

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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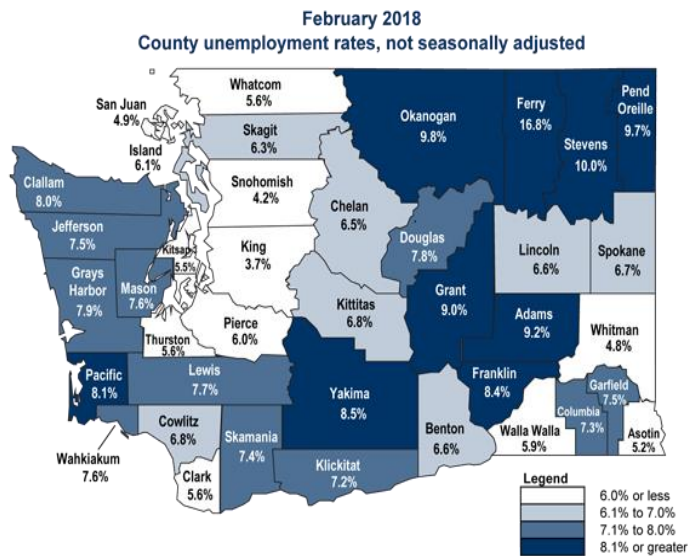
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On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 8,700 from January 2018 to February 2018. BLS estimates the private sector gained 8,200 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 500 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for February 2017 through February 2018 indicate an increase in employment of 99,100 for the state. The private sector added 89,500 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 9,600 jobs over the year.



Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February 2018 is 4.7 percent. The revised estimated January 2017 unemployment rate was at 4.7 percent. The February 2017 unemployment rate was 4.8 percent.

Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) Feb-18	Jan-18	Feb-17	Year-to-Year Change
USA	4.4%	4.5%	4.9%	-0.5%
Washington state	5.3%	5.4%	5.4%	-0.1%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	5.9%	5.7%	5.9%	0.0%
Whatcom County	5.6%	5.5%	5.8%	-0.2%
Skagit County	6.3%	6.1%	6.5%	-0.2%
Island County	6.1%	5.9%	5.7%	0.4%
San Juan County	4.9%	5.2%	5.2%	-0.3%

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. January’s preliminary estimated gain of 6,800 jobs was revised to a gain of 10,500 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 5.6 percent in February 2018 (preliminary), up from 5.5 percent reported in January (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.8 percent.

- Compared to February 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,002 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 134, resulting in a 0.8 percent increase in the size of the labor force and a drop in the unemployment rate. Whatcom County’s labor force was about 110,351 in February.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County decreased from 851 in January to 565. Altogether, 1,681 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in February; down from 1,905 in January.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)
 Data benchmarked through September 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Feb-18	Revised Jan-18	Revised Feb-17	Revised Jan-17	Change		
					Jan-18 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18
Total Nonfarm	93,800	93,000	90,800	90,600	800	3,000	3.3%
Total Private	75,000	74,400	72,400	72,500	600	2,600	3.6%
Goods Producing	18,300	17,900	17,200	17,100	400	1,100	6.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,300	8,000	7,000	7,000	300	1,300	18.6%
Manufacturing	10,000	9,900	10,200	10,100	100	-200	-2.0%
Service Providing	75,500	75,100	73,600	73,500	400	1,900	2.6%
Private Services Providing	56,700	56,500	55,200	55,400	200	1,500	2.7%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,300	16,500	16,000	16,200	-200	300	1.9%
Retail Trade	11,400	11,500	10,900	11,100	-100	500	4.6%
Financial Activities	3,500	3,500	3,400	3,400	0	100	2.9%
Professional and Business Services	8,300	8,200	7,800	7,700	100	500	6.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	9,600	9,500	10,100	10,100	100	-500	-5.0%
Government	18,800	18,600	18,400	18,100	200	400	2.2%
Federal Government	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400	0	0	0.0%
Total State Government	6,900	6,900	6,900	6,700	0	0	0.0%
Total Local Government	10,500	10,300	10,100	10,000	200	400	4.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County increased by 800 from January to February 2018. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 3,000 or 3.3 percent.

- In February, goods producing industries collectively added 400 jobs. Private services providers and government each added 200 jobs over the month. Most industries in this report reported employment gains over the month. Construction added the largest number of jobs (+300). The only sector reporting employment losses over the month was trade transportation and utilities (-200), and within that retail trade (-100). January tends to be a month characterized by seasonal declines.
- Over the year, all major industries covered by this report added jobs, with the exception of manufacturing which shed 200. The largest year over year increase was attributable to hiring in the construction industry (+1,300 or 18.6 percent).

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 6.3 percent in February 2018 (preliminary), up from 6.1 reported in January (revised). The unemployment rate in February 2017 was 6.5 percent.

