

Washington

4.6%



United States

3.5%

Seasonally adjusted

Monthly Employment Report

September 2019



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 fell by 3,100 in September 2019.¹ BLS estimates the private sector gained 3,800 jobs during the month and the public sector lost 6,900 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for September 2018 through September 2019 indicate an increase in employment of 66,000 for the state. The private sector added 63,200 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 2,800 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2019 is 4.6 percent. The revised estimated August 2019 unemployment rate is at 4.6 percent. The September 2018 unemployment rate was 4.4 percent.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. August's preliminary estimated gain of 2,300 jobs was revised to a gain of 8,800 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, August and September 2018 and 2019
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	September 2019 (Preliminary)	August 2019 (Revised)	September 2018 (Revised)	August 2018 (Revised)
United States				
Unemployment rate				
Seasonally adjusted	3.5%	3.7%	3.7%	3.8%
Washington				
Unemployment rate	4.6%	4.6%	4.4%	4.4%
Resident labor force	3,907,700	3,895,800	3,813,300	3,802,400
Unemployed	179,400	179,700	168,500	167,600
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Unemployment rate	3.0%	3.1%	3.3%	3.3%
Resident labor force	1,728,000	1,722,200	1,692,500	1,688,500
Unemployed	52,300	53,400	55,900	56,000



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 September 2019 is 4.6 percent. The revised estimated September 2019 unemployment rate is 4.4 percent.

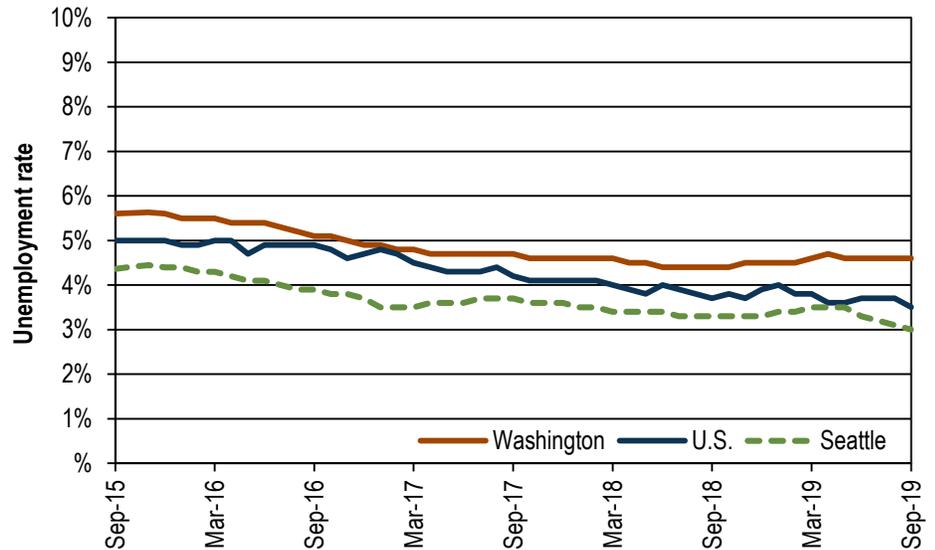
According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people fell by 300 in September 2019 compared to August 2019. At the same time, the number of employed people rose by an estimated 12,200. Overall, this amounted to an increase of 11,900 people in the labor force.

The preliminary September 2019 unemployment rate is a 0.2 percentage point higher than the September 2018 rate of 4.4 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted

U.S., Washington and Seattle, September 2015 through September 2019

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



September 2019 preliminary unemployment rates:

U.S. (preliminary) 3.5%
 Washington (preliminary) 4.6%
 Seattle area (preliminary) 3.0%

Employment change and moving average, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment decreased by 3,100 jobs from August 2019 to September 2019.

Recent employment change
July 2019: up 5,900 jobs (revised)

