

# Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

Volume 2021, Number 7

July 2021

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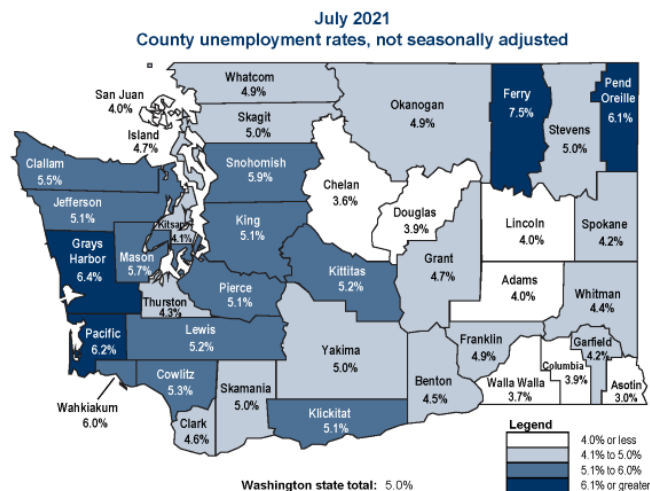
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[www.esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo](http://www.esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo)

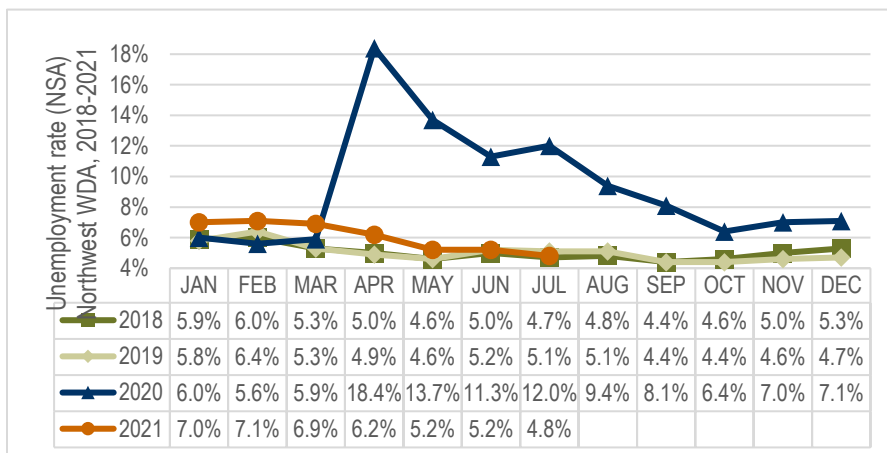
This report marks the fourth report whereby the year-over-year narrative shifts from pandemic-related losses to recovery since the start of the economic crisis. Pandemic-related employment effects began to show up in March last year, and swiftly led to unprecedented levels of unemployment in April 2020. Many jobs have recovered in the meantime, with significant variation by location and industry. This report tracks a moment in that recovery.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 22,700 in July 2021. BLS estimates the private sector gained 21,300 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 1,400 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for July 2020 through July 2021 indicate an increase in employment of 190,100 for the state. The private sector gained 181,000 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 9,100 jobs over the year.



Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for July 2021 is 5.1 percent. The revised estimated June 2021 unemployment rate is at 5.2 percent. The July 2020 unemployment rate was 10.8 percent.



BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The June 2021 preliminary estimated gain of 24,100 jobs was revised to a gain of 25,600 jobs.

# Whatcom County

## Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.9 percent in July 2021 (preliminary), below the June estimate of 5.1 percent (revised). For comparison, the unemployment rate 12 months ago was 12.3 percent.

- Compared to July 2020, the labor force expanded by 1,051 workers. Within that estimate, the number of employed workers expanded by 9,537 (9.5 percent) and the number of unemployed workers contracted by 8,486 (60.2 percent). Whatcom County's estimated labor force was 115,338 in July 2021.

## Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted  
**Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)**  
 Data benchmarked through March 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-21	Revised Jun-21	Revised Jul-20	Change		
				Jun-21 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21
Total Nonfarm	89,400	91,100	85,500	-1,700	3,900	4.6%
Total Private	73,900	73,600	70,500	300	3,400	4.8%
Goods Producing	17,400	17,500	17,000	-100	400	2.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,100	8,200	7,600	-100	500	6.6%
Manufacturing	9,300	9,300	9,400	0	-100	-1.1%
Service Providing	72,000	73,600	68,500	-1,600	3,500	5.1%
Private Services Providing	56,500	56,100	53,500	400	3,000	5.6%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,300	16,000	15,300	300	1,000	6.5%
Retail Trade	11,000	10,700	10,400	300	600	5.8%
Financial Activities	4,000	4,000	4,200	0	-200	-4.8%
Professional and Business Services	8,400	8,300	8,000	100	400	5.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	9,800	9,400	7,900	400	1,900	24.1%
Government	15,500	17,500	15,000	-2,000	500	3.3%
Federal Government	1,500	1,500	1,500	0	0	0.0%
Total State Government	4,000	5,800	4,000	-1,800	0	0.0%
Total Local Government	10,000	10,200	9,500	-200	500	5.3%

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County (not seasonally adjusted) decreased by 1,700 from June to July 2021 Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs increased by 3,900 (4.6 percent).

