



Employment estimates in this report are generated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Monthly employment estimates are subject to revision in subsequent months when more sample data become available.

BLS data in this report are rounded to the nearest 100.

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 2019.¹ 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.

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

For more information, call Paul Turek, labor economist at 360-507-9599.

Resident civilian labor force and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

The resident civilian labor force is the total number of people in the workforce, employed and unemployed, ages 16 and up.

The number of unemployed is the estimated number of people who currently do not have a job, are available for work and have actively looked for work in the last four weeks.

The unemployment rate is the ratio of the estimated number of unemployed divided by the civilian labor force.

Resident civilian labor force and unemployment, seasonally adjusted
 United States and Washington state, April and May, 2018 and 2019
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	May 2019 (Preliminary)	April 2019 (Revised)	May 2018 (Revised)	April 2018 (Revised)
United States				
Unemployment rate				
Seasonally adjusted	3.6%	3.6%	3.8%	3.9%
Washington				
Unemployment rate	4.7%	4.7%	4.5%	4.5%
Resident labor force	3,876,400	3,869,600	3,777,200	3,771,800
Unemployed	180,600	180,800	169,600	171,300
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Unemployment rate	3.5%	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%
Resident labor force	1,715,800	1,714,100	1,680,500	1,679,600
Unemployed	59,700	60,400	57,000	57,400



¹Most of the employment numbers discussed in this report refers to jobs, not persons. For example, if a person holds two positions, these positions are counted as two jobs in the employment series. In the section titled "Unemployment," these positions refer to individuals, not jobs. In this case, a person holding two jobs is counted only once.

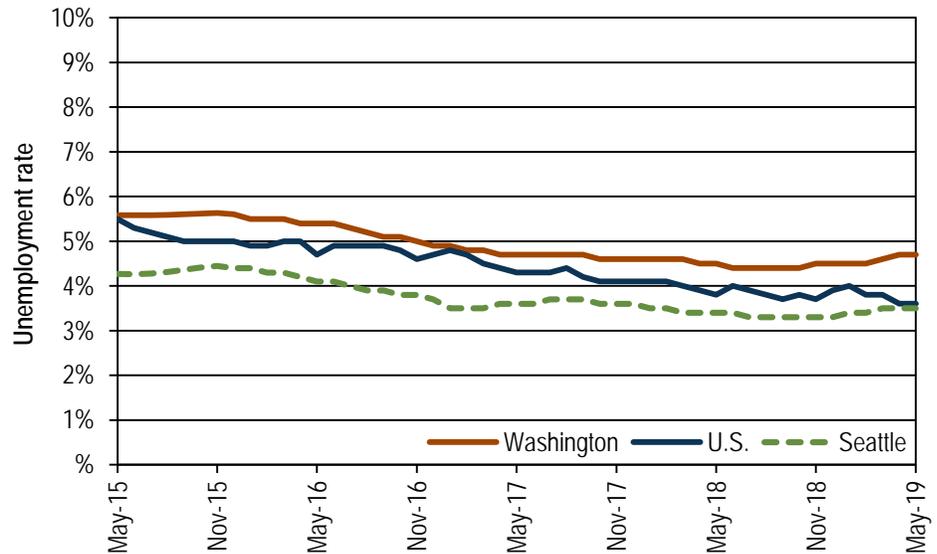
Unemployment, seasonally adjusted

The BLS estimates Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for May 2019 is 4.7 percent. The revised estimated April 2019 unemployment rate is 4.7 percent.

According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people fell by 200 in May 2019 compared to April 2019. At the same time, the number of employed people rose by an estimated 7,000. Overall, this amounted to an increase of 6,800 people in the labor force.

The preliminary May 2019 unemployment rate is a 0.2 percentage point higher than the May 2018 rate of 4.5 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted
U.S., Washington and Seattle, May 2015 through May 2019
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



May 2019 preliminary unemployment rates:

U.S. (preliminary) 3.6%
Washington (preliminary) 4.7%
Seattle area (preliminary) 3.5%

