

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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Compiled by Anneliese Vance-Sherman, Ph.D., Regional Labor Economist

Phone: (425)258-6315 avancesherman@esd.wa.gov

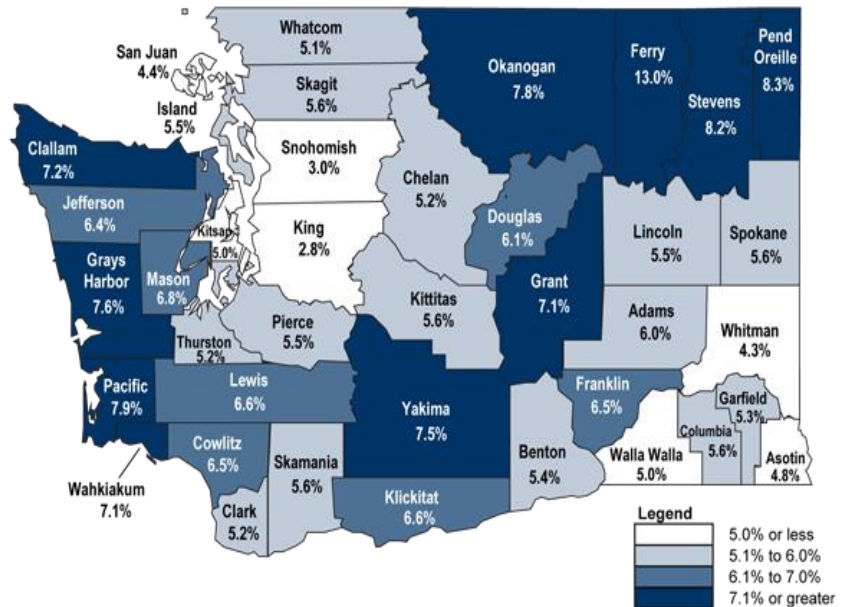
www.esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo

On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 13,500 in April 2019. BLS estimates the private sector gained 11,800 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 1,700 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for April 2018 through April 2019 indicate an increase in employment of 83,100 for the state. The private sector added 87,100 jobs while the public sector lost an estimated 4,000 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2019 is 4.7 percent. The revised estimated March 2019 unemployment rate is at 4.6 percent. The April 2018 unemployment rate was 4.5 percent.

April 2019
 County unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted



Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) Apr-19	Mar-19	Apr-18	Year-to-Year Change
USA	3.3%	3.9%	3.7%	-0.4%
Washington state	4.5%	5.2%	4.3%	0.2%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	5.3%	5.5%	4.8%	0.5%
Whatcom County	5.1%	5.2%	4.6%	0.5%
Skagit County	5.6%	5.9%	5.1%	0.5%
Island County	5.5%	5.7%	5.3%	0.2%
San Juan County	4.4%	4.9%	4.1%	0.3%

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. March's preliminary estimated gain of

27,900 jobs was revised to a gain of 27,700 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 5.1 percent in April 2019 (preliminary), down slightly from 5.2 percent reported in March (revised). The unemployment rate in April 2018 was 4.6 percent.

- Compared to 12 months ago, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 3,940 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 775, resulting in a 4.3 percent increase in the size of the labor force. Whatcom County’s labor force was about 115,421 in April 2019.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County increased from 568 in March to 694. Altogether, 1,538 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in April; down from 1,738 in March.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)

Data benchmarked through December 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-19	Revised Mar-19	Revised Apr-18	Revised Mar-18	Change		
					Mar-19 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19
Total Nonfarm	97,000	96,800	95,600	95,100	200	1,400	1.5%
Total Private	78,200	78,000	76,900	76,300	200	1,300	1.7%
Goods Producing	19,300	19,600	19,100	18,800	-300	200	1.0%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,700	9,000	8,800	8,300	-300	-100	-1.1%
Manufacturing	10,600	10,600	10,300	10,500	0	300	2.9%
Service Providing	77,700	77,200	76,500	76,300	500	1,200	1.6%
Private Services Providing	58,900	58,400	57,800	57,500	500	1,100	1.9%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,700	16,400	16,400	16,400	300	300	1.8%
Retail Trade	11,400	11,200	11,100	11,100	200	300	2.7%
Financial Activities	3,700	3,700	3,800	3,700	0	-100	-2.6%
Professional and Business Services	8,400	8,300	8,300	8,200	100	100	1.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	11,000	10,900	10,900	10,800	100	100	0.9%
Government	18,800	18,800	18,700	18,800	0	100	0.5%
Federal Government	1,500	1,400	1,400	1,400	100	100	7.1%
Total State Government	6,600	7,000	6,900	7,100	-400	-300	-4.3%
Total Local Government	10,700	10,400	10,400	10,300	300	300	2.9%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County increased by 200 from March to April 2019. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 1,400 or 1.5 percent.

- In April, private sector employers were responsible for all net employment expansion. The largest one month gains were attributable to hiring in trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities (+300), including retail trade (+200). Construction employment declined by 300.
- Over the year, all but two of the major industries detailed in this report added jobs. The largest gains were observed in manufacturing and trade transportation warehousing and utilities (+300 each). Construction and financial activities each shed 100 jobs over the year.

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 5.6 percent in April 2019 (preliminary), down from 5.9 percent in March (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.1 percent.