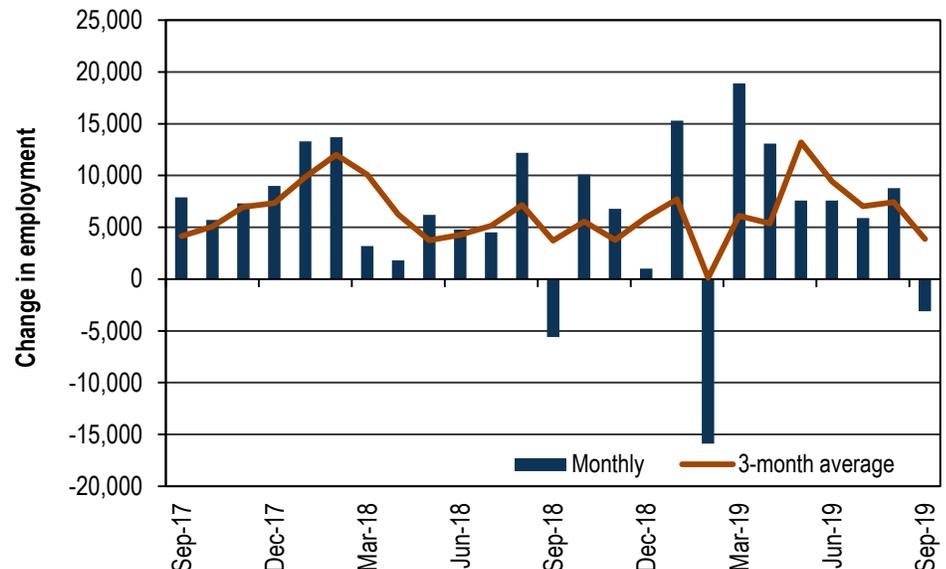
August 2019: up 8,800 jobs (revised)

September 2019: down 3,100 jobs (preliminary)

Monthly employment change and three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, September 2017 through September 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

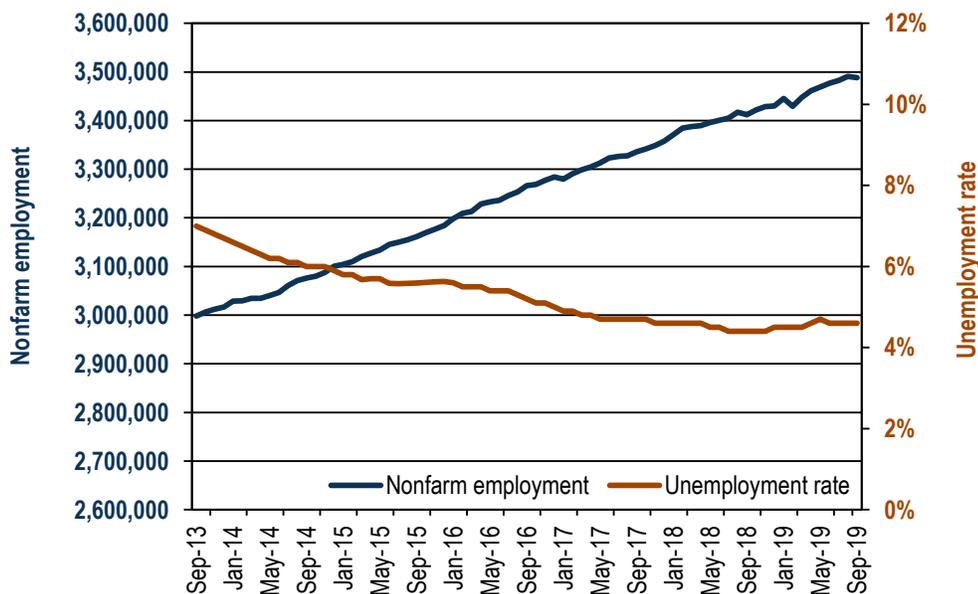
(end of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 2,824,000
Unemployment rate: 10.4%

September 2019 (preliminary)

Nonfarm employment: 3,488,000
Unemployment rate: 4.6%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, September 2013 through September 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 June 2019

