

# HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

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## Houston posts job gains in February

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The Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown metropolitan area added 10,300 nonagricultural jobs in February — the largest gain since November 2008, the **Texas Workforce Commission** reported Thursday.

The unemployment rate fell slightly in February to 8.5 percent from 8.8 percent a month earlier. However, even with the added jobs, the region's workforce is down 3.1 percent, or 80,000 jobs, for the year.

The job growth was boosted particularly by the government sector, which added 4,100 new jobs. Sectors also making significant hires included the professional and business services (2,500); education and health services (2,300); construction (2,200); and leisure and hospitality (1,600).

That growth was offset by the loss of 2,400 jobs in the trade, transportation and utilities sector, led by retailers releasing additional holiday staff.

The Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown civilian labor force grew by 1,800 people between January and February, while the number of unemployed people fell by 8,600.

Statewide, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate held steady at 8.2 percent in February from the prior month. Texas lost 13,000 nonagricultural jobs, which offset the 12,600 job gains made in January, according to the TWC.

The nation's unemployment rate fell slightly in February to 10.4 percent from 10.6 percent in January.

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