Employment change and moving average, seasonally adjusted

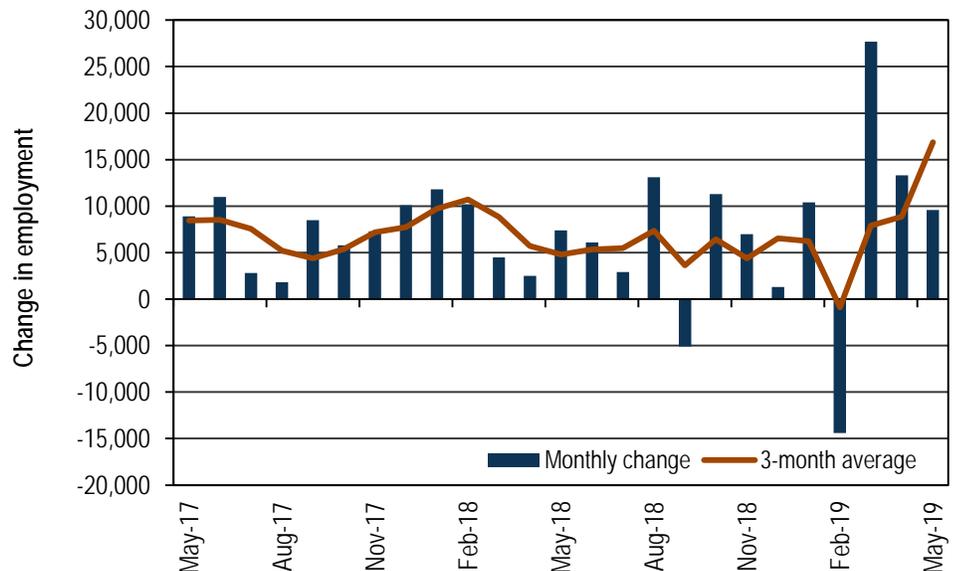
Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 9,600 jobs from April 2019 to May 2019.

Recent employment change
March 2019: up 27,700 jobs (revised)

April 2019: up 13,300 jobs (revised)

May 2019: up 9,600 jobs (preliminary)

Monthly employment change and three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, May 2017 through May 2019
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics



Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

March 2008

(start of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 3,008,000

Unemployment rate: 4.8%

February 2010

(end of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 2,824,000

Unemployment rate: 10.4%

May 2019 (preliminary)

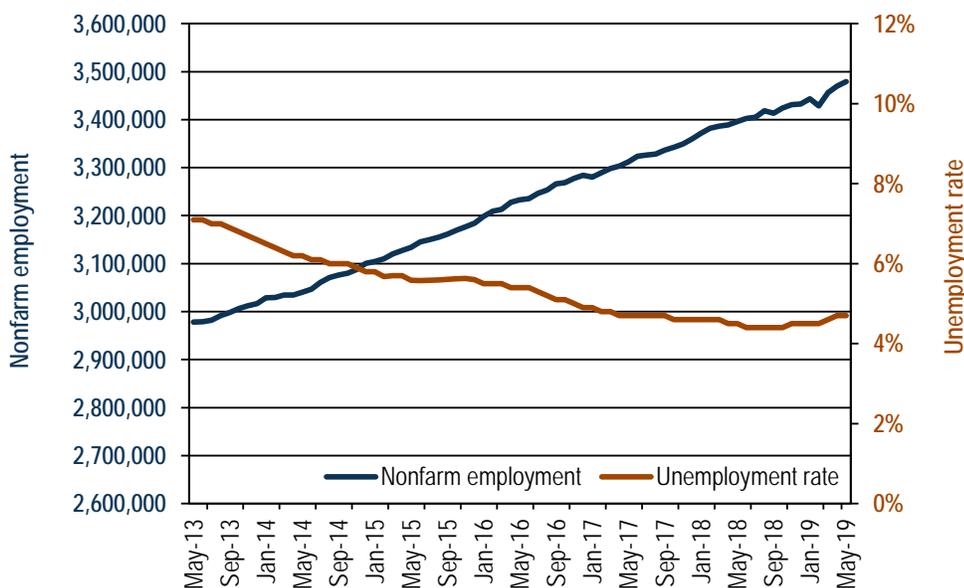
Nonfarm employment: 3,479,400

Unemployment rate: 4.7%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, May 2013 through May 2019

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Understanding what seasonally adjusted means

Over the course of a year, the size of the state's labor force and the levels of employment and unemployment undergo sharp fluctuations due to such seasonal events as changes in weather, reduced or expanded production, harvest, major holidays and the opening and closing of schools. The effect of such seasonal variation can be very large; seasonal fluctuations may account for as much as 95 percent of the month-to-month changes in unemployment at the national level.