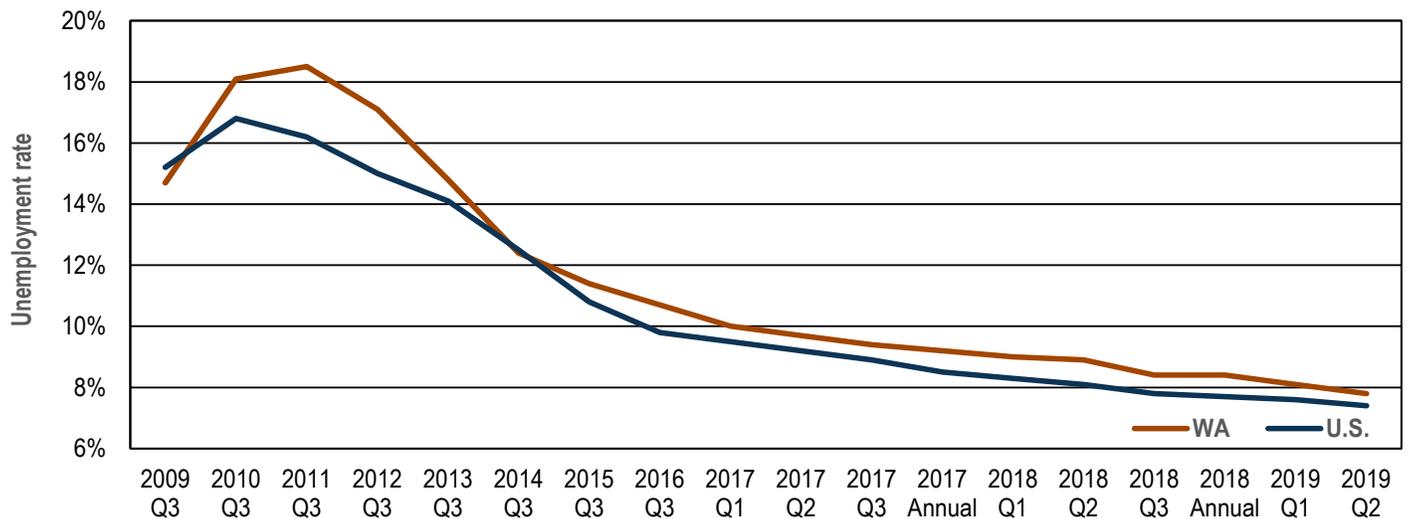
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include the annual average for 2018. One such alternative measure is the U-6 rate, which considers not only the unemployed population in

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 third quarter of 2018 through the second quarter of 2019 for Washington state was 7.8 percent. This was lower compared to the 8.9 percent U-6 unemployment rate one year prior. The U.S. U-6 unemployment rate was 7.4 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%	7.8%		
	U.S.	7.6%	7.4%		
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%
	U.S.	15.6%	15.3%	15.0%	14.7%

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 lost an estimated 3,100 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, nine industries expanded employment in August, three contracted, and one remained unchanged.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 3,800 and government employment decreased by 6,900.
- The number of jobs in retail trade increased by 1,900 overall, led by an increase of 1,100 in employment in general merchandise stores.
- Employment in financial activities increased by 900, with 600 jobs added in real estate, rental and leasing.
- Education and health services employment grew by 800, with all 800 jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Employment in construction increased by 700 overall, with 700 jobs added in heavy and civil engineering.
- Professional and business services employment fell by 900, with the decline primarily attributable to jobs lost in professional, scientific and technical services.

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

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

Total nonfarm	-3,100
Retail trade	1,900
Wholesale trade	1,000
Financial activities	900
Education and health services	800
Construction	700
Manufacturing	400
Leisure and hospitality	300
Information	300
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	100
Mining and logging	0
Professional and business services	-900
Other services	-1,700
Government	-6,900

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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 66,000 jobs from September 2018 through September 2019.

- Overall, ten major industries expanded and three contracted.
- Private sector employment rose 2.2 percent, up an estimated 63,200 jobs.
- Public sector employment rose 0.5 percent, up an estimated 2,800 jobs.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 13,800, led by a 10,600 increase in professional, scientific and technical services.
- Education and health services employment increased by 13,800 overall, with 13,900 jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Employment in information is up 9,400 with the number employed as software publishers up 5,200.
- Manufacturing added 7,700 jobs, with 5,100 jobs added in durable goods production and 2,600 jobs added in nondurable goods production.
- Employment in leisure and hospitality is up by 5,000, led by a gain of 2,100 jobs in food services and drinking places.

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

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

Total nonfarm	66,000
Professional and business services	13,800
Education and health services	13,800
Information	9,400
Manufacturing	7,700
Leisure and hospitality	5,000
Other services	4,500
Wholesale trade	4,500
Financial activities	3,500
Government	2,800
Construction	2,200
Retail trade	-100
Mining and logging	-300
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-800

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EMPLOYMENT

Monthly employment report
Employment estimates (WA-QB and CES)
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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

September 2019

Washington state:
4.6% seasonally adjusted

Nationwide:
3.5% 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, September 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	1,400	-1,700	-3,100
Government	16,800	9,900	-6,900
Education and health services	3,800	4,600	800
Manufacturing	100	500	400
Mining and logging	0	0	0
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-200	-100	100
Wholesale trade	-700	300	1,000
Financial activities	-900	0	900
Professional and business services	-1,600	-2,500	-900
Information	-1,900	-1,600	300
Other services	-2,400	-4,100	-1,700
Retail trade	-2,500	-600	1,900
Construction	-3,300	-2,600	700
Leisure and hospitality	-5,800	-5,500	300

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically increases by 1,400 from August to September. This year, the state lost an estimated 1,700 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted decrease of 3,100 jobs.

