

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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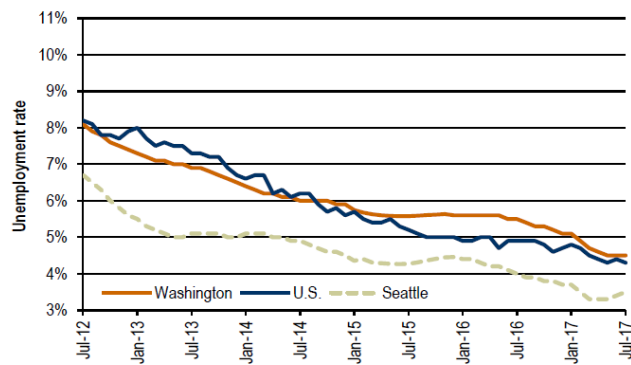
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On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 1,600 from June 2017 to July 2017.¹ BLS estimates the private sector lost 3,700 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 5,300 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for July 2016 through July 2017 indicate an increase in employment of 85,200 for the state. The private sector added 67,900 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 17,300 jobs over the year.

Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for July 2017 is 4.5 percent. The revised estimated June 2017 unemployment rate was at 4.5 percent. The July 2016 unemployment rate was 5.5 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted
U.S., Washington and Seattle, July 2012 through July 2017
Source: Employment Security Department/WITS; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) Jul-17	Jun-17	Jul-16	Year-to-Year Change
USA	4.6%	4.5%	5.1%	-0.5%
Washington state	4.4%	4.4%	5.4%	-1.0%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	4.7%	4.8%	6.1%	-1.4%
Whatcom	4.7%	4.8%	6.0%	-1.3%
Skagit	4.9%	5.1%	6.5%	-1.6%
Island	4.9%	4.8%	6.1%	-1.2%
San Juan	3.1%	3.3%	4.1%	-1.0%

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. June’s preliminary estimated gain of 2,500 jobs was revised to a gain of 4,200 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.7 percent in July 2017 (preliminary), down from 4.8 in June (revised). The unemployment rate in July 2016 was 6.0 percent.

- Compared to July 2016, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 5,014 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 1,186, resulting in a 3.5 percent increase in the size of the labor force and a drop in the unemployment rate. Whatcom County’s labor force was about 113,483 in July 2017.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County decreased from 770 in June to 654. Altogether, 1,618 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in July; up from 1,517 in June.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
 Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)

Data benchmarked through March 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-17	Revised Jun-17	Revised Jul-16	Change		
				Jun-17 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17
Total Nonfarm	92,100	93,800	90,000	-1,700	2,100	2.3%
Total Private	76,200	76,000	74,100	200	2,100	2.8%
Goods Producing	18,300	18,000	17,200	300	1,100	6.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	7,500	7,300	7,000	200	500	7.1%
Manufacturing	10,800	10,700	10,200	100	600	5.9%
Service Providing	73,800	75,800	72,800	-2,000	1,000	1.4%
Private Services Providing	57,900	58,000	56,900	-100	1,000	1.8%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	17,200	16,700	16,800	500	400	2.4%
Retail Trade	11,700	11,500	11,400	200	300	2.6%
Financial Activities	3,400	3,400	3,400	0	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	8,300	8,200	8,200	100	100	1.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	11,100	11,200	10,900	-100	200	1.8%
Government	15,900	17,800	15,900	-1,900	0	0.0%
Federal Government	1,400	1,400	1,400	0	0	0.0%
Total State Government	4,500	6,100	4,600	-1,600	-100	-2.2%
Total Local Government	10,000	10,300	9,900	-300	100	1.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Whatcom County contracted by 1,700 from June to July 2017. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs is up 2,100 or 2.3 percent.

- In July, goods producing industries collectively added 300 jobs. Private services providers shed 100 jobs and government employers shed 1,900. All private sector industries detailed in this report added jobs over the month, with the exception of leisure and hospitality which shed jobs and financial activities which remained unchanged. The large drop in state

government employment is reflective of the academic calendar and can be expected to rise again in the fall.

- Year over year, the largest private sector gains were attributed to hiring in manufacturing (+600) and construction (+500). Jobs were added by employers in all industries detailed in this report, except for government and financial activities which each remained unchanged.

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 4.9 percent in July 2017 (preliminary), down from 5.1 percent in June (revised). The unemployment rate in July 2016 was 6.5 percent.

