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## TEXAS LOSES 25,700 JOBS IN DECEMBER

Texas employers slashed payrolls by 25,700 jobs in December, while the unemployment rate rose 0.3 points to 6%. In November the state lost 11,300 jobs. Employers cut 8,100 jobs in the trade, transportation and utilities sector. Manufacturing payrolls fell by 8,000 jobs. Construction jobs dropped by 3,300. Professional and business services fell by 2,700. But the leisure and hospitality industry added 3,800 jobs. In 2008 as a whole, Texas added 153,600 jobs, while the US economy lost 2.6 million, the Texas Workforce Commission said. The Commission says state unemployment insurance is projected to have a \$447 million shortfall. While the fund was supposed to have \$861 million last October, it is projected to have had just \$414 million. Jobless claims will be paid, but the state may need to issue bonds next year to make up the shortfall. The Commission reported high call volume this week. "Due to the increased calls and workload, and the difficulties that customers are having reaching staff, TWC will not penalize claimants when they are unable to reach us in a timely manner," it said in a written statement.

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