

If you have any suggestions or content you would like to see, shoot us an email. Thanks!



Our Mission:

The mission of the South Plains workforce system is to meet the needs of the region's employers for a highly skilled workforce by educating and preparing workers.

July 2022 Newsletter Lubbock MSA and Regional Unemployment

Upcoming Events

- Workforce Solutions -
- South Plains -
- In-person Job Fair -

Lubbock's MSA unadjusted unemployment rate for June 2022 is 3.8%, up by 0.8% from May's adjusted rate of 3.0%. Austin-Round Rock recorded the lowest, not seasonally adjusted, unemployment rate at 3.1%, followed by Amarillo at 3.2% then College Station-Bryan and Midland both at 3.6%.

*Employment estimates released by TWC are produced in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. All estimates are subject to revision. To access this and more employment data, visit [TexasLMI.com](https://www.texaslmi.com).

The TWC Lubbock MSA and South Plains WDA Economic Profiles provide a breakdown of employment by industry. Click on the images to the right to access the profiles.

(Image located on page 3)

- TBD -
- Lubbock Memorial Civic Center -
- 10:00am - 2:00pm -
- Hiring Red, White and You -
- Veterans Job Fair -
- November 10, 2022 -
- 10am - 3pm -
- Lubbock Memorial Civic Center -

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CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

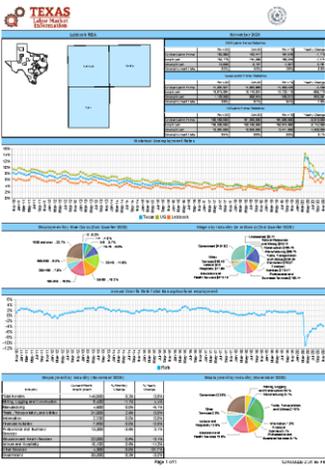
Metro Areas (Seasonally Adjusted)

Metro Areas	Apr 2017	Monthly Change	Annual Change	Annual % Change
Abilene MSA	68,100	100	700	1.0
Amarillo MSA	121,300	-1,100	1,200	1.0
Austin-Round Rock MSA	1,021,900	-400	29,300	3.0
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	164,000	900	-800	-0.5
Brownsville-Harlingen MSA	143,000	100	2,700	1.9
College Station-Bryan MSA	115,900	-400	2,500	2.2
Corpus Christi MSA	192,400	-100	1,400	0.7
Dallas-FW-Arlington MSA	3,582,400	-18,000	99,600	2.9
Dallas-Plano-Irving MD	2,555,000	-15,600	76,600	3.1
Fort Worth-Arlington MD	1,027,800	-3,200	22,600	2.2
El Paso MSA	317,000	400	9,200	3.0
Houston MSA	3,044,300	13,700	44,000	1.5
Killeen-Temple MSA	146,600	500	3,600	2.5
Laredo MSA	104,000	100	2,300	2.3
Longview MSA	96,700	300	-600	-0.6
Lubbock MSA	146,300	-1,000	800	0.5
McAllen MSA	256,700	600	4,900	1.9
Midland MSA	87,800	-100	100	0.1
Odessa MSA	69,800	100	-200	-0.3
San Angelo MSA	48,600	400	-500	-1.0
San Antonio MSA	1,035,600	3,800	24,800	2.5
Sherman-Denison MSA	47,000	100	1,000	2.2
Texarkana MSA	60,200	-500	-800	-1.3
Tyler MSA	106,200	400	2,300	2.2
Victoria MSA	42,000	200	-300	-0.7
Waco MSA	120,400	600	2,200	1.9
Wichita Falls MSA	58,000	400	-100	-0.2

Highlights

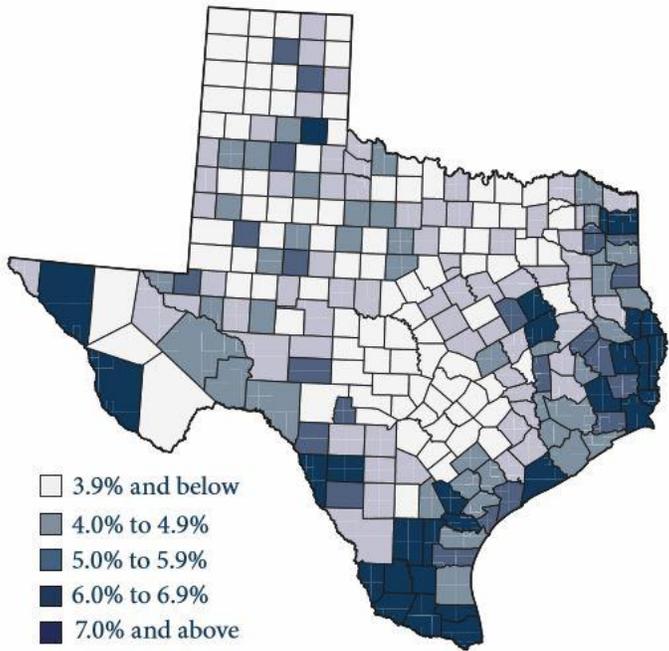
(MSA industry data are not seasonally adjusted)