Because these seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on statistical trends can be eliminated by adjusting the statistics from one month to the next. These adjustments make non-seasonal developments, such as declines in economic activity, easier to spot. For example, the large number of youth entering the labor force each June is likely to obscure any other changes that have taken place relative to May, making it

difficult to determine if the level of economic activity has risen or declined. However, because the effect of students finishing school in previous years is known, the statistics for the current year can be adjusted to allow for a comparable change. The adjusted figure provides a more useful tool with which to analyze changes in economic activity.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

U-6 unemployment rate

U-6: Broader unemployment measure declined in the four quarter period ending March 2019

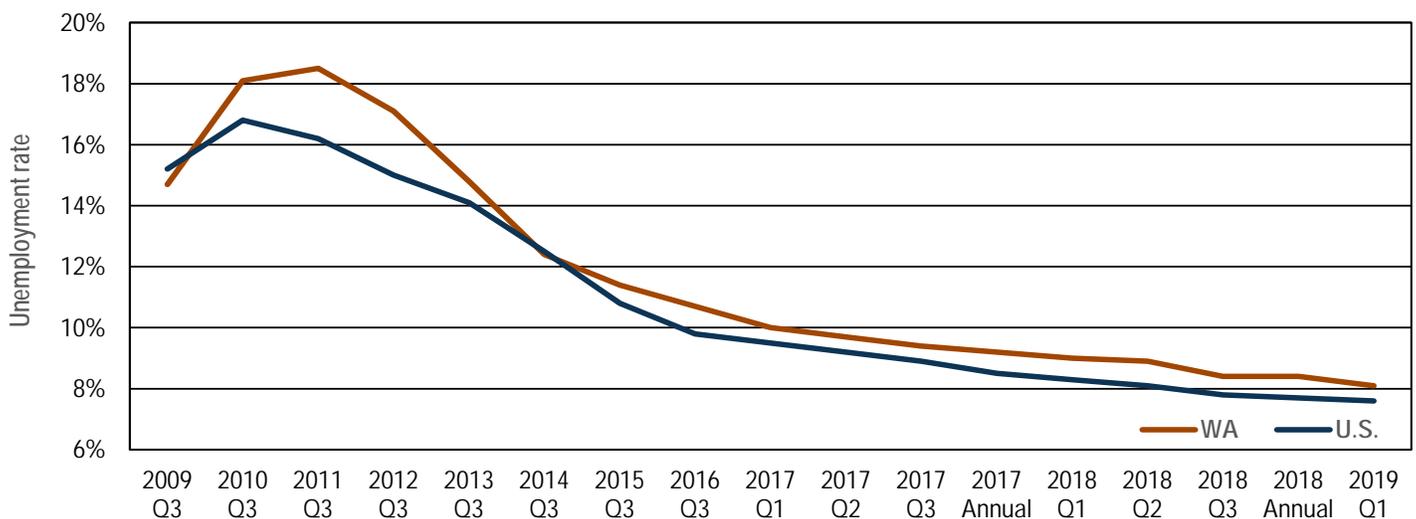
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include the annual average for 2018. One such alternative measure is the U-6 rate, which considers not only the unemployed population in

the official “U-3” unemployment rate, but also marginally attached workers and those employed part time for economic reasons. The U-6 rate is defined by BLS as the “total unemployed, plus all marginally attached workers, plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers.” This U-6 measure measures the

“unemployed, underemployed, and those who are not looking but who want a job.”

The U-6 unemployment rate for the second quarter of 2018 through the first quarter of 2019 for Washington state was 8.1 percent. This was lower compared to the 9.0 percent U-6 unemployment rate one year prior. The U.S. U-6 unemployment rate was 7.6 percent over the same time period.

Alternate measures of labor underutilization, four-quarter moving average
Washington state versus U.S. U-6 unemployment rate



Year	WA/U.S.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Annual average
2019	WA	8.1%			
	U.S.	7.6%			
2018	WA	9.0%	8.9%	8.4%	8.4%
	U.S.	8.3%	8.1%	7.8%	7.7%
2017	WA	10.0%	9.7%	9.4%	9.2%
	U.S.	9.5%	9.2%	8.9%	8.5%
2016	WA	10.9%	10.7%	10.7%	10.3%
	U.S.	10.1%	9.9%	9.8%	9.6%
2015	WA	12.0%	11.7%	11.4%	11.0%
	U.S.	11.6%	11.3%	10.8%	10.4%
2014	WA	13.3%	12.8%	12.4%	12.5%
	U.S.	13.4%	12.9%	12.5%	12.0%
2013	WA	16.4%	15.7%	14.8%	14.0%
	U.S.	14.5%	14.3%	14.1%	13.8%
2012	WA	17.6%	17.0%	17.1%	16.9%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics: <https://www.bls.gov/lau/stalt.htm>.

