

Wharton County

Labor Market Information

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County Employment Data*

Wharton County's unemployment rate was 5.2 percent in August 2026, up 0.5 percentage points from one year earlier. The county's rate remained above both the Texas rate of 4.6 percent and the U.S. rate of 4.3 percent.

Total covered employment in Wharton County declined by 418 jobs (2.6 percent) during the first quarter of 2026. Although the county typically experiences seasonal first-quarter contraction, this decline exceeded its historical average of 1.6 percent. Only three of the 11 major industry sectors added jobs during the quarter, with the only substantial gain occurring in Other Services, up 23 jobs (8.7 percent). The largest quarterly losses occurred in:

Natural Resources and Mining: -158 jobs (-7.4 percent)
Education and Health Services: -115 jobs (-4.9 percent)

On a year-over-year basis, Wharton County lost 783 jobs (4.8 percent) between the first quarters of 2025 and 2026, marking its largest annual decline since the pandemic. Seven of the 11 major industry sectors lost jobs over the year. The largest declines occurred in:

Education and Health Services: -329 jobs (-12.9 percent)
Construction: -264 jobs (-28.7 percent)
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities: -113 jobs (-2.8 percent)

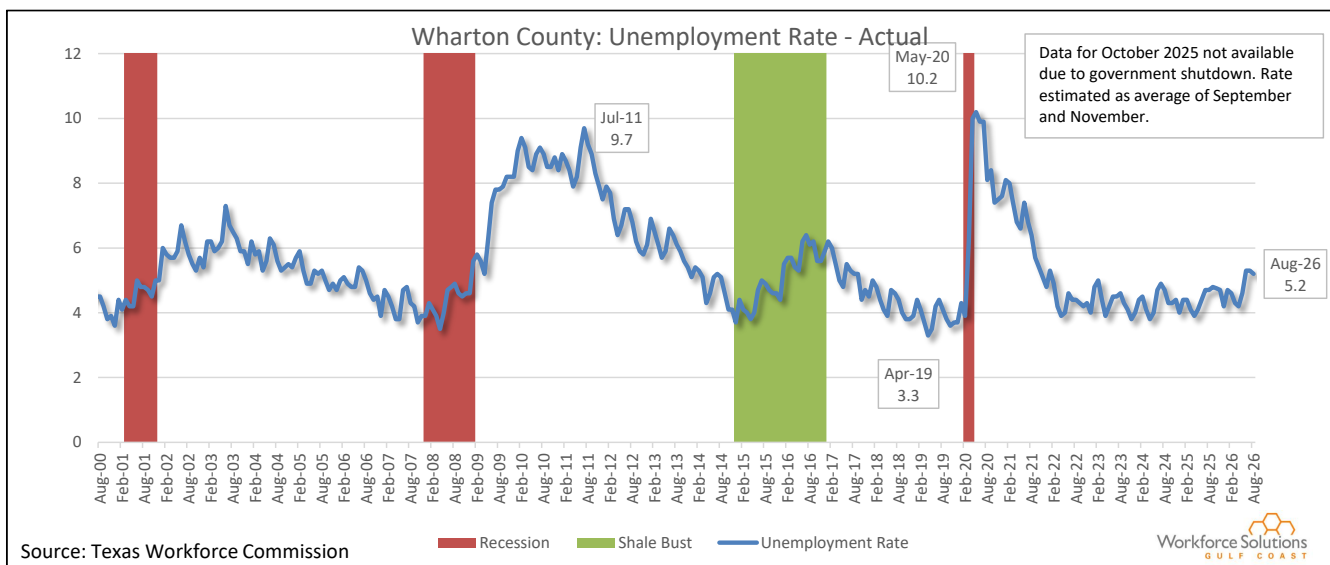
The only notable annual gains occurred in:

Professional and Business Services: +33 jobs (+5.8 percent)
Other Services: +27 jobs (+10.3 percent)

Overall, Wharton County entered 2026 with broad-based labor-market weakness. The first-quarter decline was larger than the county's normal seasonal contraction, while the annual loss was widespread and the most severe since the pandemic. Declines in Education and Health Services and Construction were especially significant and accounted for most of the annual contraction. The increase in unemployment from one year earlier, together with falling payroll employment, further indicates a deterioration in local labor-market conditions. Although Professional and Business Services and Other Services added jobs, these sectors were too small to offset losses elsewhere.

Additional details are provided on pages 2-7.

	AUG 2026	JULY 2026	AUG 2025
Civilian Labor Force	19,499	19,426	19,580
Employed	18,486	18,399	18,661
Unemployed	1,013	1,27	919
Unemployment Rate	5.2%	5.3%	4.7%
Comparative Actual Rates			
Texas	4.6%	4.8%	4.6%
U.S.	4.3%	4.4%	4.5%



*Estimates reflect actual (not seasonal adjusted) data. Civilian Labor Force includes wage and salary workers, self-employed, unpaid family, domestics in private households, agricultural workers, workers involved in labor disputes and the unemployed, all by place of residence. Covered employment data compiled from 1st quarter 2026 contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. Source: Texas Workforce Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. All data is subject to revision.

