

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 9,600 in May 2019. BLS estimates the private sector gained 8,400 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 1,200 jobs.

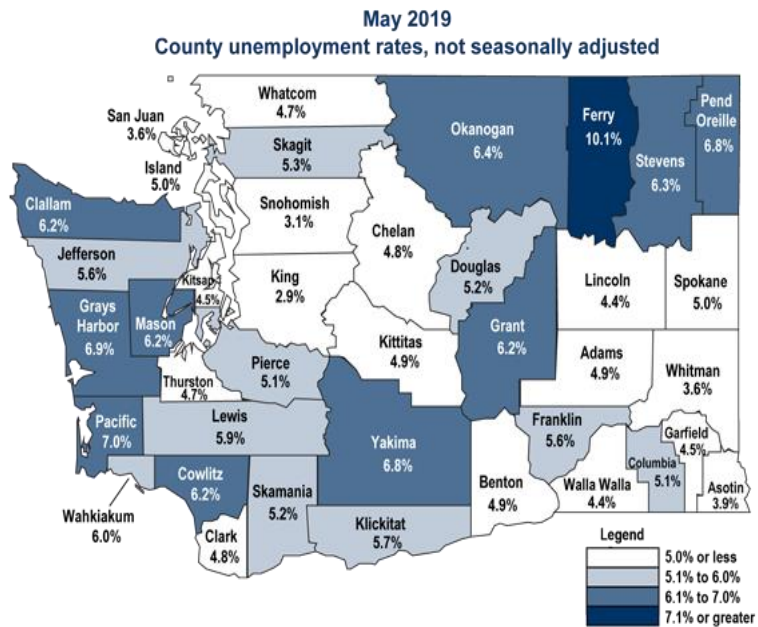
On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for May 2018 through May 2019 indicate an increase in employment of 82,300 for the state. The private sector added 83,700 jobs while the public sector lost an estimated 1,400 jobs over the year.

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

Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) May-19	Apr-19	May-18	Year-to- Year Change
USA	3.4%	3.3%	3.6%	-0.2%
Washington state	4.2%	4.4%	4.2%	0.0%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	4.9%	5.2%	4.5%	0.4%
Whatcom County	4.7%	5.0%	4.3%	0.4%
Skagit County	5.3%	5.5%	4.8%	0.5%
Island County	5.0%	5.4%	5.0%	0.0%
San Juan County	3.6%	4.3%	3.7%	-0.1%

13,500 jobs was revised to a gain of 13,300 jobs.



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

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.7 percent in May 2019 (preliminary), down from 5.0 percent reported in April (revised). The unemployment rate in May 2018 was 4.3 percent.

- Compared to 12 months ago, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 3,462 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 615, nudging the unemployment rate up over the year. The labor force increased by 3.7 percent. Whatcom County’s labor force was estimated at 115,198 in May 2019.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County increased from 694 in April to 826. Altogether, 1,403 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in May; down from 1,538 in April.

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 May-19	Revised Apr-19	Revised May-18	Change		
				Apr-19 May-19	May-18 May-19	May-18 May-19
Total Nonfarm	97,300	97,400	96,300	-100	1,000	1.0%
Total Private	78,700	78,200	77,500	500	1,200	1.5%
Goods Producing	19,400	19,300	19,000	100	400	2.1%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,800	8,800	8,700	0	100	1.1%
Manufacturing	10,600	10,500	10,300	100	300	2.9%
Service Providing	77,900	78,100	77,300	-200	600	0.8%
Private Services Providing	59,300	58,900	58,500	400	800	1.4%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,900	16,600	16,700	300	200	1.2%
Retail Trade	11,200	11,200	11,300	0	-100	-0.9%
Financial Activities	3,700	3,700	3,800	0	-100	-2.6%
Professional and Business Services	8,500	8,400	8,300	100	200	2.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	11,200	11,000	11,000	200	200	1.8%
Government	18,600	19,200	18,800	-600	-200	-1.1%
Federal Government	1,400	1,500	1,400	-100	0	0.0%
Total State Government	6,600	7,000	7,000	-400	-400	-5.7%
Total Local Government	10,600	10,700	10,400	-100	200	1.9%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County decreased by 100 from April to May 2019. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 1,000 or 1.0 percent.

- In May, 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), excluding retail trade which did not change over the month. Government employment dropped by 600 over the month.
- Over the year, five major industries detailed in this report added jobs. The largest gains were observed in manufacturing (+300). Trade transportation warehousing and utilities, professional and business services and leisure and hospitality each added 200. Government and financial activities each shed jobs over the year (-200 and -100 respectively). Retail trade, a subcategory of trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities, also shed 100 jobs over the year.

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 5.3 percent in May 2019 (preliminary), down from 5.5 percent in April (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 4.8 percent.

- Compared to May 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,894 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ increased by 426. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated at 62,101, increasing by 3.9 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County increased from 561 in April to 590 in May. Altogether, 1,011 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in May; down from 1,044 in April.

