Solutions continues its mission of matching employers with qualified job candidates across Houston and the Gulf Coast region,” said Michelle Castrow, a manager at the regional public workforce development agency. She added that some companies are still hiring despite the downturn, “We’re working with our employer partners daily and posting new job openings to [wrksolutions.com/jobsnow](http://wrksolutions.com/jobsnow).”

“If you are receiving unemployment benefits, we highly recommend registering in [www.workintexas.com](http://www.workintexas.com) today to find new career opportunities and prevent any disruption to your benefits when the requirement to look for work is reinstated,” Castrow said.

Additional labor market information including the detailed February report can be found at [wrksolutions.com/localstats](http://wrksolutions.com/localstats). The Texas Workforce Commission will release employment data for May on June 20, 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.

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