

Texas Workforce Press Release

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Holiday Season Offers Chance to Earn, Gain Work Experience



In this photo released by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), high school students (from left) Chance Everage, Royanne Hicks, Andrew Brandt and Amanda Sorenson measure and prepare to cut down Christmas trees as part of seasonal employment at Evergreen Farms Christmas Trees in Elgin. The holiday season is a popular time for job seekers to gain valuable work experience and earn extra money.

(TWC Photo by James A. Johnson)

AUSTIN — The holiday season is a jolly one for job seekers who gain valuable experience through temporary employment while earning extra cash.

Work opportunities abound during the holiday season as businesses brace for heightened holiday sales. Retail employers hire additional workers to prepare for the annual increase in holiday traffic. Between the months of September and December 2006, 93,500 jobs were added to the Texas labor market, creating opportunities for job seekers.

“Extra work around the holiday season benefits employers, employees and the economy as a whole,” said Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Chair Diane Rath. “Seasonal employment not only adds to an individual’s income, but in many, cases, a temporary job can be a springboard to a permanent career.”

The biggest workforce boosts for temporary workers typically are in the retail sector, along with transportation, warehousing and wholesale trade, and professional and business services. The last holiday season indicated a significant rise in the number of people employed across the state compared to reporting periods at other times during the year.

“Employers in many industries expand their workforces to accommodate heavier business traffic in many major industries,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Ron Lehman. “Gains are

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2-2-2-2 Seasonal Employment

evident in nearly every major industry, and the increase in sales inspires employers to hire seasonal workers to address their immediate needs.”

Among the most widely used resources that address the workforce demand is WorkInTexas.com, a powerful Web-based tool that matches employers from a variety of business sizes with full-time and part-time workers. Career resources, including information about résumé preparation, job-interview tips and current employment data also are offered on the Web site.

“It’s encouraging to see so many workers entering the labor force,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton. “Workers gain valuable workplace skills that are especially helpful in building a resume.”

Employers and their workers should be aware of specific laws associated with seasonal staffing and temporary work. They include:

- Temporary employees are subject to the same laws and protections as regular full- or part-time staff. Even if a worker’s job is scheduled to end at a specific time, temporary staff members are not contract labor.
- The Texas Payday Law requires that both temporary and regular employees receive their wages in full and in a timely manner. Employers cannot withhold any amount of a paycheck without prior written authorization from the employee, or unless authorized by state or federal law or by court order. Additionally, current minimum wage laws apply to wages earned.
- Employers must pay Unemployment Insurance taxes on their temporary employees. The wages earned must be reported and are subject to taxes. This law applies even though a temporary employee knows from the outset that the job will end at a set time, and the employee doesn’t plan to seek another job after that assignment has ended.
- Federal and Texas child labor laws ensure that children are not employed in an occupation or manner that is detrimental to their safety, health or well-being. Any individual under 18 years of age is defined as a child. Youths age 16 and 17 may perform any job not declared hazardous by the U.S. Department of Labor for unlimited hours. Youths age 14 and 15 may work outside school hours in various nonmanufacturing, nonmining, nonhazardous jobs under the following conditions: no more than three hours on a school day, 18 hours in a school week, eight hours on a nonschool day or 40 hours in a nonschool week. Except during the summer, 14- and 15-year-old employees may not begin work before 7 a.m. or work after 7 p.m.

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