

Northwest Washington Labor Market Review

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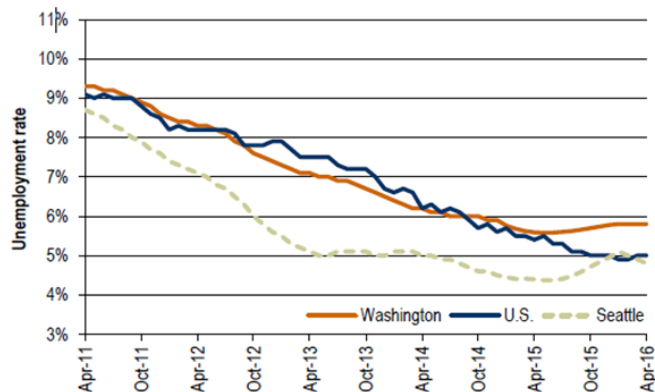
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On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington rose by 11,200 from March 2016 to April 2016. BLS estimates the private sector gained 9,600 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 1,600 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for April 2015 through April 2016 indicate an increase in employment of 102,900 for the state. The private sector added 90,800 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 12,100 jobs over the year.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted
U.S., Washington and Seattle, April 2011 through April 2016
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2016 is 5.8 percent. The revised estimated March 2016 unemployment rate was also at 5.8 percent. The April 2015 unemployment rate was 5.6 percent.

Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)				
Area	(Prelim.) Apr-16	Mar-16	Apr-15	Year-to- Year Change
USA	4.7%	5.1%	5.1%	-0.4%
Washington state	5.6%	6.0%	5.2%	0.4%
Whatcom	6.2%	6.4%	5.5%	0.7%
Skagit	6.9%	7.2%	6.3%	0.6%
Island	6.4%	6.2%	5.8%	0.6%
San Juan	5.2%	5.3%	4.6%	0.6%

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. March’s preliminary estimated gain of 9,000 jobs was revised to a gain of 7,800 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 6.2 percent in April 2016 (preliminary), down from 6.4 percent in March (revised). For comparison, the unemployment rate in April 2015 was 5.5 percent.

- Compared to April 2015, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 2,883 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 967, resulting in an overall increase in the total labor force and in the unemployment rate. Whatcom County’s labor force was estimated at 106,109 in April 2016.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Whatcom County decreased from 885 in March to 813. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in construction-related occupations. Altogether, 1,749 Whatcom County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in April; down from 2,000 in March.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)
 Data benchmarked through December 2015

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-16	Revised Mar-16	Revised Apr-15	Change		
				Mar-16 Apr-16	Apr-15 Apr-16	Apr-15 Apr-16
Total Nonfarm	90,900	89,800	87,700	1,100	3,200	3.6%
Total Private	72,500	71,400	69,600	1,100	2,900	4.2%
Goods Producing	16,600	15,900	16,000	700	600	3.8%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	7,000	6,500	6,900	500	100	1.4%
Manufacturing	9,600	9,400	9,100	200	500	5.5%
Service Providing	74,300	73,900	71,700	400	2,600	3.6%
Private Services Providing	55,900	55,500	53,600	400	2,300	4.3%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,400	15,800	16,100	600	300	1.9%
Retail Trade	11,000	10,700	11,100	300	-100	-0.9%
Financial Activities	3,200	3,200	3,300	0	-100	-3.0%
Professional and Business Services	8,100	8,000	8,000	100	100	1.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	10,500	10,300	9,900	200	600	6.1%
Government	18,400	18,400	18,100	0	300	1.7%
Federal Government	1,400	1,400	1,400	0	0	0.0%
Total State Government	6,800	6,900	6,700	-100	100	1.5%
Total Local Government	10,200	10,100	10,000	100	200	2.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Whatcom County expanded by 1,100 from March to April 2016. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs is up 3.6 percent or 3,200.

- In April 2016, goods producing industries added a net 700 jobs and private sector service providers added 400. Government employment remained unchanged over the month. The largest industry gains in April were observed in construction.

- Altogether, Whatcom County employers added 3,200 jobs over the past 12 months. The largest private sector gains were attributed to hiring in leisure and hospitality (+600) and manufacturing (+500). Retail trade and financial activities reported losses over the year. Public sector employment expanded by 300.

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County decreased from 7.2 percent in March (revised) to 6.9 percent in April (preliminary). The unemployment rate last April was 6.3 percent.