- Compared to February 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ decreased by 218 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ decreased by 163. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated as 58,375, having decreased by 0.6 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County decreased from 589 in January to 432. Altogether, 1,149 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in February. This is down from 1,334 in January.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)

Data benchmarked through September 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Feb-18	Revised Jan-18	Revised Feb-17	Change		
				Jan-18 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18
Total Nonfarm	49,300	49,300	49,000	0	300	0.6%
Total Private	37,400	37,500	37,400	-100	0	0.0%
Goods Producing	9,800	10,000	9,600	-200	200	2.1%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,100	4,200	4,000	-100	100	2.5%
Manufacturing	5,700	5,800	5,600	-100	100	1.8%
Service Providing	39,500	39,300	39,400	200	100	0.3%
Private Services Providing	27,600	27,500	27,800	100	-200	-0.7%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,700	10,000	9,800	-300	-100	-1.0%
Retail Trade	6,600	6,800	7,000	-200	-400	-5.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,100	5,000	4,900	100	200	4.1%
Government	11,900	11,800	11,600	100	300	2.6%
Federal Government	400	300	400	100	0	0.0%
State Government	1,500	1,500	1,500	0	0	0.0%
Local Government	10,000	10,000	9,700	0	300	3.1%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In February 2018, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls remained unchanged. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 300 or 0.6 percent.

- Over the month, most major industry sectors shed jobs. The deepest losses were attributable to trade transportation warehousing and utilities (-300), which includes retail trade (-200). Leisure and hospitality and government were the only two sectors adding jobs (+100 each).
- Over the year, the largest employment increases were attributable to government and leisure and hospitality (+300 and +200 respectively). Retail trade shed 400 jobs over the year.

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 6.1 percent (preliminary) in February 2018. This is up from 5.9 percent in January (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.7 percent.

- Compared to February 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 646 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work expanded by 204, pushing the unemployment rate up over the year. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 34,383, an increase of 2.5 percent over the year.
- There were 148 initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County in February, down from 199 in January. Altogether, 454 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in February. This is down from 505 in January.

Island County local area payroll jobs

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

Data benchmarked through September 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Feb-18	Revised Jan-18	Revised Feb-17	Change		
				Jan-18 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18
Total Nonfarm	16,770	16,690	16,120	80	650	4.0%
Total Private	12,040	11,970	11,420	70	620	5.4%
Goods Producing	1,790	1,770	1,690	20	100	5.9%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	940	920	880	20	60	6.8%
Manufacturing	850	850	810	0	40	4.9%
Service Providing	14,980	14,920	14,430	60	550	3.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,660	2,660	2,520	0	140	5.6%
Retail Trade	2,140	2,150	2,060	-10	80	3.9%
Information and Financial Activities	800	800	770	0	30	3.9%
Professional and Business Services	1,360	1,340	1,280	20	80	6.3%
Education and Health Services	2,320	2,300	2,200	20	120	5.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,320	2,300	2,160	20	160	7.4%
Government	4,730	4,720	4,700	10	30	0.6%
Federal Government	1,340	1,340	1,340	0	0	0.0%
State and Local Government	3,390	3,380	3,360	10	30	0.9%
State and Local Government Education	1,520	1,500	1,530	20	-10	-0.7%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County increased by 80 from January to February 2018 Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 650 or 4.0 percent.

- From January to February, most industries added jobs or remained unchanged. Retail trade is the only industry that shed jobs over the month (-10).
- Year-over-year, all major industries detailed in this report added jobs. The largest gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (+160) and trade transportation and utilities (+140).

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County decreased from 5.2 percent in January (revised) to 4.9 percent (preliminary) in February 2018. The unemployment rate in February 2017 was 5.2 percent.

- Compared to February 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 298 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 4. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 7,777 people and increased by 3.9 percent over the year.

- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County decreased from 36 in January to 21. Altogether, 95 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in February. This is down from 114 in January.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through September 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Feb-18	Revised Jan-18	Revised Feb-17	Change		
				Jan-18 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18	Feb-17 Feb-18
Total Nonfarm	5,330	5,260	4,980	70	350	7.0%
Total Private	4,560	4,490	4,150	70	410	9.9%
Goods Producing	850	820	810	30	40	4.9%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	650	650	650	0	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	200	170	160	30	40	25.0%
Service Providing	4,480	4,440	4,170	40	310	7.4%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	920	930	880	-10	40	4.5%
Information and Financial Activities	340	350	280	-10	60	21.4%
Professional and Business Services	360	350	350	10	10	2.9%
Education and Health Services	620	610	600	10	20	3.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	1,290	1,250	1,060	40	230	21.7%
Government	770	770	830	0	-60	-7.2%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County increased by 70 from January to February 2018. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 350 jobs or 7.0 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 February, manufacturing, professional and business services and education and health services added jobs. Trade transportation and utilities and information and financial activities both lost ground.
- Most industries added jobs over the year; the largest gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (+230) and information and financial activities (+60). Government was the only industry detailed in this report that shed jobs over the year (-60).