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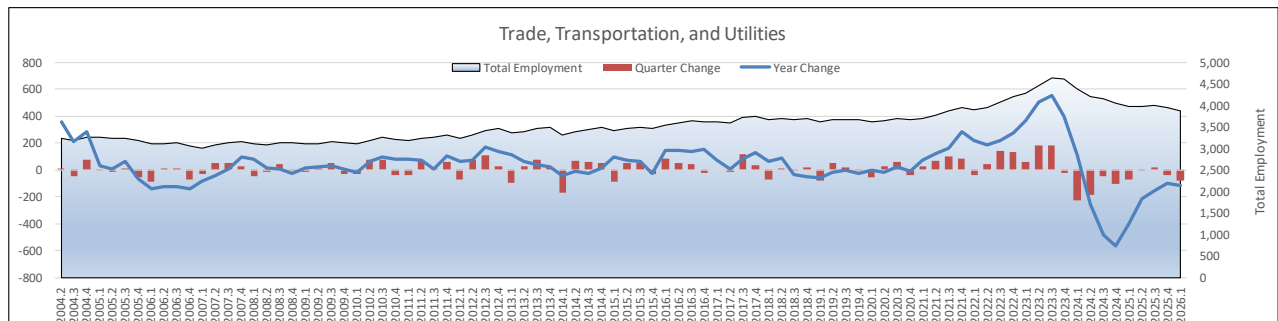
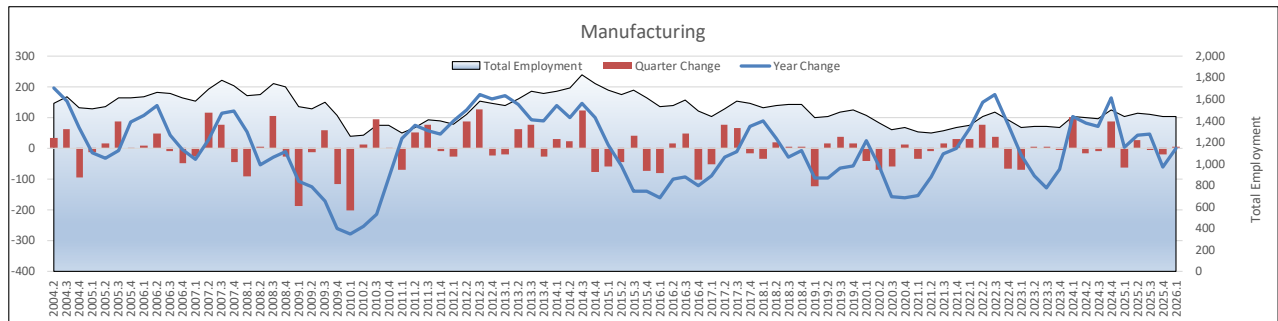
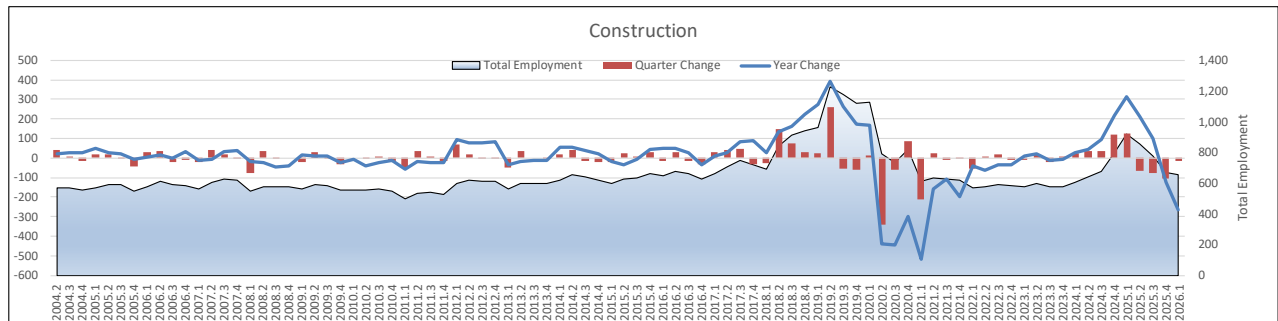
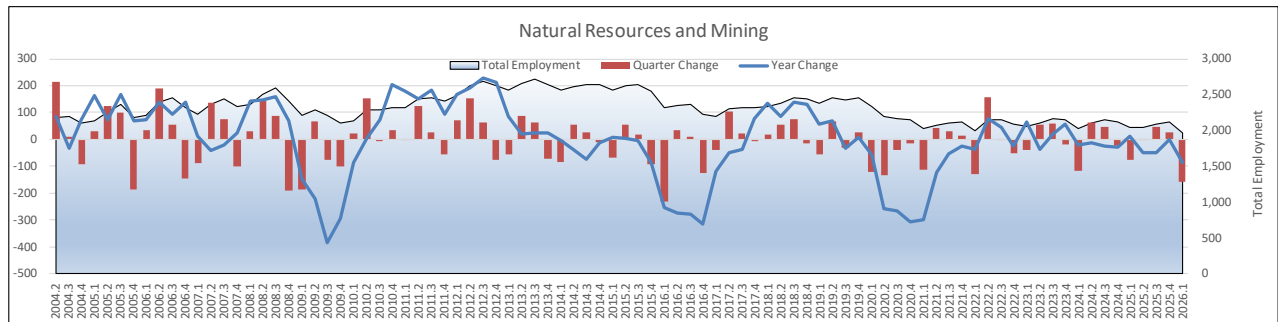
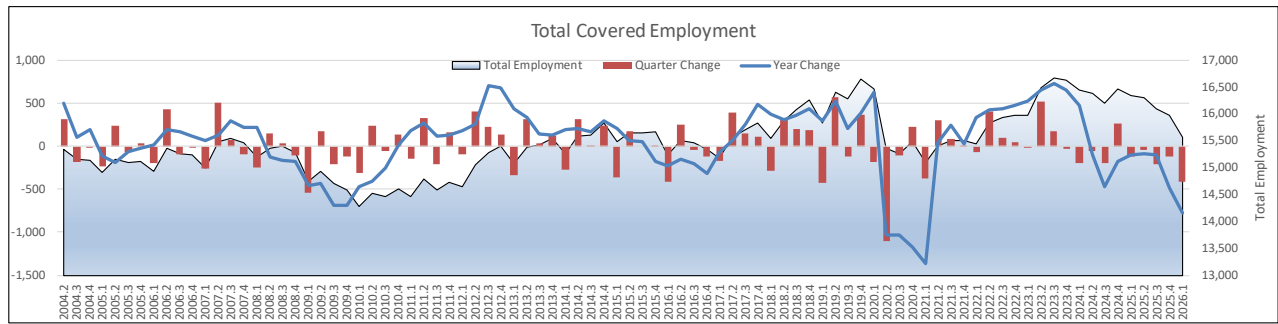
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Industrial Sector	Number of Jobs			Quarter Chg.		Annual Chg.		Avg Wkly Wage*
	1ST QTR 2026	4TH QTR 2025	1ST QTR 2025	Actual	%	Actual	%	
Total Employment	15,558	15,976	16,341	-418	-2.6%	-783	-4.8%	\$1,021
Natural Resources & Mining	1,963	2,121	2,048	-158	-7.4%	-85	-4.2%	\$1,133
Construction	655	672	919	-17	-2.5%	-264	-28.7%	\$1,141
Manufacturing	1,441	1,440	1,441	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	\$1,117
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	3,869	3,952	3,982	-83	-2.1%	-113	-2.8%	\$1,082
Information	32	45	51	-13	-28.9%	-19	-37.3%	\$1,024
Financial Activities	470	471	478	-1	-0.2%	-8	-1.7%	\$1,576
Professional & Business Services	603	608	570	-5	-0.8%	33	5.8%	\$1,056
Education & Health Services	2,212	2,327	2,541	-115	-4.9%	-329	-12.9%	\$1,053
Leisure & Hospitality	1,288	1,287	1,278	1	0.1%	10	0.8%	\$357
Other Services	288	265	261	23	8.7%	27	10.3%	\$827
Nonclassifiable	8	9	3	-1	-11.1%	5	166.7%	\$562
Public Administration	2,728	2,779	2,770	-51	-1.8%	-42	-1.5%	\$982
Federal Government	92	90	92	2	2.2%	0	0.0%	\$1,493
State Government	102	101	103	1	1.0%	-1	-1.0%	\$1,264
Local Government	2,534	2,588	2,575	-54	-2.1%	-41	-1.6%	\$952

