

## Gaines Unemployment Rate Falls to 4.6 Percent in November

Front Page News - Published on: January 25, 2012

AUSTIN -- Gaines County's unemployment rate fell below the 5-percent margin for the first time in several months, according to a report from the Texas Workforce Commission late last week.

According to the TWC, Gaines County boasted a 4.6-percent unemployment rate for the month of November 2010, which is down from October's 5-percent rate and September's 5.8-percent rate.

"Texas continues to see signs of improvement in the labor market," said Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Chairman Tom Pauken in a press release issued by the governmental entity on Friday.

Texas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 7.8 percent in December, down from 8.1 percent in November and down from 8.3 percent in December 2010.

The Texas Civilian Labor Force grew by more than 17,000 individuals in December, and now stands at more than 12.3 million Texans.

Locally, in Gaines County, 7,440 persons were listed as being in the county's workforce. Of that total workforce, 7,097 people were classified as being "employed" during the month of November. A total of 343 people were classified as being "unemployed" during November, according to the report.

In October, Gaines County, according to TWC report, had a total workforce of 7,390 persons for the month of November, which was up from 7,260 persons in the month of October and 7,389 as reported during the month of September.

According to TWC reports, Gaines County, for the month of November, saw 7,023 persons classified as "employed" during the month and 367 persons listed as "unemployed."

Texas added 20,200 nonfarm jobs in December for a total of 204,500 jobs added over the year. Private employers in Texas added 10,100 jobs in December for a total of 260,000 private sector jobs added over the year. Texas has experienced positive annual job growth for the last 20 consecutive months with annual growth rates at or above 2.0 percent for the last seven months.

"Texas' unemployment rate has decreased for the third consecutive month, and now stands at 7.8 percent, which is the lowest since July 2009," said Pauken. "Our state's unemployment rate remains below the national unemployment rate of 8.5 percent."

The Leisure and Hospitality industry added 4,100 jobs in December, totaling

41,200 jobs added over the year. This resulted in a robust annual growth rate of 4.0 percent. Growth in the Manufacturing industry continued as this industry added 2,200 jobs in December for a total of 25,200 jobs over the year for an annual growth rate of 3.1 percent. The Mining and Logging industry expanded by 2,000 jobs over the month, totaling 40,700 jobs gained over the year. Large employment gains in Mining and Logging have resulted in this industry's annual growth rate ranking highest among all of the major industries at 18.7 percent.

"I am encouraged to see our state's unemployment rate continuing to drop," said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton. "TWC and our local workforce boards stand ready to help those seeking work in Texas find good jobs to provide for themselves and their families."

Employment in Financial Activities expanded by 2,100 jobs in December, totaling 18,000 jobs added over the year for a 2.9 percent annual job growth rate—the highest for that industry since March 2007. Professional and Business Services employment expanded by 1,600 jobs in December and added 53,100 jobs over the year. Having added jobs in nine of the past 12 months, the annual job growth rate for Professional and Business Services in December was 4.1 percent.

"Eight of the 11 major industries in Texas added jobs in December, and that's good news for job seekers," said TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar. "We encourage those looking for work to utilize TWC's services and resources, such as the state's online job database [WorkInTexas.com](http://WorkInTexas.com)."

The Midland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) had the lowest December unemployment rate in the state at 3.9 percent.

The Amarillo MSA came in second at 4.9 percent, and the Odessa MSA third at 5.0 percent (not seasonally adjusted).

Author: Sentinel Staff