

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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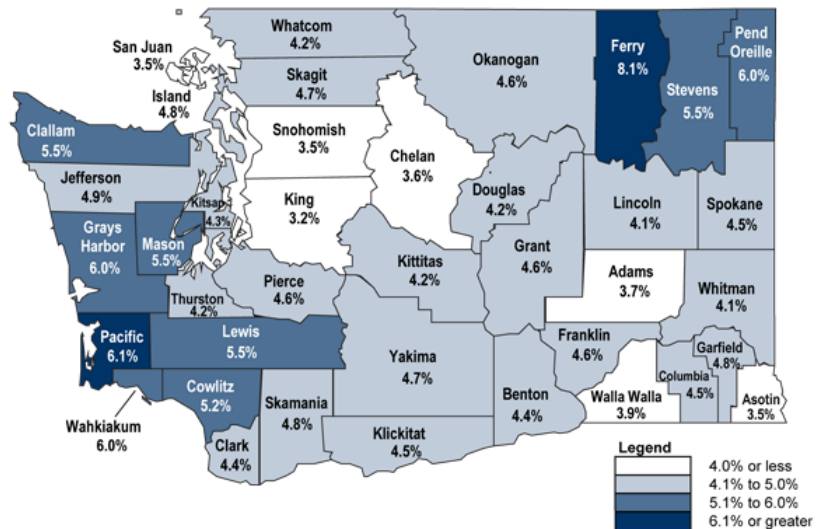
www.esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo

On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 12,400 in October 2018. BLS estimates the private sector gained 8,800 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 3,600 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for October 2017 through October 2018 indicate an increase in employment of 119,200 for the state. The private sector added 112,100 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 7,100 jobs over the year.

Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for October 2018 is 4.3 percent. The revised estimated September 2018 unemployment rate is at 4.4 percent. The September 2017 unemployment rate was 4.7 percent.

October 2018
County unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted



Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) Oct-18	Sep-18	Oct-17	Year-to- Year Change
USA	3.5%	3.6%	3.9%	-0.4%
Washington state	4.0%	3.9%	4.4%	-0.4%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	4.4%	4.1%	4.6%	-0.2%
Whatcom County	4.2%	3.9%	4.4%	-0.2%
Skagit County	4.7%	4.4%	4.8%	-0.1%
Island County	4.8%	4.6%	4.9%	-0.1%
San Juan County	3.5%	3.1%	3.5%	0.0%

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. September’s preliminary estimated gain of 4,500 jobs was revised to a gain of 8,300 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.2 percent in October 2018 (preliminary), up relative to 3.9 percent reported in September (revised). The unemployment rate in October 2017 was 4.4 percent.

- Compared to October 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 3,118 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 130, resulting in a 2.7percent increase in the size of the labor force. Whatcom County’s labor force was about 113,986 in October.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County increased from 492 in September to 730. Altogether, 1,122 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in October; down from 1,184 in September.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

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

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Oct-18	Revised Sep-18	Revised Oct-17	Change		
				Sep-18 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18
Total Nonfarm	97,500	94,800	94,400	2,700	3,100	3.3%
Total Private	78,000	77,400	75,800	600	2,200	2.9%
Goods Producing	19,300	19,200	18,800	100	500	2.7%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,800	8,700	8,600	100	200	2.3%
Manufacturing	10,500	10,500	10,200	0	300	2.9%
Service Providing	78,200	75,600	75,600	2,600	2,600	3.4%
Private Services Providing	58,700	58,200	57,000	500	1,700	3.0%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,900	16,600	16,500	300	400	2.4%
Retail Trade	11,500	11,200	11,200	300	300	2.7%
Financial Activities	3,900	3,900	3,500	0	400	11.4%
Professional and Business Services	8,400	8,300	8,300	100	100	1.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	10,900	11,100	10,400	-200	500	4.8%
Government	19,500	17,400	18,600	2,100	900	4.8%
Federal Government	1,500	1,500	1,400	0	100	7.1%
Total State Government	7,700	6,400	7,100	1,300	600	8.5%
Total Local Government	10,300	9,500	10,100	800	200	2.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County increased by 2,700 from September to October 2018. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was up 3,100 or 3.3 percent.

- In October, private employers collectively added 600 jobs. Beneath the surface, retail trade (within trade, transportation warehousing and utilities) added the largest number of jobs (+300). The only industry reporting over the month losses was leisure and hospitality (-200). Government employment expanded by 2,100 over the month, in step with the beginning of the school year.
- Over the year, all industries detailed in this report added jobs. The largest gains were observed in government (+900) and leisure and hospitality (+500).

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 4.7 percent in October 2018 (preliminary), up from 4.4 percent reported in September (revised). The unemployment rate in October 2017 was 4.8 percent.

