

Central Texas job market holds up

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Central Texas' job market is holding up, even as the national picture deteriorates.

The region grew jobs at a 2.9 percent rate last month, on track with recent performance, according to the Texas Workforce Commission. On a national level, employers are cutting jobs, with more layoffs likely as big banks and manufacturers slash their work forces.

The Austin area had 21,800 more jobs last month that it did a year earlier, for a total work force of 773,300.

Unemployment was 3.6 percent, up a tenth of a percentage point from a year earlier.

The picture could change in coming months as Dell Inc. closes its Austin manufacturing plant, affecting 900 workers. This week, Advanced Micro Devices Inc. cut 215 Austin jobs as part of a worldwide cost-cutting initiative. And Whole Foods Market Inc. is closing its Austin bakery in June, cutting 52 jobs.

Statewide, job growth was 2.1 percent last month, and the unemployment rate was 4.3 percent.

The national unemployment rate was 5.1 percent in March, and employers cut 80,000 jobs.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin