



Gulf Coast Workforce Board
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MOST MAJOR HOUSTON INDUSTRIES SHED JOBS OVER THE PAST YEAR

(HOUSTON, Texas, May 26, 2026) Houston-area employers added a below-average 5,000 positions in April, including seasonal jobs, according to numbers released Friday by Workforce Solutions - Gulf Coast. Excluding seasonal jobs, employment fell by 3,500 jobs over the month marking the first April-decline since 2020 at the start of the pandemic.

Professional and Business Services, which includes white-collar and professional occupations as well as support roles, accounted for the bulk of the month's gains with 5,800 new positions, its third-strongest April on record. Construction added another 1,200 jobs despite historically tending to lose jobs during April.

Several major industries lost ground in April offsetting gains in Professional and Business Services and Construction. Financial Activities posted its worst April since 2020, shedding 1,000 jobs over the month. Government employment also declined by 1,000 with losses concentrated within local government administration and public education.

In addition to April's tepid over-the-month job growth, over the year trends "continue to be of even greater concern" according to Parker Harvey, Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast's Manager of Regional Economic Analysis. He noted that "the slowdown has become more pronounced over the past year with Houston adding just 7,700 jobs between April 2025 and April of this year versus a year prior when that figure was 52,000. Moreover, virtually all of Houston's year-over-year job growth is currently coming from just three sectors meaning the margin for error is slim going forward."

Mining and Logging, also known as upstream oil and gas, has lost 5,400 positions over the past year. Harvey noted that "higher oil prices no longer translate into broad Houston hiring the way they once did as energy companies prioritize efficiency and capital discipline." Including Mining and Logging, seven of the region's eleven major industry sectors are negative year over year reflecting a labor market increasingly dependent on a small number of industries to generate growth.

Houston's unemployment rate dipped to 4.3 percent in April from 4.4 percent in March but remained above both the state and national rates of 4.0 percent. Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast currently forecasts the region will add 40,000 jobs by the end of 2026, though the region's ability to meet that forecast increasingly depends on continued hiring in a small number of industries.

Additional labor market information, including the detailed April report, can be found online at <https://www.wrksolutions.com/regional-economic-data/houston-area-employment-situation>. The Texas Workforce Commission will release May employment data on June 20, 2026.

ABOUT WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS: [Workforce Solutions](#) is dedicated to keeping the Texas 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 – www.WorkInTexas.com.

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