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# A record 4.5 million workers quit or changed jobs in November

By Eli Rosenberg  
The Washington Post

The labor market's record churn reached new heights in November, with 4.5 million workers quitting or changing their jobs, the highest number in the survey's history, according to the Labor Department's monthly report on job openings.

It was the fourth time in 2021 that the number of workers quitting reached a record, with previous highs in April, August and September. Workers took advantage of a hot jobs market, with employers reporting some 10.6 million job openings in the survey - down from recent records but still well above pre-pandemic averages.

The data provides yet another illustration of how profoundly the pandemic has transformed the dynamics of the labor market. Nearly two years after some 20 million work-

ers lost their jobs in the wave of shutdowns in spring 2020, the imbalance between available workers and job openings has given many workers more leverage than they've had in recent memory.

"This is the tightest labor market ever," said Julia Pollak, economist at the jobs site ZipRecruiter. "These are not quits from the labor force but quits from lower-paying jobs to higher-paying jobs, from less prestigious jobs to better, more prestigious jobs, from less flexible jobs to more flexible jobs."

The changes began last year, as retail and restaurant employers reported trouble filling positions amid the country's reopening after vaccines became available. Companies soon began to compete against each other to raise wages and offer generous cash bonuses to entice workers to fields including hospitality, restaurants, transportation and health care. Workers, too, have become more selective, putting new restrictions on the types of jobs they want to consider. The pandemic has reshaped the cost-benefit trade-off for in-person work for many workers, complicating the lives of parents and caregivers nationwide.

Overall, the numbers of people quitting or leaving to start new jobs represents 3% of the workforce, the new government data said.

The 10.6 million job openings dwarf the numbers of people currently listed as unemployed, at 6.9 million. The sheer size of the imbalance - there are about 1.5 jobs for every unemployed worker - has helped give workers more leverage.

In the months before the pandemic, there were often about 2.4 unem-

“There’s just no shortage of opportunities in my space.”

- Ian Cohen, job seeker

employed people for every job, said Pollak. When the economy shrinks in a recession, that figure can rise even higher, as unemployment increases. But the pandemic has upended these old patterns.

Still, inflation throughout the economy, especially for food, housing and energy, has negated the wage increases for many workers, at least so far, and the ever-present threat of the coronavirus, particularly for in-person work, continues to complicate employment options for others.

The number of workers quitting in November was up from the 4.2 million who left or changed jobs in October and surpassed the previous record of 4.4 million in September.

The numbers of resignations and job changes were highest among restaurant and bar workers, retail workers, arts and recreation workers - all sectors that have been among the most severely affected by the pandemic. Additionally, professional and business services also see high numbers of quits.

Nearly 7% of restaurant and bar workers changed or quit jobs in November, as did 4.4% of retail workers.

In general, the industries that saw larger quit rates were also those that have seen larger wage growth over the

past year, as businesses have raced to compete for available workers. Wages for leisure and hospitality workers, for example, rose more than 12% in the past year, according to the most recent Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

On surveys ZipRecruiter has done, many job seekers report they are looking for new types of work and particularly for remote work, due to family, child care or safety concerns.

Alexis Farris, 41, is one of the millions of workers who quit jobs for new positions in November. She had worked on a horse farm near her home in Vancouver, Washington, for four years but had tired of the low wages and lack of benefits such as health care and sick time. The pay was barely enough to sustain her and her 8-year-old daughter, she said. So she decided to look for a new job.

"I thought there were a fair amount of opportunities," she said.

She targeted her search toward positions that would have better pay and allow her to work from home. Within a few weeks, she was able to find a new position, doing customer service remotely for a national gardening company. Her new job also came with a \$5-an-hour increase to her wages and more generous benefits. She's now able to pick her daughter up from school on her lunch break.

Ian Cohen, a marketing manager in his 40s near Chattanooga, Tennessee, has changed jobs twice during the pandemic.

The number of open jobs that pop up on his LinkedIn profile, the contacts that have reached out to him and the regular ping from recruiters has convinced him that this is the hottest labor market he's ever experienced. He quit his job at a startup the first week of December after working for less than a year and feeling like it wasn't the right position from him.

He starts a new job, as a program manager for another tech company, next week.

**GOVERNMENT OF GUAM**  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
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**The Guam Board of Social Work  
Regular Virtual Board Meeting**  
Thursday, January 13, 2022 at 3:00PM.  
Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/97192353196?pwd=eW04N1B4VlFFc3F0UN3hQVY5IenJsST09>  
Meeting ID: 971 9235 3196    Passcode: 389012

**Meeting Agenda:**

- I. Call to order:
  - (a) Confirmation of Public Notice posted in Guam Daily Post.
- II. Adoption of agenda:
- III. Review and Approval of Minutes: December 07, 2021.
- IV. Treasurer's Report: Peta Meno
- V. HPLD Administrator's Report: Zennia C. Pecina, M.S.N R.N., HPLD Administrator
- VI. Board Election.
- VII. Old Business:
  - (a) Update on Rules and Regulations
  - (b) Renewal Interim Application(s)
  - (c) Licensure by Exception Application(s)
- VIII. New Business:
  - (a) Licensure by Exception Application(s)
  - (b) Renewal Interim Application(s)
- IX. Open Forum: The Guam Board of Social Work next regularly scheduled board meeting, February 03, 2022 at 11:00AM.

Adjourned:

To view the names of the applicants being considered, go to:  
<https://guamsocialwork.org>  
To view the LIVE Streaming link:  
<https://facebook.com/HPLDGuam>

For more information, please contact the Board office at (671) 735-7409-12. Persons needing telecommunication device for the Hearing/Speech Impaired (TDD) may contact (671) 475-8339.