- Compared to April 2015, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,446 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 472. Skagit County’s labor force increased by an estimated 1,918 workers over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Skagit County decreased from 664 in March to 580. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in construction-related occupations. Altogether, 1,251 Skagit County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in April. This is down from 1,387 in March.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)
 Data benchmarked through December 2015

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-16	Revised Mar-16	Revised Apr-15	Change		
				Mar-16 Apr-16	Apr-15 Apr-16	Apr-15 Apr-16
Total Nonfarm	48,900	47,600	48,400	1,300	500	1.0%
Total Private	37,400	36,400	37,100	1,000	300	0.8%
Goods Producing	9,400	9,100	9,400	300	0	0.0%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	3,500	3,400	3,600	100	-100	-2.8%
Manufacturing	5,900	5,700	5,800	200	100	1.7%
Service Providing	39,500	38,500	39,000	1,000	500	1.3%
Private Services Providing	28,000	27,300	27,700	700	300	1.1%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,700	9,700	9,700	0	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	6,700	6,600	6,900	100	-200	-2.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	4,900	4,700	4,900	200	0	0.0%
Government	11,500	11,200	11,300	300	200	1.8%
Federal Government	400	300	400	100	0	0.0%
State Government	1,400	1,400	1,500	0	-100	-6.7%
Local Government	9,700	9,500	9,400	200	300	3.2%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

In April, Skagit County nonfarm payrolls rose by 1,300. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 500 or 1.0 percent.

- Month-to-month, the largest industry-specific gains were attributable to hiring in government (+300) and manufacturing and leisure and hospitality (+200 each).
- Over the year, total nonfarm employment expanded by 500 or 1.0 percent. Employment gains were observed in government and manufacturing. Losses were observed in retail trade and construction.

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County rose from 6.2 percent in March (revised) to 6.4 percent in April (preliminary). The unemployment rate in April 2015 was 5.8 percent.

- Compared to April 2015, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 456 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 213. Island County’s civilian labor force increased by 669 resident civilians over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in Island County decreased from 200 in March to 190. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in production-related occupations. Altogether, 379 Island County residents collected unemployment insurance benefits in April. This is down from 397 the previous month.

Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Oak Harbor Micropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)
 Data benchmarked through December 2015

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim	Revised	Revised	Mar-16	Change	
	Apr-16	Mar-16	Apr-15	Apr-16	Apr-15	Apr-16
Total Nonfarm	15,580	15,500	15,600	80	-20	-0.1%
Total Private	10,910	10,890	10,980	20	-70	-0.6%
Goods Producing	1,580	1,580	1,480	0	100	6.8%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	780	800	760	-20	20	2.6%
Manufacturing	800	780	720	20	80	11.1%
Service Providing	14,000	13,920	14,120	80	-120	-0.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,540	2,550	2,520	-10	20	0.8%
Retail Trade	2,080	2,100	2,110	-20	-30	-1.4%
Information and Financial Activities	640	650	680	-10	-40	-5.9%
Professional and Business Services	1,260	1,200	1,140	60	120	10.5%
Education and Health Services	2,140	2,120	2,260	20	-120	-5.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,100	2,090	2,170	10	-70	-3.2%
Government	4,670	4,610	4,620	60	50	1.1%
Federal Government	1,370	1,340	1,320	30	50	3.8%
State and Local Government	3,300	3,270	3,300	30	0	0.0%
State and Local Government Education	1,490	1,450	1,490	40	0	0.0%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County increased by 80 in April. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs was down 0.1 percent or 20.

- From March to April, the largest gains were observed in government (+60); the deepest losses came from construction and retail trade (-20 each).
- Year-over-year, Island County employment contracted by 20. The largest gains were attributable to hiring in professional and businesses services (+120); the deepest losses came from education and health services (-120).

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County decreased from 5.3 percent (revised) in March to 5.2 percent (preliminary) in April. The unemployment rate observed in April 2015 was 4.6 percent.

- Compared to April 2015, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 99 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work increased by 48. All together, the San Juan County labor force increased by 147 over the year.
- Initial claims for unemployment benefits in San Juan County decreased from 25 in March to 24. The largest number of new claims was filed by persons in management occupations. Altogether, 77 San Juan County residents received unemployment insurance benefits in April. This is down from 104 in March.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through December 2015

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-16	Revised Mar-16	Revised Apr-15	Change		
				Mar-16 Apr-16	Apr-15 Apr-16	Apr-15 Apr-16
Total Nonfarm	5,190	5,050	5,140	140	50	1.0%
Total Private	4,350	4,250	4,320	100	30	0.7%
Goods Producing	750	740	750	10	0	0.0%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	560	560	580	0	-20	-3.4%
Manufacturing	190	180	170	10	20	11.8%
Service Providing	4,440	4,310	4,390	130	50	1.1%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	790	840	880	-50	-90	-10.2%
Information and Financial Activities	300	320	320	-20	-20	-6.3%
Professional and Business Services	380	380	360	0	20	5.6%
Education and Health Services	600	580	590	20	10	1.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	1,360	1,230	1,230	130	130	10.6%
Government	840	800	820	40	20	2.4%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

Nonfarm payroll jobs in San Juan County expanded by 140 in April. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 50 jobs or 1.0 percent.

- San Juan County has a highly-seasonal economy, due to its orientation toward tourism. July and August tend to be the months with the highest levels of employment for the year. Most industries shed jobs in the winter and begin to return with the sun. The largest gains in April

were observed in leisure and hospitality (up 130). Trade, transportation and utilities shed 50 jobs over the month.

- Over the year, employers in San Juan County collectively created 50 jobs. The largest gains were observed in leisure and hospitality (+130). The deepest losses were observed in trade transportation and utilities (-90).