*Wages compiled from 1st quarter 2026 contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. Data source: the Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market and Career Information Department in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

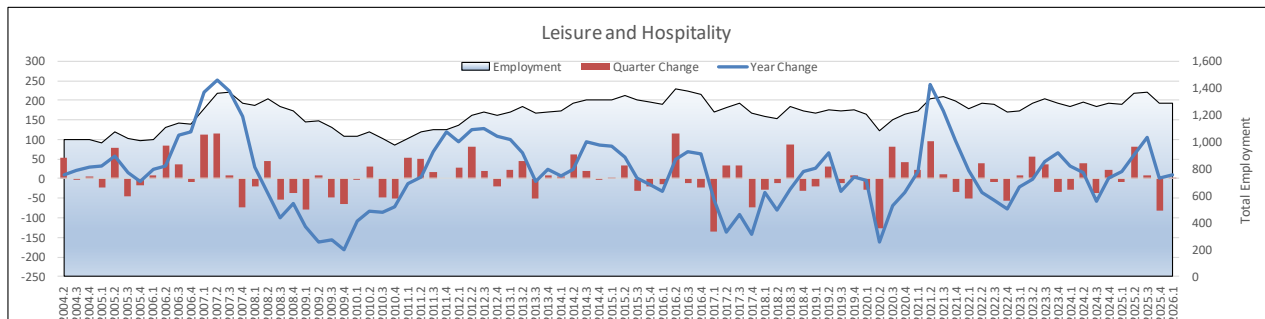
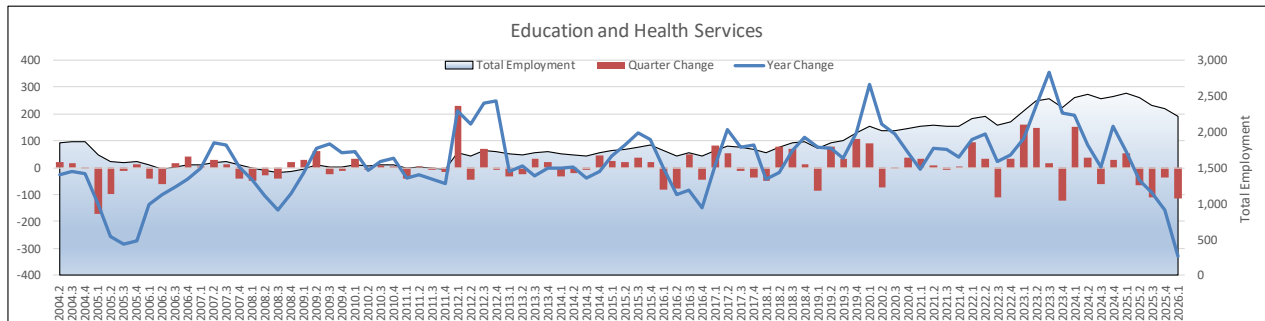
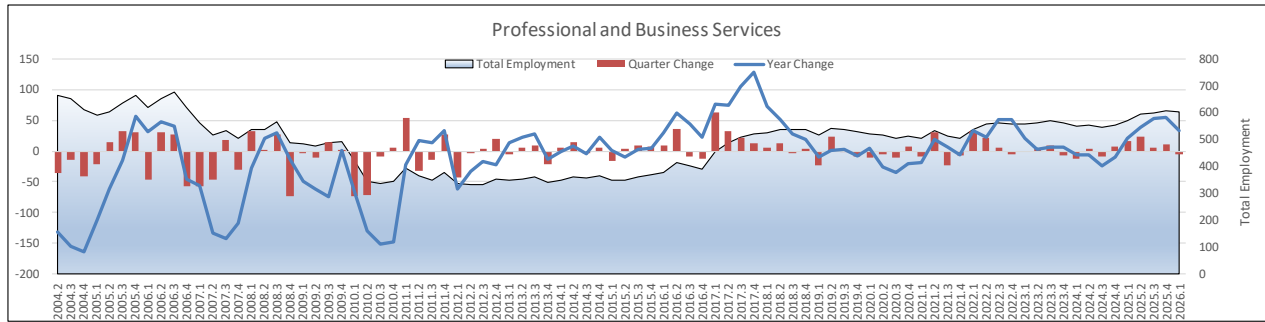