- Typically, manufacturing increases by 100 in September. On a seasonally adjusted basis, manufacturing employment increased by 400 as the estimated increase was 500.
- The employment decrease on a seasonally adjusted basis was 900 in professional and business services in September. The normal seasonal decrease is 1,600. It is estimated to have decreased by 2,500 this September.
- Employment in retail trade normally falls by 2,500. It is estimated to have decreased by 600 this September, so it increased by 1,900 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- The estimated employment decrease in construction was 2,600. The normal seasonal decrease is 3,300, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, construction employment rose by 700.
- The normal seasonal loss in leisure and hospitality employment is 5,800 in September. The estimated loss was 5,500, so employment increased by 300 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

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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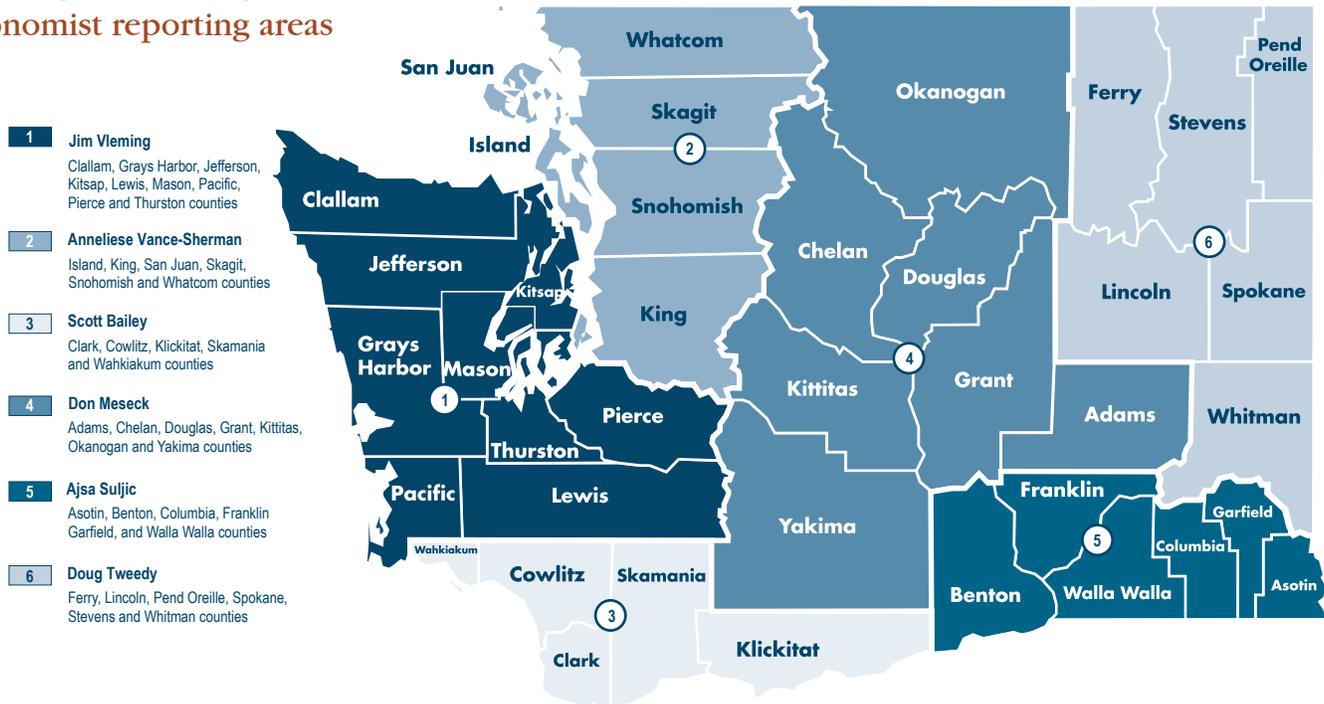
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Washington state regional labor economist reporting areas



The county level information will be available at 10 a.m., October 22, 2019. The publication schedule for 2019 is posted at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>.

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