

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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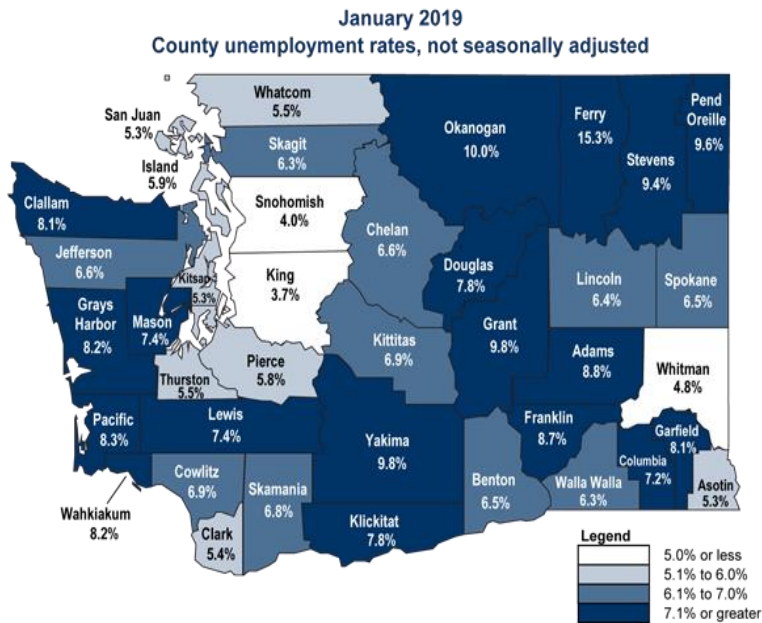
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On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 12,300 in January 2019. BLS estimates the private sector gained 12,000 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 300 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for January 2018 through January 2019 indicate an increase in employment of 83,700 for the state. The private sector added 89,800 jobs while the public sector lost an estimated 6,100 jobs over the year.

Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2019 is 4.5 percent. The revised estimated December 2018 unemployment rate is at 4.5 percent. The January 2018 unemployment rate was 4.6 percent.



Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

| Area | (Prelim.) Jan-19 | Dec-18 | Jan-19 | Year-to- Year Change |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|----------------------------|
| USA | 4.4% | 3.7% | 4.5% | -0.1% |
| Washington state | 5.3% | 4.8% | 5.4% | -0.1% |
| Northwest Workforce Development Area | 5.8% | 5.3% | 5.9% | -0.1% |
| Whatcom County | 5.5% | 5.1% | 5.7% | -0.2% |
| Skagit County | 6.3% | 5.6% | 6.3% | 0.0% |
| Island County | 5.9% | 5.5% | 6.1% | -0.2% |
| San Juan County | 5.3% | 4.5% | 5.5% | -0.2% |

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. December’s preliminary estimated gain of 11,400 jobs was revised to a gain of 13,800 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 5.5 percent in January 2019 (preliminary), up relative to 5.1 percent reported in December 2018 (revised). The unemployment rate in January 2018 was 5.7 percent.

- Compared to 12 months ago, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 3,948 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 25, resulting in a 3.6 percent increase in the size of the labor force. Whatcom County’s labor force was about 114,548 at the beginning of 2019.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County decreased from 1,062 in December to 1,014. Altogether, 1,962 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in January; up from 1,745 in December.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)

Data benchmarked through September 2018

| NAICS Industry Title | Prelim Jan-19 | Revised Dec-18 | Revised Jan-18 | Revised Dec-17 | Change | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | | | Dec-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 |
| Total Nonfarm | 96,000 | 96,900 | 93,300 | 94,300 | -900 | 2,700 | 2.9% |
| Total Private | 77,500 | 78,100 | 74,900 | 75,700 | -600 | 2,600 | 3.5% |
| Goods Producing | 18,400 | 18,700 | 18,000 | 18,200 | -300 | 400 | 2.2% |
| Mining, Logging, and Construction | 7,900 | 8,100 | 7,800 | 8,000 | -200 | 100 | 1.3% |
| Manufacturing | 10,500 | 10,600 | 10,200 | 10,200 | -100 | 300 | 2.9% |
| Service Providing | 77,600 | 78,200 | 75,300 | 76,100 | -600 | 2,300 | 3.1% |
| Private Services Providing | 59,100 | 59,400 | 56,900 | 57,500 | -300 | 2,200 | 3.9% |
| Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities | 17,000 | 17,200 | 16,500 | 16,900 | -200 | 500 | 3.0% |
| Retail Trade | 11,500 | 11,700 | 11,300 | 11,500 | -200 | 200 | 1.8% |
| Financial Activities | 3,900 | 3,900 | 3,600 | 3,600 | 0 | 300 | 8.3% |
| Professional and Business Services | 8,300 | 8,400 | 8,000 | 8,200 | -100 | 300 | 3.8% |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 10,800 | 10,900 | 10,700 | 10,700 | -100 | 100 | 0.9% |
| Government | 18,500 | 18,800 | 18,400 | 18,600 | -300 | 100 | 0.5% |
| Federal Government | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,400 | 1,400 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Total State Government | 6,600 | 6,700 | 6,900 | 6,900 | -100 | -300 | -4.3% |
| Total Local Government | 10,500 | 10,700 | 10,100 | 10,300 | -200 | 400 | 4.0% |
| Workers in Labor/Management Disputes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County decreased by 900 from December 2018 to January 2019. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 2,700 or 2.9 percent.

