

Texas Workforce Press Release

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Unemployment Rate Declines as Texas Employers Add Jobs *Annual Growth of 153,500 Jobs in 2005*

AUSTIN - The December unemployment rate of 5.1 percent represented a two-tenths of a percentage point decrease from the November rate of 5.3 percent. Seasonally Adjusted Nonagricultural Employment in Texas rose by 13,400 jobs in December, which marked sixteen straight months of over-the-month employment increases. Annual growth for Total Nonagricultural Employment ended December at 153,500 jobs, for an annual growth rate of 1.6 percent.

“The brightest news for the year is significant job growth across every industry sector,” said Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Chair Diane Rath. “When employers add jobs as they did throughout 2005, more opportunities are available for Texans in the workforce.”

Employment in Education & Health Services recorded a gain of 3,800 jobs in December and was responsible for the largest share of the employment increase for the month. Education & Health Services added 25,100 jobs since December 2004.

Employment in Professional & Business Services posted a gain of 2,400 positions in December. The annual growth rate of 3.3 percent in this sector represented a boost of 36,100 jobs over the year. This was the largest annual growth rate since September 2004.

Employment in Construction jumped by 1,600 positions in December for a total of 17,200 jobs over the year. The annual growth rate in Construction rose to 3.2 percent in December and has remained in positive territory since March 2005.

“As the economy expands, Texas employers continue to add jobs to meet the demands of the marketplace,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Ron Lehman. “A 1.6 percent annual job growth rate spread across all industries is an encouraging economic indicator.”

Employment in Leisure & Hospitality added 2,600 positions in December. The annual growth rate rose to 2.2 percent, an increase of 19,700 positions over the year. This was the largest annual growth rate since February 2005.

Natural Resources & Mining employment ended 2005 with an increase of 500 jobs in December. A total of 4,200 positions were added over the year, bringing the annual growth rate to 2.7 percent in December.

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December Unemployment

“The lower unemployment rate is directly tied to the availability of jobs,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton. “The Texas labor force is 11.3 million strong, and with job growth, opportunities are available for all.”

Initial claims for unemployment compensation in December were 63,436, down 30.6 percent from December 2004 and down 19.2 percent from December 2003.

**Civilian Labor Force Estimates for Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas
Not Seasonally Adjusted (In Thousands)**

	December 2005*				November 2005				December 2004			
	C.L.F.	Emp.	Unemp.	Rate	C.L.F.	Emp.	Unemp.	Rate	C.L.F.	Emp.	Unemp.	Rate
United States	149,874	142,918	6,956	4.6	150,239	142,968	7,271.0	4.8	147,877	140,278	7,599.0	5.1
State of Texas	11,302.8	10,757.6	545.2	4.8	11,329.3	10,738.6	590.7	5.2	11,128.2	10,485.9	642.3	5.8
Abilene	84.0	81.0	3.0	3.6	84.3	81.1	3.2	3.8	81.4	77.8	3.6	4.4
Amarillo	131.1	126.7	4.4	3.3	131.5	126.8	4.7	3.6	129.0	123.8	5.2	4.0
Austin-Round Rock	804.5	773.0	31.5	3.9	809.9	775.7	34.2	4.2	785.4	748.6	36.8	4.7
Beaumont-Port Arthur	177.5	164.5	13.0	7.3	179.5	164.1	15.4	8.6	181.4	166.8	14.6	8.1
Brownsville-Harlingen	146.7	137.6	9.1	6.2	146.5	137.0	9.5	6.5	144.3	131.7	12.6	8.7
College Station-Bryan	105.1	101.2	3.9	3.7	106.4	102.0	4.4	4.1	103.4	99.2	4.2	4.0
Corpus Christi	197.5	187.6	9.9	5.0	197.2	186.7	10.5	5.3	198.5	185.7	12.8	6.4
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	3,043.2	2,902.3	140.9	4.6	3,049.0	2,896.3	152.7	5.0	2,999.5	2,833.6	165.9	5.5
Dallas-Plano-Irving MD	2,039.9	1,943.9	96.0	4.7	2,044.5	1,940.5	104.0	5.1	2,009.7	1,895.9	113.8	5.7
Fort Worth-Arlington MD	1,003.3	958.4	44.9	4.5	1,004.3	955.7	48.6	4.8	989.8	937.7	52.1	5.3
El Paso	302.3	284.1	18.2	6.0	303.2	284.0	19.2	6.3	292.9	269.8	23.1	7.9
Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land	2,653.0	2,512.6	140.4	5.3	2,657.9	2,501.9	156.0	5.9	2,599.7	2,445.2	154.5	5.9
Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood	151.6	144.1	7.5	5.0	152.3	144.2	8.1	5.3	147.4	139.5	7.9	5.3
Laredo	87.5	83.1	4.4	5.0	87.2	82.7	4.5	5.2	85.0	79.5	5.5	6.4
Longview	103.5	99.0	4.5	4.4	103.7	98.8	4.9	4.7	101.2	95.7	5.5	5.5
Lubbock	143.9	139.0	4.9	3.4	144.8	139.5	5.3	3.6	142.3	136.4	5.9	4.2
McAllen-Edinburg-Pharr	268.7	250.1	18.6	6.9	266.2	247.8	18.4	6.9	262.4	238.0	24.4	9.3
Midland	65.3	63.1	2.2	3.3	65.5	63.2	2.3	3.5	64.6	62.0	2.6	4.1
Odessa	62.3	59.8	2.5	4.0	62.5	59.9	2.6	4.2	61.8	58.5	3.3	5.3
San Angelo	55.4	53.4	2.0	3.6	55.7	53.5	2.2	4.0	53.2	50.8	2.4	4.5
San Antonio	903.2	864.4	38.8	4.3	904.7	862.5	42.2	4.7	890.1	843.2	46.9	5.3
Sherman-Denison	58.7	56.1	2.6	4.5	58.9	56.1	2.8	4.7	57.9	54.5	3.4	5.8
Texarkana	63.9	61.0	2.9	4.5	64.2	61.1	3.1	4.8	62.7	59.3	3.4	5.4
Tyler	97.3	93.3	4.0	4.1	97.7	93.3	4.4	4.5	95.9	90.8	5.1	5.3
Victoria	57.4	55.0	2.4	4.2	57.7	55.1	2.6	4.5	56.2	53.2	3.0	5.4
Waco	112.9	108.0	4.9	4.3	113.2	108.0	5.2	4.6	111.4	105.9	5.5	4.9
Wichita Falls	76.0	73.0	3.0	3.9	76.2	73.0	3.2	4.3	74.7	71.2	3.5	4.7

The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.

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