This advertisement was paid for by DPHSS/Health Professional Licensing Office-Local Funds

## Atkins Kroll unveils 2022 Toyota Tundra

**NEW TRUCK IS IN TOWN:** Tom Mazzei, right, director of sales at Atkins Kroll, and members of the company's sales team, introduce the 2022 Toyota Tundra during an unveiling event at the AK showroom in Tamuning on Thursday afternoon. The new Tundra, according to Mazzei, has been redesigned bumper to bumper and features a 3.5L V6 twin-turbo engine. The launch of the new vehicle coincides with the introduction of the AK Signature Care Program, which provides up to three years of free service for all new and used AK vehicle brands, at no extra charge. The manufacturer's suggested retail price for this new Tundra is \$58,999, but prices can vary depending on the options consumers select.  
Norman M. Taruc/The Guam Daily Post



# Bronx apartment fire kills 19, most of them children

NEW YORK (The Washington Post) - A fire at a New York apartment complex killed 19 people on Sunday, many of them children, in what officials called one of the most devastating blazes in city history.

More than 60 people were injured as smoke engulfed the 19-story building in the Bronx, sending dozens to the hospital in critical condition as about 200 firefighters responded, authorities said. Families of the victims huddled in the halls of a nearby school, crying out as they got news of each death.

Nine of those who died were 16 or younger, according to an official with the mayor's office. The Bronx fire was the second blaze in less than week to underscore the vulnerabilities of those living in affordable housing, echoing the disaster at a crowded Philadelphia rowhouse where a fire killed a dozen people, including eight children.

"We are indeed a city in shock," said New York Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul, adding that she held a mother who had lost her whole family. She vowed to the victims: "We will not forget you, we will not abandon you."

The fire appeared to originate from a space heater in a second- and third-floor duplex just before 11 a.m., authorities said at a Sunday evening news conference. Smoke billowed up through the 120-unit complex, aided by an open door, they said.

Firefighters arrived within three minutes of a call about the blaze on East 181st Street and were met with flames in the hallway, New York City Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro said. Victims suffering from smoke inhalation were found "on every floor, in stairways," Nigro said, and were taken away in cardiac and respiratory arrest.

Officials said 32 people in life-threatening conditions were transported to hospitals. Stefan Ringel, a senior adviser to Democratic Mayor Eric Adams, said Sunday afternoon that 19 of those people had died, leaving 13 people in critical condition. The official death toll had not changed Sunday evening.

Leaders said many residents of the building, Twin Parks North West, were immigrants from the West African nation of Gambia. They were "striving to climb that ladder up, and their lives [were] snuffed out," said Democratic Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York. "It's awful."

The blaze was the deadliest in New

“There is often a disconnect between the requirements of the law and the actual living conditions of these buildings.”

- Rep. Ritchie Torres, Democrat from New York

York City since the 1990 Happy Land Social Club disaster, which killed 87. Nearly two-thirds of those victims were young men, including many Hispanic immigrants who worked low-wage jobs and were the sole breadwinners for their families.

Rep. Ritchie Torres, D-N.Y., who represents the Bronx, said the country has a "crisis" in housing maintenance and that many of the buildings in his area lack basic fire safety equipment, such as fire alarms in every apartment and stairwells with self-closing doors. City housing code requires self-closing doors to slow the spread of fire and smoke from one unit to the rest of an apartment.

"There is often a disconnect between the requirements of the law and the actual living conditions of these buildings," Torres said.

Nigro said that residents left a door open to the duplex that caught fire, and that "it did not close by itself." The building's ownership group said Twin Parks North West is outfitted with self-closing doors in compliance with the city's housing laws and has no open violations for self-closing doors.

Even before Sunday's death toll was announced, local officials said the fire would be one of the most horrific in local memory.

Jade Gonzalez, 14, was awakened by her grandmother, who saw smoke come through the door of their third-floor apartment. They got out after firefighters brought a ladder and broke a window, she said.

Mariama Kebbeh said she was with her husband and two adult children on the 18th floor when she smelled the smoke. The family and a neighbor gathered in Kebbeh's bedroom, she said, trying to protect themselves with a wet towel at the bottom of the door.

Brittany Agostini was cooking breakfast for her children in an adjacent



**FATAL FIRE:** Firefighters use ladders to access units in a 19-story apartment building that caught fire in the Bronx in New York Sunday. The fire killed 19 people, many of them children, in what officials called one of the most devastating blazes in city history. Screenshot of a video by The Washington Post

building Sunday when her 7-year-old alerted her to the fire.

She said she watched a family with many young children leave the burning building, escaping without shoes or coats on what was a chilly day. The smoke and flames were so close to her home, she said, that she feared for her safety.

"I've never seen flames so big," Agostini said. "It was just pouring out of the windows."

Officials said the apartment had interior stairways rather than fire escapes, something that a couple of survivors said they had long worried about. Saidatu Hammed, a resident of the 12th floor, expressed frustration with building management and said the smoke made it difficult to breathe as she and her family ran down floor after floor.

She said she did not have time to grab warm clothes for herself, her 8-year-old daughter or her 5-year-old son.

"The smoke is going through the room, inside the room, everywhere," she said.

Displaced residents will be sent to hotels or given other accommodations, said Christina Farrell, first deputy commissioner of the New York City Emergency Management Department.

The fire devastated an affordable housing development that sits in the Bronx's Tremont neighborhood, a mostly residential part of the borough with a diverse population - about 70% of residents are Hispanic, more than a quarter are Black and about 43% were born outside the United States, according to city data.

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