- In January, private employers collectively shed 600 jobs and Government employers shed 300 jobs. Losses in January are not unexpected.
- Over the year, all major industries detailed in this report added jobs. The largest gains were observed in trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities (+500) and manufacturing, financial activities and professional and business services (+300 each). Despite increases in government employment as a whole, state government shed 300 jobs over the year.
- September 2018 benchmarks were applied to this report. Total nonfarm employment increased by 500 or 0.5 percent over previous estimates.

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 6.3 percent in January 2019 (preliminary), up from 5.6 percent in December 2018 (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 6.3 percent.

- Compared to January 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 2,046 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ increased by 159. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated at 61,107, increasing by 3.7 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County decreased from 761 in December to 573. Altogether, 1,376 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in January. This is up from 1,303 in December.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)

Data benchmarked through September 2018

| NAICS Industry Title | Prelim Jan-19 | Revised Dec-18 | Revised Jan-18 | Change | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | | Dec-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 |
| Total Nonfarm | 50,900 | 52,000 | 49,500 | -1,100 | 1,400 | 2.8% |
| Total Private | 38,900 | 39,900 | 38,000 | -1,000 | 900 | 2.4% |
| Goods Producing | 10,300 | 10,800 | 10,100 | -500 | 200 | 2.0% |
| Mining, Logging, and Construction | 4,300 | 4,600 | 4,200 | -300 | 100 | 2.4% |
| Manufacturing | 6,000 | 6,200 | 5,900 | -200 | 100 | 1.7% |
| Service Providing | 40,600 | 41,200 | 39,400 | -600 | 1,200 | 3.0% |
| Private Services Providing | 28,600 | 29,100 | 27,900 | -500 | 700 | 2.5% |
| Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities | 10,300 | 10,700 | 9,900 | -400 | 400 | 4.0% |
| Retail Trade | 7,300 | 7,500 | 7,200 | -200 | 100 | 1.4% |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 5,100 | 5,200 | 4,800 | -100 | 300 | 6.3% |
| Government | 12,000 | 12,100 | 11,500 | -100 | 500 | 4.3% |
| Federal Government | 300 | 400 | 300 | -100 | 0 | 0.0% |
| State Government | 1,400 | 1,300 | 1,500 | 100 | -100 | -6.7% |
| Local Government | 10,300 | 10,400 | 9,700 | -100 | 600 | 6.2% |
| Workers in Labor/Management Disputes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

In January 2019, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls contracted by 1,100. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs increased by 1,400 or 2.8 percent.

- Over the month, all major industries detailed in this report shed jobs. This is not uncommon for January.
- The industries reporting the largest annual gains were government (+500) and trade, transportation and utilities (+400). Within government, state government was the only industry reporting over the year losses.
- The application of September benchmarks to this report boosted Skagit County employment estimates by 500 jobs or 1.0 percent.

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 5.9 percent (preliminary) in January 2019. This is up from 5.5 percent in December 2018 (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 6.1 percent.

- Compared to January 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,048 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work did not change. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 35,372, an increase of 3.1 percent over the year.

- There were 231 initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County in January, up from 213 in December. Altogether, 485 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in January. This is up from 431 in December.

Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Oak Harbor Micropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)

Data benchmarked through September 2018

| NAICS Industry Title | Prelim Jan-19 | Revised Dec-18 | Revised Jan-18 | Change | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | | Dec-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 |
| Total Nonfarm | 16,860 | 17,120 | 16,570 | -260 | 290 | 1.8% |
| Total Private | 12,110 | 12,360 | 11,900 | -250 | 210 | 1.8% |
| Goods Producing | 1,840 | 1,890 | 1,830 | -50 | 10 | 0.5% |
| Mining, Logging, and Construction | 1,040 | 1,090 | 1,010 | -50 | 30 | 3.0% |
| Manufacturing | 800 | 800 | 820 | 0 | -20 | -2.4% |
| Service Providing | 15,020 | 15,230 | 14,740 | -210 | 280 | 1.9% |
| Trade, Transportation, and Utilities | 2,560 | 2,650 | 2,620 | -90 | -60 | -2.3% |
| Retail Trade | 2,010 | 2,080 | 2,090 | -70 | -80 | -3.8% |
| Information and Financial Activities | 780 | 800 | 800 | -20 | -20 | -2.5% |
| Professional and Business Services | 1,350 | 1,370 | 1,200 | -20 | 150 | 12.5% |
| Education and Health Services | 2,430 | 2,450 | 2,320 | -20 | 110 | 4.7% |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 2,310 | 2,360 | 2,320 | -50 | -10 | -0.4% |
| Government | 4,750 | 4,760 | 4,670 | -10 | 80 | 1.7% |
| Federal Government | 1,300 | 1,320 | 1,330 | -20 | -30 | -2.3% |
| State and Local Government | 3,450 | 3,440 | 3,340 | 10 | 110 | 3.3% |
| State and Local Government Education | 1,620 | 1,580 | 1,530 | 40 | 90 | 5.9% |
| Workers in Labor/Management Disputes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

Total nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County decreased by 260 jobs from December 2018 to January 2019. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 290 or 1.8 percent.

- From December to January, all major industries detailed in this report shed jobs. This is not unexpected in January.
- Year-over-year, the industries adding the largest number of jobs were professional and business services and education and health services (150 and 110 respectively). The deepest loss was attributable to retail trade (-80).
- September benchmarks added 240 jobs to previous estimates, boosting the Island County job count by 1.4 percent.

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County increased from 4.5 percent in December 2018 (revised) to 5.3 percent (preliminary) in January 2019. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.5 percent.

- Compared to January 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 173 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 9. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 7,707 workers and decreased by 2.2 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County totaled 46 in January, up from 40 the previous month. Altogether, 83 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in January. This is up from 79 in December.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through September 2018

| NAICS Industry Title | Prelim Jan-19 | Revised Dec-18 | Revised Jan-18 | Change | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | | Dec-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 | Jan-18 Jan-19 |
| Total Nonfarm | 5,070 | 5,330 | 5,040 | -260 | 30 | 0.6% |
| Total Private | 4,250 | 4,510 | 4,280 | -260 | -30 | -0.7% |
| Goods Producing | 840 | 900 | 830 | -60 | 10 | 1.2% |
| Mining, Logging, and Construction | 650 | 680 | 650 | -30 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Manufacturing | 190 | 220 | 180 | -30 | 10 | 5.6% |
| Service Providing | 4,230 | 4,430 | 4,210 | -200 | 20 | 0.5% |
| Trade, Transportation, and Utilities | 990 | 1,040 | 930 | -50 | 60 | 6.5% |
| Information and Financial Activities | 380 | 390 | 330 | -10 | 50 | 15.2% |
| Professional and Business Services | 320 | 340 | 350 | -20 | -30 | -8.6% |
| Education and Health Services | 620 | 600 | 570 | 20 | 50 | 8.8% |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 940 | 1,070 | 1,080 | -130 | -140 | -13.0% |
| Government | 820 | 820 | 760 | 0 | 60 | 7.9% |
| Workers in Labor/Management Disputes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County decreased by 260 from December to January. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 30 jobs or 0.6 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 January, all private sector industries detailed in this report shed jobs, with the exception of education and health services which added 20. Leisure and hospitality, the county’s largest industry, shed 130 jobs.

- Over the year, there was a net gain of employment. The largest one-year gains were attributable to hiring in the trade, transportation and utilities industries (+60). The deepest 12 month losses were attributable to the leisure and hospitality industry (-140).
- September benchmarks boosted previous estimates by 30 jobs or 0.5%.

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 November and updated in February. Forecast information is available at www.erfc.wa.gov.



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