- Seventeen of 26 areas grew in April for a combined increase of 22,700 jobs. Nineteen areas grew over the year, while seven areas contracted.
- The Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA accounted for more than half of all area employment gains over the month. The MSA increased its annual growth rate to 1.5 percent.
- The San Angelo MSA grew fastest in percentage terms with a 0.8 percent April expansion. Per not seasonally adjusted industry data, Retail Trade and Other Services each added 200 jobs over the month, while Government was down 200 positions.
- The Dallas-Plano-Irving MD led in actual and percentage job growth annually. Professional and Business Services led all major industries with 21,000 positions gained, followed by Leisure and Hospitality with 10,900 jobs added.
- The Beaumont-PA and the Texarkana MSAs lost the most jobs annually. The loss of 2,100 jobs in Retail was primarily responsible for the contraction in the Beaumont-PA MSA, while employment losses in Texarkana were spread across industries.

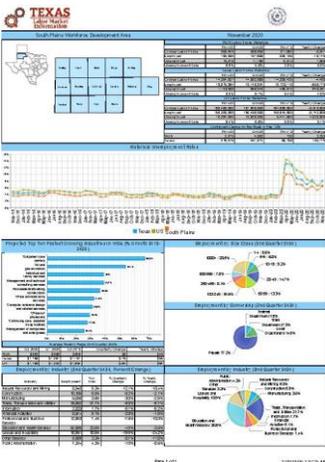


Click image to
view full report:
Lubbock Metropolitan
Statistical Area (MSA)

County Unemployment Rates



(Image located on page 6)



Click image to
view full report:
South Plains Regional

Workforce Development Area
(WDA)

2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
County	Rate								
Big Bend	1.8%								
Brewster	1.8%								
Dallam	1.8%								
Dawson	1.8%								
Deaf Smith	1.8%								
Dockery	1.8%								
Emery	1.8%								
Gardner	1.8%								
Haskell	1.8%								
Holmes	1.8%								
Irwell	1.8%								
King	1.8%								
Land	1.8%								
LeFlore	1.8%								
Liberty	1.8%								
Loop	1.8%								
Madison	1.8%								
Marshall	1.8%								
Mason	1.8%								
McCook	1.8%								
Midland	1.8%								
Monterey	1.8%								
Morris	1.8%								
Murray	1.8%								
Nolan	1.8%								
Oldham	1.8%								
Orange	1.8%								
Pecos	1.8%								
Reeves	1.8%								
Rockwall	1.8%								
Sherman	1.8%								
Sutton	1.8%								
Tarrant	1.8%								
Texas	1.8%								
Throckmorton	1.8%								
Tommy	1.8%								
Wade	1.8%								
Wheeler	1.8%								
Wichita	1.8%								
Wilbarger	1.8%								
Winkler	1.8%								
Woods	1.8%								
Worth	1.8%								
Yemen	1.8%								

**Click image to
view full report:**
Lubbock LAUS
County-by-County
Unemployment Rates

Pandemic Makes Application of WARN Act More Complex



By [Leah Shepherd](#) July 21, 2022



Employers must comply with federal and state laws on alerting employees about impending layoffs, but the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of remote work are making compliance more difficult. Appellate court rulings, changes in state law and district court rulings all are coming into play.

Federal Appellate Court Ruling

On June 15, a federal appellate court ruled that the COVID-19 pandemic is not a natural disaster that would relieve employers of their duty to give adequate warning before mass layoffs. In *Easom v. US Well Services*, former employees filed a class-action lawsuit after the company laid them off in 2020 without giving 60-days' notice.

The federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN Act) requires employers with 100 or more full-time workers to provide written notice at least 60 days before implementing a plant closing or mass layoff, unless the layoff is a direct result of a natural disaster or unforeseeable business circumstances.

The court found that the COVID-19 pandemic did not qualify as a natural disaster because Congress did not include words like "disease," "pandemic" or "virus" in the statutory language of the WARN Act. The court did not address the extent to which the "unforeseeable business circumstances" exception to the notice rule is available for COVID-19-related layoffs.