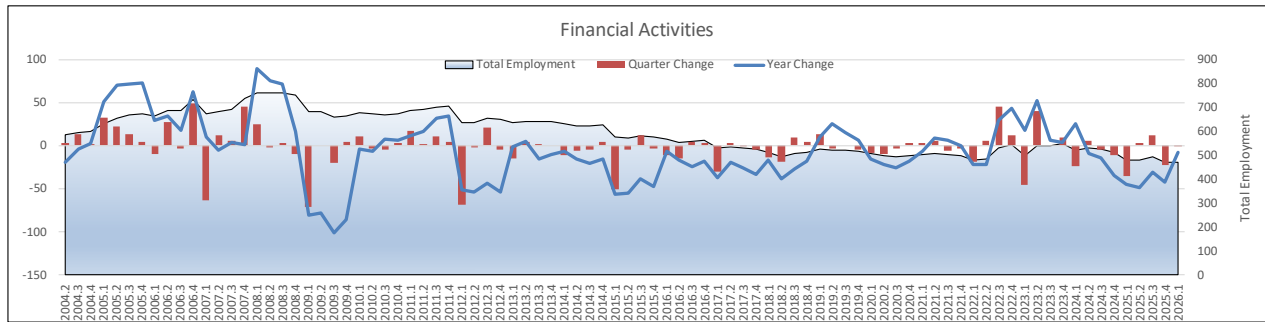
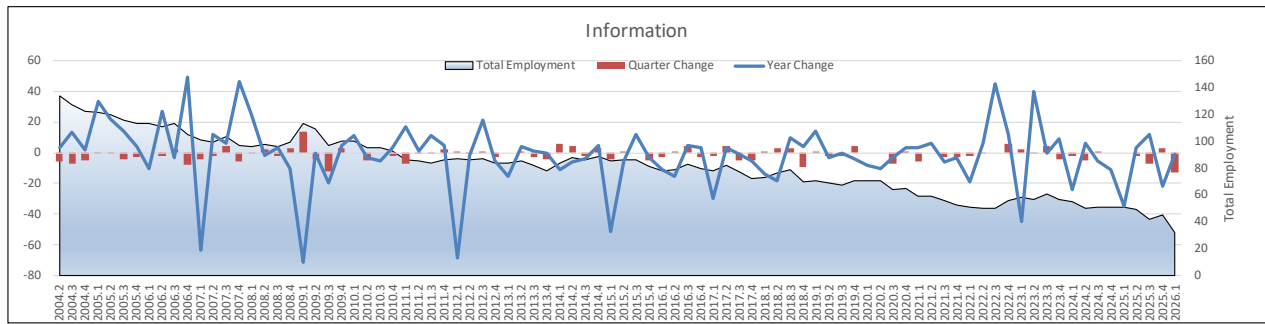
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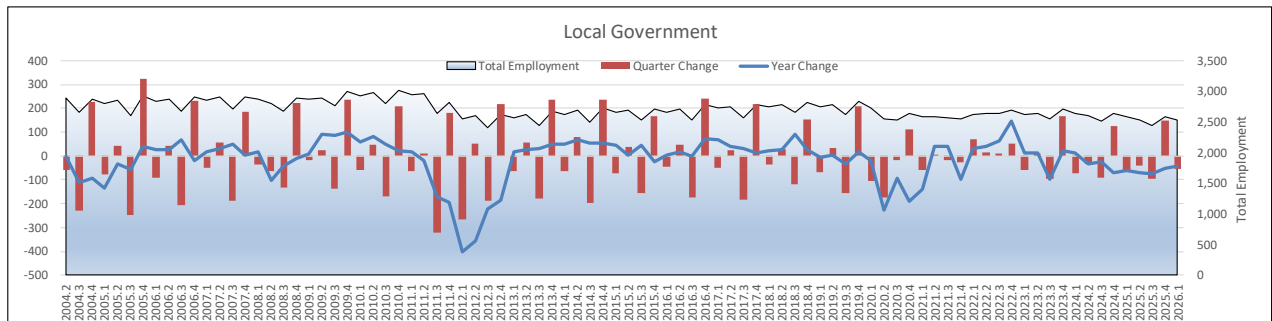
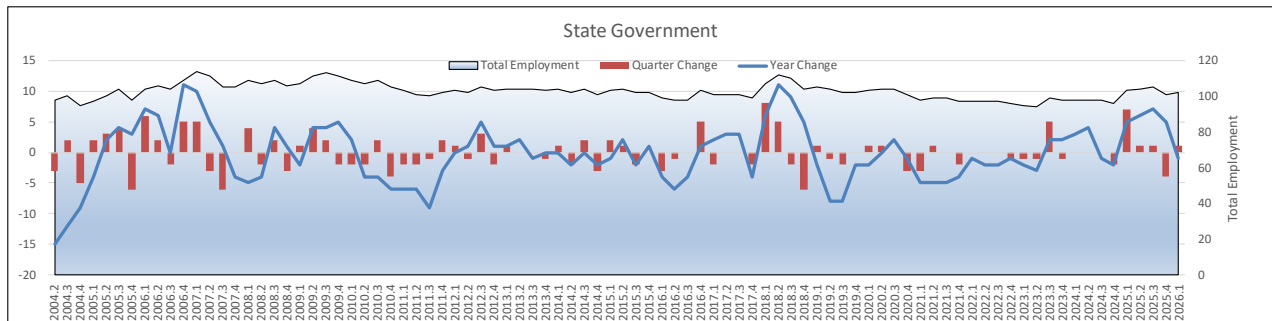
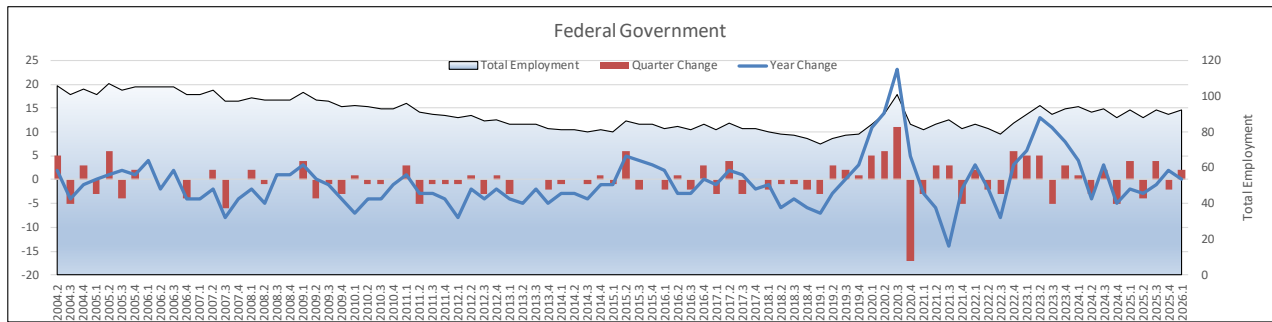
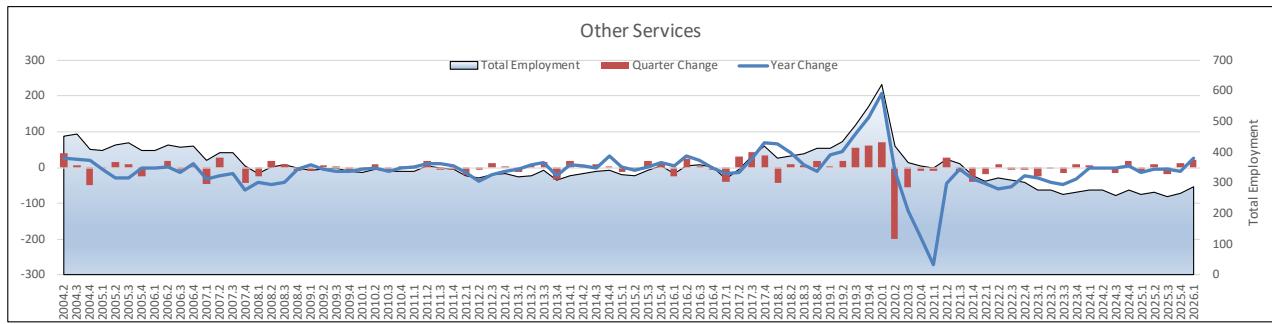
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Historical Employment Highlights