Industry employment in Washington, seasonally adjusted

One-month employment change by industry

Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington gained an estimated 9,600 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, ten industries expanded employment in May, one contracted, and two remained unchanged.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 8,400 and government employment increased by 1,200.
- Employment in construction increased by 2,200, led by a gain of 1,600 by specialty trade contractors.
- Professional and business services employment rose by 1,800, with administrative and support services adding 1,000 jobs.
- Education and health services employment grew by 1,400, with 1,200 jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- The number of jobs in leisure and hospitality increased by 900 overall, with 900 jobs added in accommodation.
- Employment in retail trade increased by 800 overall, with 700 jobs added by motor vehicle and parts dealers.

Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, April 2019 to May 2019

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

Total nonfarm	9,600
Construction	2,200
Professional and business services	1,800
Education and health services	1,400
Government	1,200
Leisure and hospitality	900
Other services	900
Retail trade	800
Wholesale trade	700
Manufacturing	400
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	100
Information	0
Mining and logging	0
Financial activities	-800

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Industry employment in Washington, not seasonally adjusted

Change by industry over the year

Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington added an estimated 82,300 jobs from May 2018 through May 2019:

- Overall, eleven major industries expanded and two contracted.
- Private sector employment rose 3.0 percent, up an estimated 83,700 jobs.
- Public sector employment decreased 0.2 percent, a net loss of 1,400 jobs.
- Education and health services employment increased by 18,800 with 15,900 of the jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 17,500, led by a 10,800 increase in professional, scientific and technical services.
- Employment in leisure and hospitality is up by 12,400, led by a gain of 10,900 jobs in food services and drinking places.
- Employment in construction is up 12,100 with the number employed as specialty trade contractors up 8,100.
- Manufacturing added 6,300 jobs, with 5,300 jobs added in durable goods production and 1,000 jobs added in nondurable goods production.

Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted Washington state, May 2018 through May 2019

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

Total nonfarm	82,300
Education and health services	18,800
Professional and business services	17,500
Leisure and hospitality	12,400
Construction	12,100
Manufacturing	6,300
Retail trade	6,100
Wholesale trade	3,900
Information	3,800
Financial activities	2,600
Other services	2,000
Mining and logging	100
Government	-1,400
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-1,900

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The Labor Market and Economic Analysis (LMEA) Division is pleased to announce our new Labor Market Information Director, Mr. Steven Ross. Steven presides over the LMEA team and their products, services and publications.

Steven can be reached by phone at: 360-507-9615 and email at: SRoss@esd.wa.gov

Monthly unemployment rates

May 2019

Washington state:
4.7% seasonally adjusted

Nationwide:
3.6% seasonally adjusted

[Labor force by county snapshot](#)
not seasonally adjusted

Seasonally adjusted employment

Seasonally adjusted numbers account for normal seasonal patterns that occur year after year, such as strong seasonal hiring in retail trade around the holidays. Taking into account normal seasonal variations makes it possible to see unusual changes in employment levels.

Normal seasonal change is the expected monthly change in employment based on history.

Estimated change is the employment change over the month based on BLS survey data.

Seasonally adjusted change is change in employment accounting for normal seasonal patterns.

Normal seasonal change, estimated change and seasonally adjusted change
Washington state, May 2019

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
Total nonfarm	21,800	31,400	9,600
Leisure and hospitality	6,900	7,800	900
Government	4,300	5,500	1,200
Construction	3,300	5,500	2,200
Retail trade	2,800	3,600	800
Professional and business services	1,600	3,400	1,800
Manufacturing	1,200	1,600	400
Financial activities	1,000	200	-800
Other services	600	1,500	900
Wholesale trade	400	1,100	700
Education and health services	400	1,800	1,400
Mining and logging	200	200	0
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	100	200	100
Information	-1,000	-1,000	0

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically increases by 21,800 from April to May. This year the state gained an estimated 31,400 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted increase of 9,600 jobs.

