



ABILENE CHAMBER

DAILY BUSINESS BRIEF

Skimming the daily updates for your business so you don't have to.

TEXAS UNEMPLOYMENT RATE RISES TO 8.3% IN SEPTEMBER, SEVEN MONTHS INTO ECONOMIC RECESSION

The Texas unemployment rate rose to 8.3% in September, the Texas Workforce Commission said Friday, surpassing the national unemployment rate of 7.9% and returning the state to the unemployment levels of the Great Recession.

While the national unemployment rate declined, the state's sharp increase from the seasonally adjusted August unemployment rate of 6.8% shows how some industries that had hoped to weather the coronavirus pandemic's economic recession have not been able to do so, economists said, and instead have announced large numbers of layoffs. The number Friday also shows that a lot of Texans are jobless seven months into the pandemic despite [widespread business reopenings](#) across the state.

Friday's announcement provides what could be the clearest snapshot of the Texas economy ahead of the Nov. 3 election. Peter Rodriguez, dean of the Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business at Rice University, called the increase "evidence that we didn't take the short route out of the recession."

[Read more.](#)

HENDRICK HEALTH FINALIZES PURCHASE OF ABILENE AND BROWNWOOD MEDICAL CENTERS

Hendrick Health announced Monday afternoon the finalization of the purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center and Brownwood Regional Medical Center.

According to a press release issued Monday afternoon, on Tuesday, Oct. 27, Hendrick Health will assume ownership of the 231-bed facility in Abilene and the 188-bed hospital in Brownwood.

"The pursuit of this purchase has been referred to as a transformational transaction – and that is exactly what it is," said Larry Smith, chair for Hendrick Health's Board of Trustees.

"As the need for additional beds and resources has steadily increased in Abilene, Brownwood and our surrounding areas, we were challenged to determine the best way to meet those needs as quickly as possible. The purchase of Abilene Regional and Brownwood Regional Medical Centers allows us to do just that."

[Read more.](#)

NEW PARKING PLANS FOR DOWNTOWN ABILENE PUT BEFORE PUBLIC

An estimated 200 new parking spaces will result from an expected "restripe" of downtown parking, said Greg McCaffery, the city's public works director, at a come-and-go forum Monday night.

Preliminary plans for the restripe showed the proposed layout along frontage of downtown businesses at the Abilene Convention Center event.

"Our intent is to obtain feedback from individuals on this program before we proceed to final design," McCaffery said.

The area is bounded by Walnut Street to Hickory Street and North Second Street to North Sixth Street.

The alterations as presented require some reduction in lanes of traffic.

Walnut and Pine streets would be reduced from four lanes to three, and on some east--west streets, which would go from three lanes to two.

[Read more.](#)

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA SURVEY

All sorts of questions are swirling around about the 87th Session of the Texas Legislature, which begins January 12, 2021. One of the biggest questions today is how it will function in light of COVID-19 restrictions.

However the 87th Session functions, the Abilene Chamber of Commerce will be highly involved advocating for our members on a wide variety of issues.

We are ready to develop our Legislative Agenda. It will set the priorities for us, going into the session.

We need your help in determining those priorities. Please take this survey before the deadline of Nov. 2, 2020. After the Business Advocacy Council (BAC) review the responses, we will develop a draft Legislative Agenda that we will present to the Chamber Board for approval.

Each of the questions on the survey has a place for comments. Help us understand your answers, the issues you are facing today and what needs to be done to make the future better.

[Take the survey.](#)

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WHAT WE'RE READING

How to Spot Employee Burnout (And Prevent It From Happening in the First Place)

Business owners overlook this common and costly problem.

[Read more.](#)

The Economic Outlook for Texas and Its Major Metro Areas

Recovery Slows, but Continues

[Read more.](#)



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