	All-Time High	All-Time High Quarter	All-Time Low	All-Time Low Qtr
Total	16,669	2023.3	14,282	2010.1
Natural Resources and Mining	2,717	2013.3	1,963	2026.1
Construction	1,228	2019.2	500	2011.1
Manufacturing	1,822	2014.3	1,248	2010.1
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	4,635	2023.3	2,875	2003.2
Information	143	2003.3	32	2026.1
Financial Activities	762	2008.3	470	2026.1
Professional and Business Services	805	2003.3	331	2012.2
Education and Health Services	2,541	2025.1	1,427	2008.3
Leisure and Hospitality	1,392	2016.2	963	2004.1
Other Services	620	2020.1	254	2025.3
Federal Government	107	2005.2	73	2019.1
State Government	114	2007.1	94	2023.2
Local Government	3,011	2010.4	2,409	2012.3

Average Change from Previous Quarter

	1st Qtr Avg Chg #	1st Qtr Avg Chg %	2nd Qtr Avg Chg #	2nd Qtr Avg Chg %
Total	-244	-1.6%	248	1.7%
Natural Resources and Mining	-62	-2.7%	93	4.2%
Construction	-9	-1.3%	28	5.2%
Manufacturing	-42	-2.7%	24	1.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	-32	-1.0%	30	0.9%
Information	-1	-1.7%	-1	-0.7%
Financial Activities	-17	-2.7%	3	0.5%
Professional and Business Services	-8	-0.8%	1	0.3%
Education and Health Services	10	0.5%	7	0.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	-9	-0.6%	45	3.9%
Other Services	-7	-2.2%	4	2.1%
Federal Government	0	0.1%	1	1.4%
State Government	1	1.1%	0	0.0%
Local Government	-63	-2.2%	13	0.5%

Average Change from Previous Quarter

	3rd Qtr Avg Chg #	3rd Qtr Avg Chg %	4th Qtr Avg Chg #	4th Qtr Avg Chg %
Total	-8	-0.1%	66	0.4%
Natural Resources and Mining	35	1.5%	-68	-2.8%
Construction	-3	-0.3%	-1	-0.3%
Manufacturing	50	3.3%	-28	-1.6%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	52	1.5%	4	0.1%
Information	-1	-1.8%	-2	-1.9%
Financial Activities	5	0.8%	5	0.7%
Professional and Business Services	4	0.7%	-8	-1.0%
Education and Health Services	-1	0.1%	5	0.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	0	0.0%	-21	-1.7%
Other Services	2	0.5%	-6	-1.3%
Federal Government	-1	-0.6%	-1	-0.8%
State Government	0	0.3%	-2	-1.7%
Local Government	-149	-5.3%	188	7.2%

