

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

Volume 2018, Number 7

July 2018

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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 12,400 in July 2018.¹ BLS estimates the private sector gained 11,900 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 500 jobs.

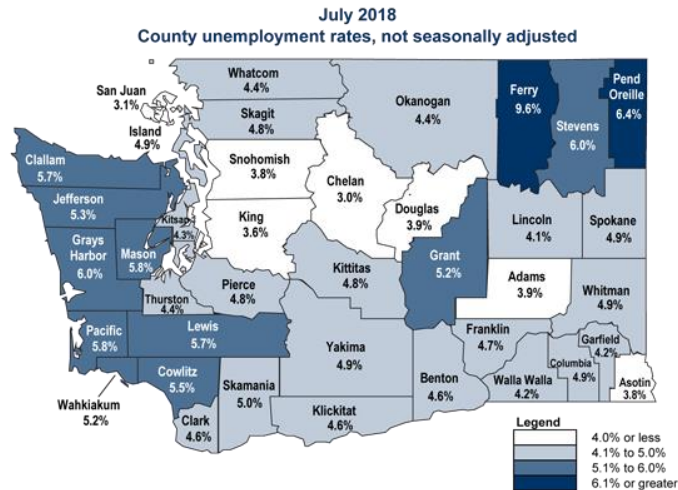
On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for July 2017 through July 2018 indicate an increase in employment of 102,500 for the state. The private sector added 103,600 jobs while the public sector lost an estimated 1,100 jobs over the year.

Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for July 2018 is 4.6 percent. The revised estimated June 2018 unemployment rate is at 4.7 percent. The July 2017 unemployment rate was 4.8 percent.

Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) Jul-18	Jun-18	Jul-17	Year-to-Year Change
USA	4.1%	4.2%	4.6%	-0.5%
Washington state	4.2%	4.4%	4.6%	-0.4%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	4.5%	4.8%	5.0%	-0.5%
Whatcom County	4.4%	4.7%	5.0%	-0.6%
Skagit County	4.8%	5.0%	5.2%	-0.4%
Island County	4.9%	5.2%	5.0%	-0.1%
San Juan County	3.1%	3.5%	3.2%	-0.1%

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 4,100 jobs was revised to a gain of 7,100 jobs.



Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.4 percent in July 2018 (preliminary), down from 4.7 percent reported in June (revised). The unemployment rate in July 2017 was 5.0 percent.

- Compared to July 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,713 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 618, resulting in a 1.0 percent increase in the size of the labor force. Whatcom County’s labor force was about 111,772 in July.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County decreased from 643 in June to 634. Altogether, 1,412 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in July; up from 1,311 in June.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)
 Data benchmarked through March 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-18	Revised Jun-18	Revised Jul-17	Change		
				Jun-18 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18
Total Nonfarm	94,700	96,900	90,900	-2,200	3,800	4.2%
Total Private	78,800	78,300	74,800	500	4,000	5.3%
Goods Producing	19,500	19,200	18,100	300	1,400	7.7%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,700	8,500	7,800	200	900	11.5%
Manufacturing	10,800	10,700	10,300	100	500	4.9%
Service Providing	75,200	77,700	72,800	-2,500	2,400	3.3%
Private Services Providing	59,300	59,100	56,700	200	2,600	4.6%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	17,400	17,200	16,700	200	700	4.2%
Retail Trade	11,200	11,000	11,300	200	-100	-0.9%
Financial Activities	3,600	3,600	3,500	0	100	2.9%
Professional and Business Services	8,600	8,500	8,300	100	300	3.6%
Leisure and Hospitality	11,200	11,200	10,200	0	1,000	9.8%
Government	15,900	18,600	16,100	-2,700	-200	-1.2%
Federal Government	1,500	1,400	1,400	100	100	7.1%
Total State Government	4,500	6,900	4,600	-2,400	-100	-2.2%
Total Local Government	9,900	10,300	10,100	-400	-200	-2.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County decreased by 2,200 from June to July 2018. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 3,800 or 4.2 percent.

- In July, goods producing industries collectively added 300 jobs. Private services providers added 200 and government shed 2,700 jobs. The largest one-month gains were observed in construction and trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities—specifically within retail trade (+200 each); the only major industry reporting a loss was government (-2,700).

Government losses in July are reflective of the start of summer vacation, and most will return in the September and October reports.

- Over the year, all but two of the major industries covered by this report added jobs. The largest gains were observed in leisure and hospitality and construction (+1,000 and 900 respectively). Government and retail trade each shed jobs over the year.

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 4.8 percent in July 2018 (preliminary), down from 5.0 reported in June (revised). The unemployment rate in July 2017 was 5.2 percent.