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 May-19	Revised Apr-19	Revised May-18	Change		
				Apr-19 May-19	May-18 May-19	May-18 May-19
Total Nonfarm	52,600	52,300	51,700	300	900	1.7%
Total Private	40,500	40,200	39,800	300	700	1.8%
Goods Producing	10,900	10,900	10,600	0	300	2.8%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,900	4,900	4,600	0	300	6.5%
Manufacturing	6,000	6,000	6,000	0	0	0.0%
Service Providing	41,700	41,400	41,100	300	600	1.5%
Private Services Providing	29,600	29,300	29,200	300	400	1.4%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,700	9,800	10,000	-100	-300	-3.0%
Retail Trade	7,200	7,200	7,300	0	-100	-1.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,300	5,200	5,400	100	-100	-1.9%
Government	12,100	12,100	11,900	0	200	1.7%
Federal Government	400	400	400	0	0	0.0%
State Government	1,500	1,500	1,600	0	-100	-6.3%
Local Government	10,200	10,200	9,900	0	300	3.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In May 2019, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls increased by 300. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 900 or 1.7 percent.

- Over the month, most industries remained relatively unchanged. Leisure and hospitality and trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities each changed by 100 (+100 and -100 respectively).
- Most major industries in this report added jobs over the year. The industries reporting the largest gains were construction (+300) and government (+200). Trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities (including retail) reported the largest 12-month losses (-300).

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 5.0 percent (preliminary) in May 2019. This is down from 5.4 percent in April (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.0 percent.

- Compared to May 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 411 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 23. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 34,826, an increase of 1.3 percent over the year.

- There were 152 initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County in May, down from 194 in April. Altogether, 391 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in May. This is down from 403 in April.

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 May-19	Revised Apr-19	Revised May-18	Change		
				Apr-19 May-19	May-18 May-19	May-18 May-19
Total Nonfarm	16,910	16,740	17,120	170	-210	-1.2%
Total Private	12,240	12,080	12,380	160	-140	-1.1%
Goods Producing	1,850	1,810	1,880	40	-30	-1.6%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,080	1,050	1,070	30	10	0.9%
Manufacturing	770	760	810	10	-40	-4.9%
Service Providing	15,060	14,930	15,240	130	-180	-1.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,720	2,700	2,720	20	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	2,150	2,140	2,170	10	-20	-0.9%
Information and Financial Activities	760	760	810	0	-50	-6.2%
Professional and Business Services	1,250	1,250	1,280	0	-30	-2.3%
Education and Health Services	2,240	2,230	2,370	10	-130	-5.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,540	2,460	2,470	80	70	2.8%
Government	4,670	4,660	4,740	10	-70	-1.5%
Federal Government	1,310	1,300	1,310	10	0	0.0%
State and Local Government	3,360	3,360	3,430	0	-70	-2.0%
State and Local Government Education	1,570	1,590	1,560	-20	10	0.6%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County expanded by 170 from April to May 2019. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs contracted by 210 or 1.2 percent.

- From April to May, most industries reported employment gains. The largest one month gains were attributable to hiring in leisure and hospitality (+80) and construction (+30).
- Year-over-year, more industries shed jobs than added them. The deepest losses were observed in the education and health services industries (-130) and government (-70).

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 4.3 percent in April (revised) to 3.6 percent (preliminary) in May. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 3.7 percent.

- Compared to May 2018, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 364 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 9. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 8,461 workers and increased by 4.6 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County totaled 9 in May, down from 20 in April. Altogether, 48 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in May. This is down from 62 in April.

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 May-19	Revised Apr-19	Revised May-18	Change		
				Apr-19 May-19	May-18 May-19	May-18 May-19
Total Nonfarm	5,970	5,600	5,760	370	210	3.6%
Total Private	5,210	4,850	4,990	360	220	4.4%
Goods Producing	980	950	920	30	60	6.5%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	750	730	700	20	50	7.1%
Manufacturing	230	220	220	10	10	4.5%
Service Providing	4,990	4,650	4,840	340	150	3.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,050	990	1,010	60	40	4.0%
Information and Financial Activities	370	360	370	10	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	380	370	390	10	-10	-2.6%
Education and Health Services	650	640	600	10	50	8.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	1,600	1,340	1,510	260	90	6.0%
Government	760	750	770	10	-10	-1.3%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County increased by 370 from April to May. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 210 jobs or 3.6 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 May, the largest one-month gains were reported from leisure and hospitality (+260).
- Over the year, there was a net gain of employment. The largest one-year gains were attributable to hiring in leisure and hospitality (+90). Construction and education and health

services also made a strong showing, each increasing over the year employment by 50. The only two industries reporting 12-month losses were professional and business services and government (-10 each).

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 June. Forecast information is available at www.erfc.wa.gov.

New data published at esd.wa.gov

The Labor Market and Economic Analysis division of ESD publishes **industry and occupational projections** on an annual basis. 2019 projections were published last week.

<https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/projections>

- The average annual growth rate projected for the Northwest Workforce Development Area from 2017 to 2022 is about 1.6 percent. At a broad industry level, the highest growth industries are expected to be construction (2.9 percent) and other services (2.7 percent).

Occupational Employment Statistics are also updated annually. Find occupation and wage information for 2019 here. <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/occupations>. Note that Whatcom County estimates are found in the Bellingham MSA, Skagit County is identified as Mount Vernon-Anacortes MSA, and Island and San Juan occupational estimates are bundled with Clallam and Jefferson County as the Western Washington nonmetropolitan area.

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.