

TEXAS VETERAN EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND COMPARISONS

AN ISSUE BRIEF FROM LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD STAFF

ID: 1215

SEPTEMBER 2014

OBJECTIVE

Veterans in Texas are participating in the labor force at increased levels. The increase is especially prevalent in Texas with Gulf War II veterans. This brief analyzes the number of veterans in the Texas labor force, employment trends by county, and comparisons to veteran employment data for the United States.

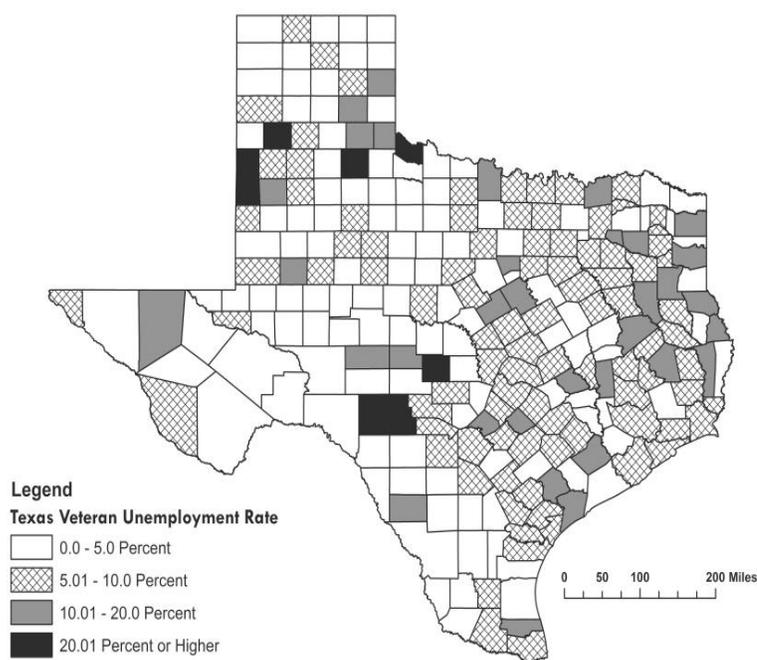
KEY FACTS

- ◆ According to the U.S. Census Bureau for the years 2008 through 2012, the veteran unemployment rate for 118 of Texas' counties was 0-5 percent, while 93 counties had an unemployment rate of 5.1-10 percent.
- ◆ At the national level, female veterans have higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts for three of the last four years.
- ◆ The number of Gulf War II veterans in the Texas labor force increased by 82 percent since October, 2009, compared to 27 percent for the nation.
- ◆ The largest cohort of living U.S. Veterans for both Texas and the nation is those who served during the Vietnam Era (August 1964 to April 1975). The number of Gulf War II veterans in Texas' labor force is increasing and made up a larger percentage of the veteran population than that of the nation.

TEXAS VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Veterans are civilian men and women ages 18 and over whom served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces. As of October 2012, there were 11.8 million veterans nationwide, and over 1.6 million veterans in Texas, spanning from those who served in World War II to those who were on active duty during the post-9/11 period known as the Gulf War II Era. Texas veterans tend to have lower unemployment rates than the general population with an estimated unemployment rate of 3.7 percent for veterans and 6.3 percent for non-veterans in 2012. The most recent veteran unemployment rates at the county level are available from the 2008-12 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Fig. 1 shows veteran unemployment rates by county; with 118 of the 254 counties having a rate of 0-5 percent, 93 counties with an unemployment rate of between 5.1 and 10 percent, and 43 counties had a veteran unemployment rate of greater than 10 percent.

FIG. 1: TEXAS VETERAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY COUNTY, 2008-2012



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008-2012

For more detailed information on veterans in both Texas and the United States, go to the Legislative Budget Board's interactive graphics at the following link: <http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/interactive.aspx>