- The normal seasonal gain in leisure and hospitality employment is 6,900 in May. The estimated gain was 7,800, so employment increased by 900 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- The employment increase on a seasonally adjusted basis was 1,800 in professional and business services in May. The normal seasonal increase is 1,600. It is estimated to have increased by 3,400 this May.
- The estimated employment increase in construction was 5,500. The normal seasonal increase is 3,300, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, construction employment rose by 2,200.
- Employment in retail trade normally rises by 2,800. It is estimated to have increased by 3,600 this May, so it increased by 800 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- Typically, manufacturing increases by 1,200 in May. On a seasonally adjusted basis, manufacturing employment increased by 400 as the estimated increase was 1,600.

Contact an economist

Our statewide economist and six regional economists serve customers in their areas for WorkSource offices, workforce development councils, non-profit organizations, higher education, businesses and the news media. They can help you find and use labor market data, fulfill special data requests and answer questions about the state and local labor markets. Get in touch with your regional economist to get the local information you need.

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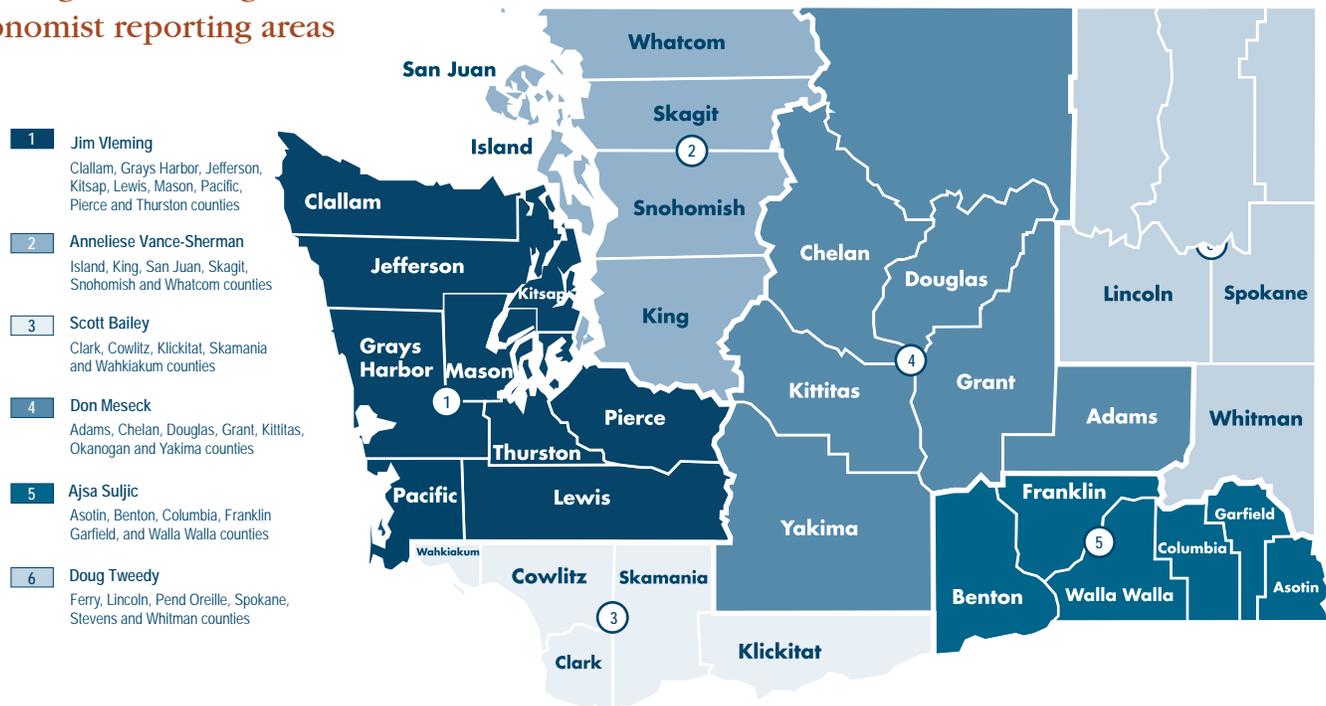
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Washington state regional labor economist reporting areas



The county level information will be available at 10 a.m., June 25, 2019. The publication schedule for 2019 is posted at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>.

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