

San Antonio reports lowest unemployment rate among big Texas cities

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Employment in the San Antonio metropolitan area improved in February as employers added 7,700 jobs during the month.

That's according to labor market information released by **Workforce Solutions Alamo**.

The San Antonio area's unemployment rate stood at 6 percent in February, which is down from 6.3 percent during January. This makes the San Antonio area the best-performing major metropolitan market in Texas in terms of unemployment figures. The San Antonio region fared better than Austin (6.3 percent), Houston (6.4 percent) and the Dallas-Fort Worth area (6.9 percent).

State and national unemployment figures for the month currently stand at 6.6 percent and 8.9 percent, respectively.

February's job gains in the San Antonio were attributed to growth in the government industry sector. Local schools added 4,300 jobs between January and February 2009 as workers were put back on the payrolls after the holiday breaks.

"Despite weaknesses in some sectors of our economy, the San Antonio area is doing better than the state and nation, overall, and that is a hopeful sign," says Workforce Solutions Alamo Executive Director Chakib Chehadi. "We continue to encourage both employers and job-seekers to utilize the services that we offer to them at no cost."

When comparing job figures in San Antonio between February 2009 and February 2008, however, the San Antonio market lost 8,000 jobs. Local employment contracted 0.1 percent.

The manufacturing sector posted an annual loss of 2,800 jobs, or a 5.8 percent reduction. The trade, transportation and utilities sector lost 1,900 jobs since February 2008, down 1.3 percent. The professional and business services sector lost 3,000 jobs since February 2008, down of 2.8 percent. The government sector lost 200 jobs over the period for an annual loss of 0.1 percent.

In the positive column, the education and health services sector remained strong by adding 5,400 jobs over the past year to achieve a growth rate of 4.7 percent. This industry benefitted from growth in the health care and social services sectors.

Leisure and hospitality all added 800 jobs over the past year for an increase of 0.8 percent.

Workforce Solutions Alamo provides employment services to more than 40,000 businesses and 2 million residents in San Antonio and a 12-county region.

Web site: www.workforcesolutionsalamo.org