- In July, most industries added jobs. The largest one-month gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (+400). Government shed the largest number of jobs this month (-2,000).
- Most major industries added jobs over the year. Leisure and hospitality added the largest number of jobs over the year (+1,900). Employment in financial activities and manufacturing were both down over the year.

# Skagit County

## Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 5.0 percent (preliminary) in July—this is down from 5.5 percent in June (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 12.5 percent.

- Compared to July 2020, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 4,650 (8.4 percent) and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ contracted by 4,731 (59.9 percent). Skagit County’s resident labor force was estimated at 63,240, decreasing by 0.1 percent over the year.

## Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

### Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)

Data benchmarked through March 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-21	Revised Jun-21	Revised Jul-20	Change		
				Jun-21 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21
Total Nonfarm	50,300	50,300	48,100	0	2,200	4.6%
Total Private	38,600	38,500	37,300	100	1,300	3.5%
Goods Producing	10,500	10,400	10,500	100	0	0.0%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,200	4,100	4,300	100	-100	-2.3%
Manufacturing	6,300	6,300	6,200	0	100	1.6%
Service Providing	39,800	39,900	37,600	-100	2,200	5.9%
Private Services Providing	28,100	28,100	26,800	0	1,300	4.9%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,900	9,800	9,400	100	500	5.3%
Retail Trade	7,300	7,200	6,700	100	600	9.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	4,900	4,700	4,200	200	700	16.7%
Government	11,700	11,800	10,800	-100	900	8.3%
Federal Government	500	400	500	100	0	0.0%
State Government	1,100	1,300	1,200	-200	-100	-8.3%
Local Government	10,100	10,100	9,100	0	1,000	11.0%

Total nonfarm employment in Skagit County neither increased nor decreased over the month. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 2,200 or 4.6 percent.

- Over the month, all industries except government added jobs or maintained employment levels. Leisure and hospitality added the largest number of jobs in July (+200)
- Most major industries have recovered jobs over the year. The largest 12-month increases were attributable to government (+900) and leisure and hospitality (+700). Manufacturing employment was down over the year (-100).

## Island County

### Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 4.7 percent (preliminary) in July 2021, below the (revised) unemployment rate (5.0 percent) reported in June. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 10.4 percent.

- Compared to July 2020, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,745 (5.3 percent) and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work contracted by 2,106 (55.5 percent). Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 36,132 in July 2021, down 1.0 percent over the year.

### Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted  
Oak Harbor Micropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)

Data benchmarked through March 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-21	Revised Jun-21	Revised Jul-20	Change		
				Jun-21 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21
Total Nonfarm	16,990	17,040	16,620	-50	370	2.2%
Total Private	12,480	12,430	12,160	50	320	2.6%
Goods Producing	1,910	1,900	1,960	10	-50	-2.6%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,210	1,200	1,150	10	60	5.2%
Manufacturing	700	700	810	0	-110	-13.6%
Service Providing	15,080	15,140	14,660	-60	420	2.9%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,750	2,760	2,670	-10	80	3.0%
Retail Trade	2,190	2,200	2,090	-10	100	4.8%
Information and Financial Activities	860	870	820	-10	40	4.9%
Professional and Business Services	1,500	1,490	1,460	10	40	2.7%
Education and Health Services	2,440	2,440	2,260	0	180	8.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,130	2,120	2,110	10	20	0.9%
Government	4,510	4,610	4,460	-100	50	1.1%
Federal Government	1,280	1,280	1,300	0	-20	-1.5%
State and Local Government	3,230	3,330	3,160	-100	70	2.2%
State and Local Government Education	1,360	1,420	1,300	-60	60	4.6%

Total nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County contracted by 50 from June to July 2021. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 370 or 2.2 percent.

- From June to July, employment changes were generally small for most industries, with gains or losses of no more than 10, with the exception of government which was down 100.
- Year-over-year, the largest employment gains were attributable to educational and health services (+180) and retail trade (+100). Manufacturing was down 110 jobs over the year

*Employment statistics for Island County do not include military employment.*

# San Juan County

## Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County was 4.0 percent in July 2021 (preliminary), down from 4.3 percent (revised) over the month. For comparison, the unemployment rate 12 months ago was 9.5 percent.

- Compared to July 2020, the number of residents counted as ‘employed’ increased by 321 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 458. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 8,009 resident workers and contracted by 1.7 percent over the year.