- Compared to July 2016, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 2,998 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ decreased by 827. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated as 61,567, having increased by 3.7 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County decreased from 424 in June to 408. Altogether, 945 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in July. This is down from 949 in June.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

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

Data benchmarked through March 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-17	Revised Jun-17	Revised Jul-16	Change		
				Jun-17 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17
Total Nonfarm	52,500	51,900	49,900	600	2,600	5.2%
Total Private	40,900	40,200	38,600	700	2,300	6.0%
Goods Producing	11,300	10,800	9,700	500	1,600	16.5%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,700	4,600	3,800	100	900	23.7%
Manufacturing	6,600	6,200	5,900	400	700	11.9%
Service Providing	41,200	41,100	40,200	100	1,000	2.5%
Private Services Providing	29,600	29,400	28,900	200	700	2.4%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	10,000	10,000	10,100	0	-100	-1.0%
Retail Trade	7,400	7,300	7,200	100	200	2.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,400	5,300	5,500	100	-100	-1.8%
Government	11,600	11,700	11,300	-100	300	2.7%
Federal Government	500	500	500	0	0	0.0%
State Government	1,400	1,500	1,200	-100	200	16.7%
Local Government	9,700	9,700	9,600	0	100	1.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In July 2017, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls expanded by 600. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 2,600 or 5.2 percent.

- Over the month, the largest employment gains were attributable to hiring in manufacturing (+400). The only sectors not reporting month to month growth were government (-100) and trade transportation warehousing and utilities (no change).
- Over the year, most industries detailed in this report added jobs. The largest employment gains were observed in construction (+900) and manufacturing (+700). Employers in leisure and hospitality shed jobs.

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 4.9 percent (preliminary) in July 2017. This is up from 4.8 percent (revised) in June. The unemployment rate in July 2016 was 6.1 percent.

- Compared to July 2016, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,568 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work fell by 330. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 34,252, increasing by 3.7 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County decreased from 182 in June to 166. Altogether, 377 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in July. This is up from 371 in June.

Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Oak Harbor Micropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)

Data benchmarked through March 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-17	Revised Jun-17	Revised Jul-16	Change		
				Jun-17 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17
Total Nonfarm	16,690	16,780	16,250	-90	440	2.7%
Total Private	12,000	12,060	11,690	-60	310	2.7%
Goods Producing	1,850	1,840	1,710	10	140	8.2%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,030	1,020	940	10	90	9.6%
Manufacturing	820	820	770	0	50	6.5%
Service Providing	14,840	14,940	14,540	-100	300	2.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,660	2,690	2,630	-30	30	1.1%
Retail Trade	2,180	2,200	2,180	-20	0	0.0%
Information and Financial Activities	800	800	850	0	-50	-5.9%
Professional and Business Services	1,240	1,240	1,240	0	0	0.0%
Education and Health Services	2,160	2,220	2,060	-60	100	4.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,460	2,440	2,430	20	30	1.2%
Government	4,690	4,720	4,560	-30	130	2.9%
Federal Government	1,340	1,340	1,340	0	0	0.0%
State and Local Government	3,350	3,380	3,220	-30	130	4.0%
State and Local Government Education	1,440	1,490	1,340	-50	100	7.5%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County decreased by 90 in July 2017. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 440 or 2.7 percent.

- From June to July, the largest job gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (+20) and the deepest losses were observed in government and trade transportation and utilities (-30 each).
- Year-over-year, Island County employment expanded in most industry sectors detailed in this report. The largest gains were attributable to hiring in government (+130) education and health services (+100) and construction (+90). Losses were observed in information and financial activities (-50).

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County fell from 3.3 percent in June (revised) to 3.1 percent (preliminary) in July. The unemployment rate in July 2016 was 4.1 percent.

- Compared to July 2016, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 340 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 83. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 9,265 people and increased by 2.9 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County increased from 10 in June to 12. Altogether, 21 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in July. This is down from 30 in June.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through March 2017

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-17	Revised Jun-17	Revised Jul-16	Change		
				Jun-17 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17	Jul-16 Jul-17
Total Nonfarm	6,680	6,280	6,630	400	50	0.8%
Total Private	5,840	5,400	5,780	440	60	1.0%
Goods Producing	920	900	890	20	30	3.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	720	710	690	10	30	4.3%
Manufacturing	200	190	200	10	0	0.0%
Service Providing	5,760	5,380	5,740	380	20	0.3%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,040	980	1,110	60	-70	-6.3%
Information and Financial Activities	330	320	360	10	-30	-8.3%
Professional and Business Services	400	390	450	10	-50	-11.1%
Education and Health Services	600	600	590	0	10	1.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,360	2,020	2,190	340	170	7.8%
Government	840	880	850	-40	-10	-1.2%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in San Juan County expanded by 400 in July. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 50 jobs or 0.8 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 July, goods producing employment increased by 20 jobs, with employment gains coming from both construction and manufacturing. The largest month to month changes were attributable to hiring in leisure and hospitality (+340) and trade transportation and utilities (+60).
- Over the year, the largest gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (+170) and construction (+30). The deepest losses were observed in trade transportation and utilities and professional and business services (-70 and -50 respectively).