- Compared to April 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 2,262 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ increased by 416. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated at 61,997, increasing by 4.5 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County increased from 403 in March to 561 in April. Altogether, 1,044 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in April. This is down from 1,177 in March.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)
 Data benchmarked through December 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-19	Revised Mar-19	Revised Apr-18	Change		
				Mar-19 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19
Total Nonfarm	52,300	51,600	51,000	700	1,300	2.5%
Total Private	40,200	39,500	39,200	700	1,000	2.6%
Goods Producing	10,900	10,700	10,400	200	500	4.8%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,900	4,700	4,500	200	400	8.9%
Manufacturing	6,000	6,000	5,900	0	100	1.7%
Service Providing	41,400	40,900	40,600	500	800	2.0%
Private Services Providing	29,300	28,800	28,800	500	500	1.7%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,800	9,700	9,900	100	-100	-1.0%
Retail Trade	7,200	7,200	7,200	0	0	0.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,200	5,100	5,200	100	0	0.0%
Government	12,100	12,100	11,800	0	300	2.5%
Federal Government	400	400	400	0	0	0.0%
State Government	1,500	1,500	1,500	0	0	0.0%
Local Government	10,200	10,200	9,900	0	300	3.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In April 2019, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls increased by 700. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 1,300 or 2.5 percent.

- Over the month, most industries detailed in this report expanded employment. Construction saw the largest one-month gains (+200).
- Most major industries in this report added jobs or remained unchanged over the year. The industries reporting the largest gains were construction (+400) and government (+300). Trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities reported 12-month losses (-100).

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 5.5 percent (preliminary) in April 2019. This is down from 5.7 percent in March (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.3 percent.

- Compared to April 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 468 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 110. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 34,786, an increase of 1.7 percent over the year.
- There were 194 initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County in April, up from 129 in March. Altogether, 403 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in April. This is down from 418 in March.

Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Oak Harbor Micropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)

Data benchmarked through December 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-19	Revised Mar-19	Revised Apr-18	Change		
				Mar-19 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19
Total Nonfarm	16,500	16,380	16,920	120	-420	-2.5%
Total Private	11,850	11,750	12,180	100	-330	-2.7%
Goods Producing	1,800	1,790	1,870	10	-70	-3.7%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,050	1,040	1,050	10	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	750	750	820	0	-70	-8.5%
Service Providing	14,700	14,590	15,050	110	-350	-2.3%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,720	2,710	2,660	10	60	2.3%
Retail Trade	2,140	2,120	2,120	20	20	0.9%
Information and Financial Activities	760	760	790	0	-30	-3.8%
Professional and Business Services	1,180	1,160	1,270	20	-90	-7.1%
Education and Health Services	2,070	2,080	2,380	-10	-310	-13.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,460	2,420	2,390	40	70	2.9%
Government	4,650	4,630	4,740	20	-90	-1.9%
Federal Government	1,300	1,300	1,320	0	-20	-1.5%
State and Local Government	3,350	3,330	3,420	20	-70	-2.0%
State and Local Government Education	1,620	1,610	1,570	10	50	3.2%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County expanded by 120 from March to April 2019. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs contracted by 420 or 2.5 percent.

- From March to April, most industries reported employment gains. The largest one month gains were attributable to hiring in leisure and hospitality (+40). Education and health services is the only industry reporting one-month losses (-10).
- Year-over-year, more industries shed jobs than added them. The deepest losses were observed in the education and health services industries (-310).

It is important to note that employment statistics for Island County do not include military employment.

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County decreased from 4.9 percent in March (revised) to 4.4 percent (preliminary) in April. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 4.1 percent.

- Compared to April 2018, the number of people counted as 'employed' increased by 344 and the number counted as 'unemployed' or actively seeking work increased by 39. Altogether,

the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 8,139 workers and increased by 4.9 percent over the year.

- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County totaled 20 in April, down from 26 the previous month. Altogether, 62 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in April. This is down from 91 in March.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through December 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-19	Revised Mar-19	Revised Apr-18	Change		
				Mar-19 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19	Apr-18 Apr-19
Total Nonfarm	5,640	5,370	5,390	270	250	4.6%
Total Private	4,880	4,630	4,630	250	250	5.4%
Goods Producing	960	930	870	30	90	10.3%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	740	730	670	10	70	10.4%
Manufacturing	220	200	200	20	20	10.0%
Service Providing	4,680	4,440	4,520	240	160	3.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,000	970	950	30	50	5.3%
Information and Financial Activities	320	310	360	10	-40	-11.1%
Professional and Business Services	400	380	380	20	20	5.3%
Education and Health Services	670	670	600	0	70	11.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	1,340	1,180	1,280	160	60	4.7%
Government	760	740	760	20	0	0.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County increased by 270 from March to April. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 250 jobs or 4.6 percent.

- San Juan County has a highly-seasonal economy, due to its orientation toward tourism. Most industries shed jobs in the winter and return with the sun. In April, the largest one-month gains were reported from leisure and hospitality (+160).
- Over the year, there was a net gain of employment. The largest one-year gains were attributable to hiring in the construction and education and health services (+70 each). The only industry reporting 12-month losses was information and financial activities (-40)

Forecast information for Washington state:

The Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council issues quarterly forecasts that address Washington's projected economic health. The most recent forecast was issued in March and updated in May. Forecast information is available at 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.