- Compared to July 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 348 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ decreased by 234. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated at 60,249, increasing by 0.2 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County decreased from 522 in June to 475. Altogether, 976 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in July. This is up from 883 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 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-18	Revised Jun-18	Revised Jul-17	Change		
				Jun-18 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18
Total Nonfarm	52,600	52,200	50,700	400	1,900	3.7%
Total Private	41,000	40,300	39,200	700	1,800	4.6%
Goods Producing	11,200	10,800	10,200	400	1,000	9.8%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,500	4,500	4,200	0	300	7.1%
Manufacturing	6,700	6,300	6,000	400	700	11.7%
Service Providing	41,400	41,400	40,500	0	900	2.2%
Private Services Providing	29,800	29,500	29,000	300	800	2.8%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	10,100	10,000	10,100	100	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	7,500	7,400	7,200	100	300	4.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,300	5,200	5,600	100	-300	-5.4%
Government	11,600	11,900	11,500	-300	100	0.9%
Federal Government	500	400	500	100	0	0.0%
State Government	1,200	1,500	1,300	-300	-100	-7.7%
Local Government	9,900	10,000	9,700	-100	200	2.1%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In July 2018, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls increased by 400. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 1,900 or 3.7 percent.

- Over the month, most major industry sectors detailed in this report added jobs. The largest increase was attributable to hiring in manufacturing (+400). Government employment was down over the month (-300) reflecting the end of the school year.
- The industry reporting the largest annual gains was manufacturing (+700). Leisure and hospitality shed 300 jobs over the year.

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 4.9 percent (preliminary) in July 2018. This is down from 5.2 percent in June (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.0 percent.

- Compared to July 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ decreased by 395 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work contracted by 81. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 34,012, a decline of 1.4 percent over the year.
- There were 147 initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County in July, down from 166 in June. Altogether, 391 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in July. This is up from 385 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 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-18	Revised Jun-18	Revised Jul-17	Change		
				Jun-18 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18
Total Nonfarm	17,070	17,160	17,010	-90	60	0.4%
Total Private	12,460	12,460	12,380	0	80	0.6%
Goods Producing	1,930	1,900	1,850	30	80	4.3%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,130	1,100	1,020	30	110	10.8%
Manufacturing	800	800	830	0	-30	-3.6%
Service Providing	15,140	15,260	15,160	-120	-20	-0.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,710	2,720	2,710	-10	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	2,180	2,180	2,200	0	-20	-0.9%
Information and Financial Activities	810	810	830	0	-20	-2.4%
Professional and Business Services	1,260	1,260	1,330	0	-70	-5.3%
Education and Health Services	2,340	2,410	2,220	-70	120	5.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,560	2,520	2,600	40	-40	-1.5%
Government	4,610	4,700	4,630	-90	-20	-0.4%
Federal Government	1,340	1,340	1,320	0	20	1.5%
State and Local Government	3,270	3,360	3,310	-90	-40	-1.2%
State and Local Government Education	1,440	1,520	1,400	-80	40	2.9%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County decreased by 90 from June to July 2018. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 60 or 0.4 percent.

- From June to July, two major industries added jobs and three lost jobs. The largest month-to-month increase was observed in leisure and hospitality (+40). Government shed 90 jobs.
- Year-over-year, the industry adding the largest number of jobs was education and health services (+120). The deepest loss was attributable to professional and business services (-70).

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County decreased from 3.5 percent in June (revised) to 3.1 percent (preliminary) in July 2018. The unemployment rate in July 2017 was 3.2 percent.

- Compared to July 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ decreased by 319 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 18. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 8,935 people and decreased by 3.6 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County was 13 in June and 10 in July. Altogether, 30 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in June. This is down from 41 in June.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through March 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Jul-18	Revised Jun-18	Revised Jul-17	Change		
				Jun-18 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18	Jul-17 Jul-18
Total Nonfarm	6,700	6,210	6,790	490	-90	-1.3%
Total Private	5,930	5,410	6,000	520	-70	-1.2%
Goods Producing	960	920	950	40	10	1.1%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	710	690	720	20	-10	-1.4%
Manufacturing	250	230	230	20	20	8.7%
Service Providing	5,740	5,290	5,840	450	-100	-1.7%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,140	1,080	1,110	60	30	2.7%
Information and Financial Activities	360	350	380	10	-20	-5.3%
Professional and Business Services	410	390	400	20	10	2.5%
Education and Health Services	600	600	600	0	0	0.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,270	1,870	2,360	400	-90	-3.8%
Government	770	800	790	-30	-20	-2.5%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County increased by 490 from June to July 2018. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was down 90 jobs or -1.3 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, most industries added jobs. The largest increase was attributable to the county's largest industry: leisure and hospitality (+400). Government shed 30 jobs in July, consistent with the rhythm of the school year.
- Over the year, there was a net loss of employment, with a mix of industry-specific gains and losses; the largest industry gain was observed in trade transportation and utilities (+30). The deepest year-over-year loss was observed in leisure and hospitality (-90).

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.