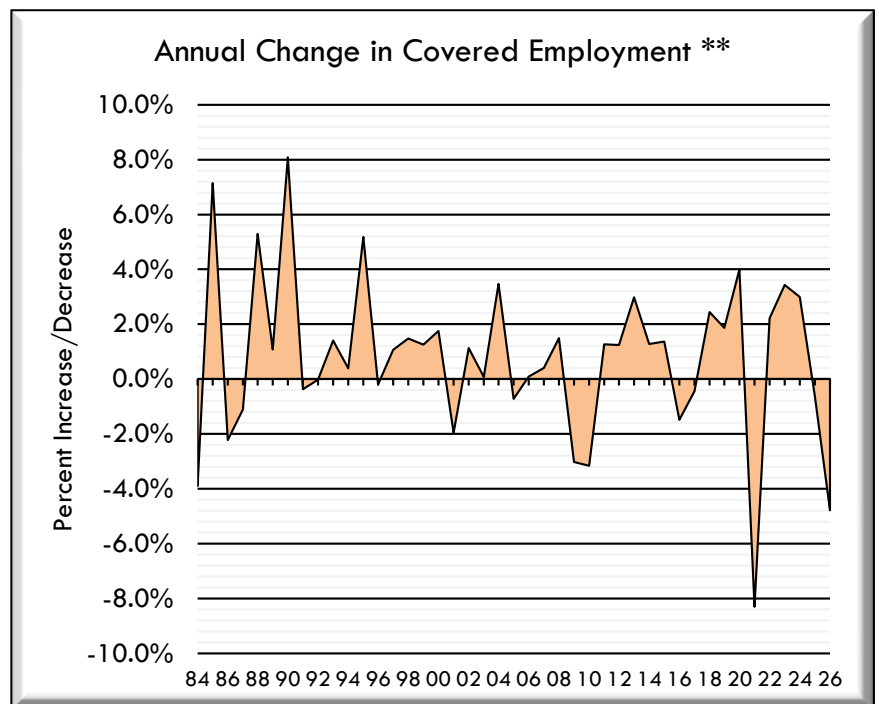
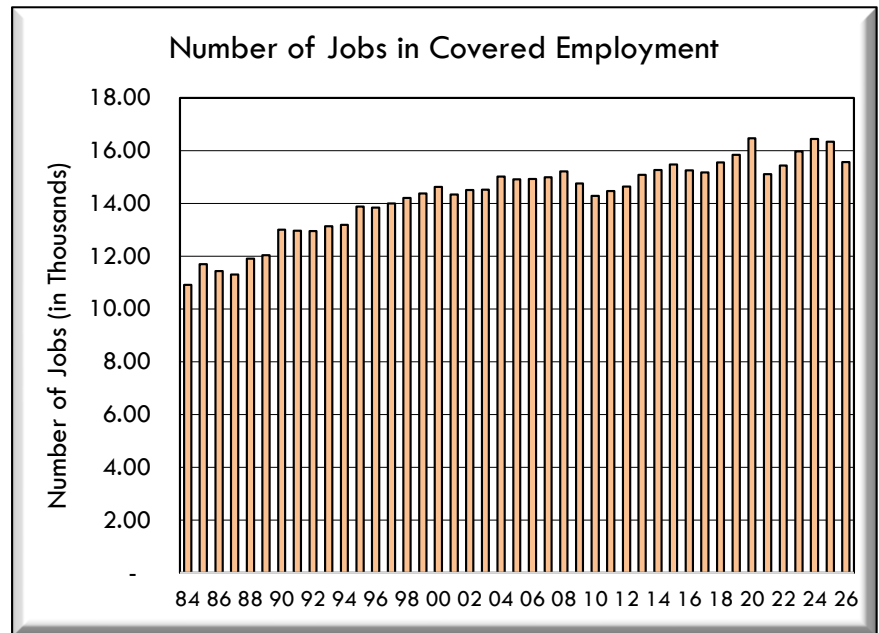
Covered employment data compiled from contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. Source: Texas Workforce Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Historical data was only available for second quarter 2003 and forward. All data is subject to revision.

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Wharton County 1983-2026 Covered Employment**

YEAR	JOBS	+ / (-)	% +/-
83	11,356		
84	10,913	(443)	-3.9%
85	11,693	780	7.1%
86	11,433	(260)	-2.2%
87	11,306	(127)	-1.1%
88	11,905	599	5.3%
89	12,034	129	1.1%
90	13,007	973	8.1%
91	12,958	(49)	-0.4%
92	12,955	(3)	0.0%
93	13,137	182	1.4%
94	13,189	52	0.4%
95	13,872	683	5.2%
96	13,845	(27)	-0.2%
97	13,992	147	1.1%
98	14,199	207	1.5%
99	14,377	178	1.3%
00	14,629	252	1.8%
01	14,342	(287)	-2.0%
02	14,504	162	1.1%
03	14,515	11	0.1%
04	15,019	504	3.5%
05	14,911	(108)	-0.7%
06	14,925	14	0.1%
07	14,985	60	0.4%
08	15,209	224	1.5%
09	14,749	(460)	-3.0%
10	14,282	(467)	-3.2%
11	14,462	180	1.3%
12	14,641	179	1.2%
13	15,078	437	3.0%
14	15,270	192	1.3%
15	15,478	208	1.4%
16	15,247	(231)	-1.5%
17	15,178	(69)	-0.5%
18	15,549	371	2.4%
19	15,839	290	1.9%
20	16,471	632	4.0%
21	15,104	(1,367)	-8.3%
22	15,438	334	2.2%
23	15,967	529	3.4%
24	16,445	478	3.0%
25	16,341	(104)	-0.6%
26	15,558	(783)	-4.8%