The employer bears the burden of proof that an exception has been met under the WARN Act. Floods, earthquakes, droughts, storms, tidal waves and tsunamis qualify as natural disasters for legal purposes.

Employers that violate the federal WARN Act must pay affected employees back pay for each day of violation.

The law applies when an employer closes a facility or discontinues an operating unit permanently or temporarily, affecting at least 50 employees at one worksite. A mass layoff occurs when a company lays off 500 or more workers at one worksite during a 30-day period, or when laying off 50-499 workers constitutes one-third of the employer's total active workforce at one worksite. However, the WARN Act does not apply if the layoffs last for less than six months.

The law "does not require an entire facility to be shut down to trigger. Rather, it can be triggered by the closure of one or more departments, teams, product lines or other organizationally distinct units, which results in employment losses of at least 50 full-time employees at the site," said Joshua Ditelberg, a lawyer with Seyfarth Shaw in Chicago.

The WARN Act does not cover:

- Part-time workers.
- Workers who retire, resign or are terminated for cause.
- Workers who are offered a transfer to another site of employment.

Update to New Jersey WARN Act

New Jersey passed amendments to its state WARN Act in 2020. Because of the pandemic, the effective date of these amendments was put on hold. New Jersey

employers should stay attuned to any updates or changes to the effective date.

The law will apply to employers with at least 100 employees, regardless of whether they are full time or part time. It will apply to mass layoffs of 50 or more employees. Employers will have to give 90-days' notice before a mass layoff.

Affected employees will be entitled to one week of severance pay for each year of service, regardless of whether they were part time or full time. Four additional weeks of severance pay will be required if the employer didn't give adequate notice. However, employers won't have to pay any severance to workers if the mass layoff was a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other States' WARN Laws

State WARN laws often have stricter requirements than the federal WARN Act, but they differ in their thresholds and definitions. "Most of them have at least some more pro-employee/easier-to-trigger provisions than federal WARN, but they are a hodgepodge," Ditelberg said.

Unlike New Jersey, Hawaii and Maine don't require severance pay under their state WARN laws, unless a company fails to give adequate notice.

The pandemic and subsequent economic downturn have impacted the outlook for these state laws.

"A number of states that had such statutes prior to the COVID-19 pandemic have considered making them easier to trigger, and in some cases have done so," Ditelberg said. "While we thus far have not seen a significant movement on the part of states that never have had a state WARN Act to enact one, with an economy that may be heading toward a recession, it would not be surprising for states to try to impose various costs of worker displacement on employers."

"Some states that had no enforcement mechanism, and therefore compliance with the state WARN statute was voluntary, are adding teeth to those statutes through mandatory compliance requirements and enforcement mechanisms, including administrative enforcement, private rights of action, [and] ability to recover lost wages and benefits, as well as attorney's fees and penalties," said Penny Ann Lieberman, an attorney with Jackson Lewis in White Plains, N.Y.

Remote Work and Extensive Travel

It may be confusing to know how to count your remote workers and those who travel extensively, such as salespeople and truck drivers. The U.S. Department of Labor's guidance states that such workers should be counted as part of the worksite from which their work is assigned or to which they report.

For example, let's say a company is headquartered in Seattle with 50 workers physically there. It has 300 remote employees throughout the country. All 350

workers must be counted as part of the Seattle worksite for the purposes of the federal WARN Act.

This stipulation is increasingly important for employers as the number of remote workers continues to grow.

On Feb. 7 in *Piron v. General Dynamics Information Technologies*, a U.S. district court found in favor of a group of remote workers who sought class-action certification, claiming their former employer violated the federal WARN Act by not giving them 60-days' notice before laying them off in 2019. The remote workers reported to and received assignments from a business unit in Falls Church, Va. The lead plaintiff worked at home in North Dakota, and several other plaintiffs worked at home in Virginia.

Texas Economy added 82,500 non-farm jobs in June 2022.

State unemployment rate is 4.1 percent for June

AUSTIN – In June 2022, Texas' unemployment rate was 4.1%, a decrease of 0.1% from May's rate of 4.2 percent.

Read the full [press release](#).

Sources:

Texas Labor Market Review

<https://texaslmi.com/api/GetHomeLinks/TLMR>

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Workforce Solutions South Plains Community Stakeholder

Our mailing address is:

Workforce Solutions South Plains Board Administration
1500 Broadway, Ste. 800, Lubbock, TX 79401
(806) 744-1987
www.workforcesouthplains.org

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