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF VETERAN POPULATION

Fig. 2 shows that as of October 2012, Gulf War II veterans accounted for 20.1 percent of Texas' veteran labor force, compared to 18.3 percent of the U.S. veteran labor force. Since October 2009, the number of Gulf War II veterans in Texas' labor force has increased from 109,055 to 198,177, an increase of 82 percent. Due to the rapid growth in Texas' Gulf War II veteran population, Texas now has the largest population of Gulf War II veterans in the nation (see interactive graphic: Texas Veteran Labor Force Participation and Gulf War II Veteran Populations). Fig. 2 also shows that as of October 2012, the unemployment rate for total veterans and Gulf War II veterans is lower in Texas (3.7 and 3.9 percent respectively) than for the United States (6.3 and 10.2 percent respectively). For the same time period, the unemployment rate for Texas and the nation was 6.2 percent and 7.5 percent respectively. At the national level, female veterans have higher levels of unemployment than male veterans for three of the four most recent years. For both Texas and the United States, management and professional services are the most common occupation for employed veterans. Fig. 2 also shows the educational attainment level of Gulf War II veterans and a breakdown of total veterans by age groups, with the largest percentage of veterans in the age 55+ cohort, representing the Vietnam era.

FIG. 2 DEMOGRAPHIC AND EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF VETERANS IN LABOR FORCE, CPS OCTOBER 2009 TO OCTOBER 2012

	Texas				United States			
	October 2009	October 2010	October 2011	October 2012	October 2009	October 2010	October 2011	October 2012
Number of Veterans in Labor Force by Period of Service								
Total Veterans Employed	890,889	902,633	924,176	984,542	10,928,013	10,646,830	10,343,502	10,240,759
Gulf War II Veterans Employed	109,055	118,753	162,391	198,177	1,471,835	1,699,025	1,745,758	1,872,139
Percent Gulf War II Veterans	12.2%	13.2%	17.6%	20.1%	13.5%	16.0%	16.9%	18.3%
Unemployment Rate of Veterans by Period of Service and Gender								
Gulf War II Veterans	14.1%	18.5%	8.9%	3.9%	11.6%	10.6%	12.3%	10.2%
Male	10.1%	16.8%	8.9%	2.2%	11.5%	10.4%	12.4%	9.4%
Female	NA*	NA*	NA*	NA*	11.9%	11.9%	11.0%	15.6%
Total Veterans	5.2%	7.5%	6.2%	3.7%	8.1%	8.3%	7.7%	6.3%
Occupation of Employed Veterans by Sector								
Management, Professional	43.0%	33.9%	39.6%	33.2%	36.5%	35.2%	36.6%	36.3%
Production, Transportation	15.3%	16.7%	17.7%	15.8%	16.9%	18.3%	17.1%	18.1%
Sales, Office	17.1%	18.7%	18.5%	25.0%	17.8%	17.8%	16.6%	16.9%
Services	13.0%	11.1%	11.9%	16.9%	13.7%	13.5%	15.5%	13.9%
All Others	11.6%	19.5%	12.3%	9.2%	15.1%	15.3%	14.1%	14.9%
Education Level of Gulf War II Veterans								
High School Grad or Less	29.6%	NA*	32.9%	28.6%	28.9%	30.7%	28.8%	26.3%
Some College	53.9%	NA*	43.8%	47.4%	47.5%	44.5%	44.2%	43.9%
Bachelor's Degree	10.2%	NA*	17.4%	13.9%	16.6%	17.8%	17.5%	20.2%
Advanced Degree	6.4%	NA*	5.9%	10.1%	7.0%	7.0%	9.5%	9.6%
Veterans by Age Group								
18 to 24 years	2.3%	2.2%	1.9%	1.8%	1.3%	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%
25 to 34 years	7.7%	9.4%	8.9%	10.6%	7.4%	7.5%	7.1%	7.5%
35 to 54 years	30.9%	31.3%	33.1%	32.8%	28.0%	27.7%	27.8%	27.3%
55 years and older	59.0%	57.1%	56.1%	54.9%	63.2%	63.4%	63.7%	63.9%

Note: NA* indicates that the sample size of this portion of the population for this time period was not large enough for a valid comparison.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, October 2009-October 2012.

USEFUL REFERENCES

<http://www.lbb.state.tx.us/interactive.aspx>:

LBB Interactive Graphic: Texas Veteran Labor Force Participation and Gulf War II Veteran Populations

LBB Interactive Graphic: Comparison of Disability and Poverty Status of Veterans and Non-veterans by State

LBB Interactive Graphic: Comparison of Disability and Poverty Status of Veterans and Non-veterans by Texas County

LBB Interactive Graphic: Responses to U.S. Census Bureau Questions Regarding Veteran Training Participation

LBB Interactive Graphic: Projected Texas Veteran Population by County, Age, Gender, and Service Period

CONTACT

Kofi Effah Email: IssueBrief@lbb.state.tx.us