**Data Compiled from 1st quarter contribution and wage reports submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission by employers' subject to the Texas Unemployment Compensation Act. For more information on a specific industry, please call 832/681-2535. Data source: the Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market and Career Information Department in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

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Gulf Coast** 2025 Wages*

(High-Skill High-Growth Occupations Targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board)

Std. Occ. Code	Occupation	Average Hourly Wage	Average Annual Wage	Employment
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	\$45.86	\$95,386	28,750
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	\$26.34	\$54,782	15,230
19-4021	Biological Technicians	\$25.84	\$53,744	1,660
43-3031	Bookkeepers, Acctg and Auditing Clerks	\$25.08	\$52,163	26,620
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	\$30.77	\$64,003	7,530
53-3052	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	\$23.81	\$49,528	3,420
13-1020	Buyers and Purchasing Agents	\$39.17	\$81,470	10,990
47-2031	Carpenters	\$25.47	\$52,975	9,700
41-2011	Cashiers	\$14.46	\$30,074	56,290
39-9011	Childcare Workers	\$14.44	\$30,033	8,820
17-2051	Civil Engineer	\$53.47	\$111,213	12,200
15-1232	Computer User Support Specialists	\$30.15	\$62,706	12,980
47-2061	Construction Laborers	\$21.06	\$43,800	34,510
35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	\$17.03	\$35,414	5,000
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	\$15.84	\$32,938	33,180
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	\$20.83	\$43,328	66,170
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	\$40.16	\$83,541	4,490
47-3013	Electrician Helpers	\$21.33	\$44,357	1,830
47-2111	Electricians	\$29.60	\$61,574	19,980
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	\$36.71	\$76,367	7,680
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	\$13.27	\$27,601	108,070
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	\$35.04	\$72,889	37,870
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	\$24.31	\$50,556	23,290
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	\$15.94	\$33,156	16,660
11-9051	Food Service Managers	\$33.35	\$69,374	5,130
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	\$70.07	\$145,740	98,820
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	\$19.53	\$41,255	5,540
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics	\$28.98	\$60,282	7,780
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	\$32.99	\$68,617	18,630
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operator	\$21.95	\$45,652	21,160
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$15.70	\$32,658	49,540
53-7062	Laborers and Freight Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$19.14	\$39,820	53,160
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	\$31.31	\$65,117	11,150
11-9081	Lodging Managers	\$35.49	\$73,827	780
51-4041	Machinists	\$29.98	\$62,351	8,250
11-2021	Marketing Managers	\$77.60	\$161,401	8,980
31-9092	Medical Assistants	\$19.97	\$41,532	18,580
49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	\$32.46	\$67,511	5,400
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	\$19.38	\$40,316	19,690
19-5011	Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	\$43.34	\$90,153	5,730
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	\$20.78	\$43,216	50,990
29-1051	Pharmacists	\$65.90	\$137,073	6,500
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	\$30.66	\$63,782	11,090
33-3051	Police and Sherriff's Patrol Officers	\$35.62	\$74,090	16,560
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	\$29.43	\$61,210	8,940
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	\$17.19	\$35,760	17,430
29-1141	Registered Nurses	\$48.13	\$100,112	66,750
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	\$16.64	\$34,610	80,470
47-5071	Roustabouts, Oil and Gas	\$24.01	\$49,931	6,040
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, except Technical and Scientific Products	\$39.67	\$82,520	25,940
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	\$22.72	\$47,248	34,870
33-9032	Security Guards	\$18.46	\$34,802	29,550
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	\$18.57	\$38,630	74,310
53-1047	Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Exc.Aircraft Cargo Handling	\$31.40	\$65,307	15,500
53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy an Tractor-Trailer	\$27.93	\$58,091	50,590
53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	\$23.42	\$48,712	19,220
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	\$28.60	\$59,491	16,090

*Data compiled by the Texas Workforce Commission, LMCI Dept. in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics as part of the Occupational Employment Survey. Employment is the estimate of employment based upon the sample, not the sample employment. Wages for the OES survey are straight-time, gross pay, exclusive of premium pay. Base rate, cost-of-living allowances, guaranteed pay, hazardous-duty pay, incentive pay including commissions and production bonuses, tips, and on-call pay are included. Excluded are back pay, jury duty pay, overtime pay, severance pay, shift differentials, nonproduction bonuses, employer cost of supplementary benefits, and tuition reimbursements. **Data by individual county is not available for many occupations. The Gulf Coast Region is defined as Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton Counties.