- Compared to October 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,254 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ decreased by 2. Skagit County’s labor force was estimated at 60,951, increasing by 2.1 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County increased from 404 in September to 518. Altogether, 868 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in October. This is virtually unchanged from 869 in September.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

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

Data benchmarked through June 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Oct-18	Revised Sep-18	Revised Oct-17	Change		
				Sep-18 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18
Total Nonfarm	52,100	51,500	50,700	600	1,400	2.8%
Total Private	40,000	40,300	39,000	-300	1,000	2.6%
Goods Producing	10,800	10,900	10,300	-100	500	4.9%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,700	4,700	4,400	0	300	6.8%
Manufacturing	6,100	6,200	5,900	-100	200	3.4%
Service Providing	41,300	40,600	40,400	700	900	2.2%
Private Services Providing	29,200	29,400	28,700	-200	500	1.7%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,900	9,800	10,100	100	-200	-2.0%
Retail Trade	7,300	7,200	7,200	100	100	1.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,300	5,500	5,100	-200	200	3.9%
Government	12,100	11,200	11,700	900	400	3.4%
Federal Government	400	400	400	0	0	0.0%
State Government	1,600	1,500	1,600	100	0	0.0%
Local Government	10,100	9,300	9,700	800	400	4.1%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In October 2018, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls expanded by 600. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs increased by 1,400 or 2.8 percent.

- Over the month, the leisure and hospitality and manufacturing industries shed jobs. Trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities (including retail) added 100. Government employment expanded by 900 jobs over the month, related to the school calendar.
- The industries reporting the largest annual gains were government (+400) and construction (+300). Trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities was the only collection of industries reporting losses over the year (-200).

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 4.8 percent (preliminary) in October 2018. This is up from 4.6 percent in September (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 4.9 percent.

- Compared to October 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 30 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work contracted by 54. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 34,729, a decline of 0.1 percent over the year.
- There were 174 initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County in October, up from 161 in September. Altogether, 343 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in October. This is down from 348 in September.

Island County local area payroll jobs

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

Data benchmarked through June 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Oct-18	Revised Sep-18	Revised Oct-17	Change		
				Sep-18 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18
Total Nonfarm	16,920	16,880	16,650	40	270	1.6%
Total Private	12,250	12,400	11,970	-150	280	2.3%
Goods Producing	1,880	1,880	1,830	0	50	2.7%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,100	1,100	1,000	0	100	10.0%
Manufacturing	780	780	830	0	-50	-6.0%
Service Providing	15,040	15,000	14,820	40	220	1.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,660	2,690	2,660	-30	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	2,060	2,090	2,140	-30	-80	-3.7%
Information and Financial Activities	780	780	810	0	-30	-3.7%
Professional and Business Services	1,290	1,280	1,130	10	160	14.2%
Education and Health Services	2,310	2,280	2,380	30	-70	-2.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,470	2,610	2,340	-140	130	5.6%
Government	4,670	4,480	4,680	190	-10	-0.2%
Federal Government	1,300	1,310	1,320	-10	-20	-1.5%
State and Local Government	3,370	3,170	3,360	200	10	0.3%
State and Local Government Education	1,550	1,330	1,500	220	50	3.3%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County expanded by 40 from September to October 2018. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 270 or 1.6 percent.

- From September to October, three major industries added jobs and two shed jobs. The largest month-to-month increase was observed in government (+190) and the deepest losses were observed in leisure and hospitality (-140). Both of these changes are seasonal in nature.
- Year-over-year, the industries adding the largest number of jobs were professional and business services and leisure and hospitality (+160 and +130). The deepest loss was attributable to retail trade (-80).

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County increased from 3.1 percent in September (revised) to 3.5 percent (preliminary) in October 2018. The unemployment rate 12 months earlier was 3.5 percent.

- Compared to October 2017, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 54 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 3. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 8,226 workers and increased by 0.6 percent over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County totaled 21 October, up from 13 the previous month. Altogether, 40 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in October. This is up from 35 in September.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through June 2018

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Oct-18	Revised Sep-18	Revised Oct-17	Change		
				Sep-18 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18	Oct-17 Oct-18
Total Nonfarm	5,760	6,310	5,650	-550	110	1.9%
Total Private	4,970	5,550	4,890	-580	80	1.6%
Goods Producing	980	1,010	940	-30	40	4.3%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	720	730	720	-10	0	0.0%
Manufacturing	260	280	220	-20	40	18.2%
Service Providing	4,780	5,300	4,710	-520	70	1.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	990	1,070	990	-80	0	0.0%
Information and Financial Activities	460	480	350	-20	110	31.4%
Professional and Business Services	360	370	360	-10	0	0.0%
Education and Health Services	620	600	610	20	10	1.6%
Leisure and Hospitality	1,360	1,820	1,460	-460	-100	-6.8%
Government	790	760	760	30	30	3.9%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County decreased by 550 from September to October 2018. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 110 jobs or 1.9 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 October, most industries shed jobs. Leisure and hospitality, the county's largest industry, shed 460 jobs. Education and health services and government were the only industries that added jobs in October.
- Over the year, there was a net gain of employment. The largest one-year gains were attributable to hiring in the information and financial services industries (+110). The only industry reporting 12 month losses was leisure and hospitality (-100).

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

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.