## San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

### San Juan County

Data benchmarked through March 2021

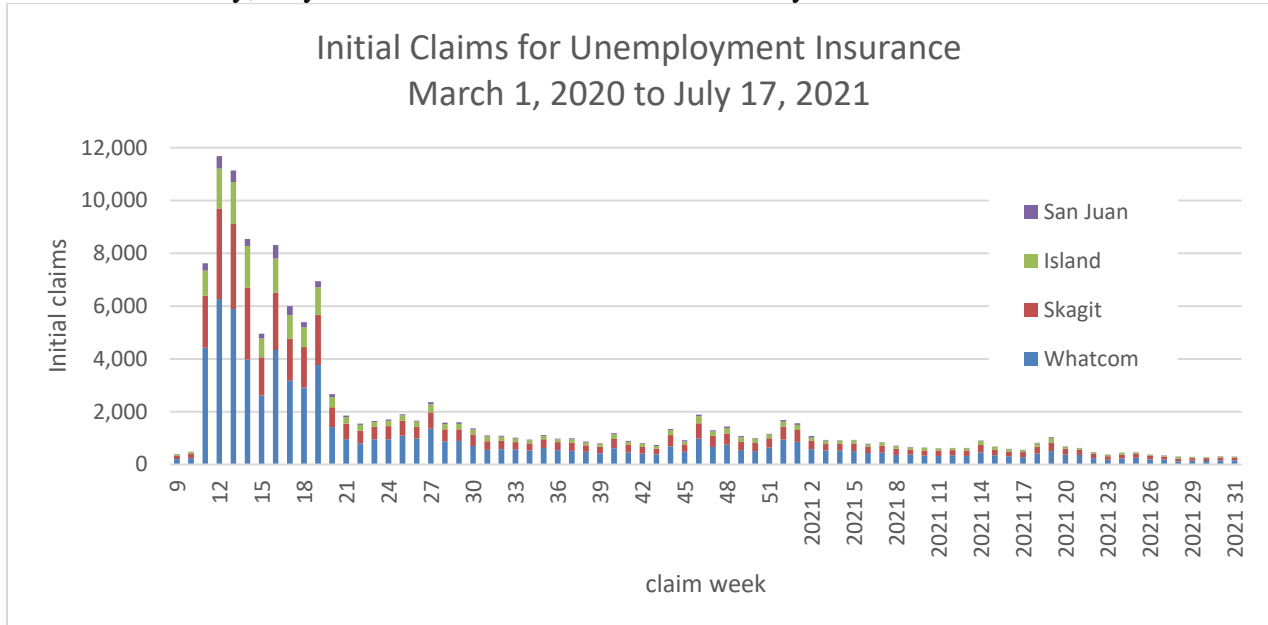
NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-21	Revised Jun-21	Revised Jul-20	Change		
				Jun-21 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21	Jul-20 Jul-21
Total Nonfarm	5,180	5,070	5,580	110	-400	-7.2%
Total Private	4,350	4,230	4,810	120	-460	-9.6%
Goods Producing	920	910	960	10	-40	-4.2%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	720	720	730	0	-10	-1.4%
Manufacturing	200	190	230	10	-30	-13.0%
Service Providing	4,260	4,160	4,620	100	-360	-7.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,060	1,050	1,050	10	10	1.0%
Information and Financial Activities	350	350	380	0	-30	-7.9%
Professional and Business Services	440	440	450	0	-10	-2.2%
Education and Health Services	540	530	560	10	-20	-3.6%
Leisure and Hospitality	870	770	1,230	100	-360	-29.3%
Government	830	840	770	-10	60	7.8%

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County expanded over the month (+110). Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was down 400 or 7.2 percent.

- From June to July, most industries detailed in this report added jobs, with the largest gains observed in leisure and hospitality (+100). The only industry that shed jobs over the month was government (-10).
- According to preliminary estimates, the deepest 12-month losses were observed in leisure and hospitality (-360) and the largest gains were observed in government (+60).

## Weekly Unemployment Insurance Claims information:

In March 2020, the Employment Security Department began publishing weekly counts of initial claims for Unemployment Insurance. Initial claims provide an indicator of layoffs. Because they are entered weekly, they are a bit more nimble than our survey-based datasets.



New claims for unemployment insurance have finally reached pre-pandemic levels. There were 289 new claims for unemployment insurance filed in the Northwest WDA during the week of August 8-14, 2021.

*\*Labor force and payroll reporting reflects employment during 2021 the week of July 11-17.*

### Forecast information for Washington state:

The Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council issues quarterly forecasts that address Washington's projected economic health. The June forecast is currently online at [www.erfc.wa.gov](http://www.erfc.wa.gov).

*The Employment Security Department is an equal-opportunity employer and provider of programs and services. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to people with disabilities. Washington Relay Service 711.*