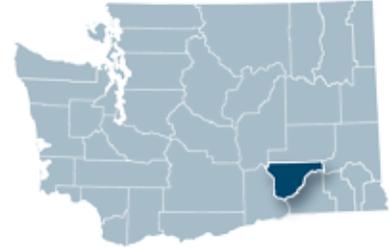


Franklin County profile

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Overview

Regional context

Franklin County, named for Benjamin Franklin, was created from Whitman County in 1883. The county is located in southeastern Washington at the convergence of the Snake and Columbia rivers. The Columbia River forms its western border and the Snake River forms its southern and eastern borders. Adams County is to its north. The railroads secured the county's future as towns grew up around its railroad stations. Ranching and farming have continued to be the economic mainstay of Franklin County. It ranked 27th in the state in terms of land area and 15th in the state in people per square mile (62.9) in 2010.

Local economy

Native Americans were the first people who inhabited this area, hunting game and fishing salmon. In the 1850s, white prospectors traveled through the area to the gold rush in British Columbia. Some stayed to raise sheep and plant orchards. The 1855 treaty agreements resulted in the native people ceding their lands to the United States and moving onto reservations.

In the 1800s, cattle and horse ranches dominated much of the northern county while orchards flourished elsewhere. With the coming of the railroad, settlements started at the mouth of the Snake River. Pasco was connected to Kennewick through ferry-operated services and steamboats, which ended in 1887 when the first railroad bridge connected Pasco to Kennewick. The railroad furthered development throughout the 1900s. There were settlements of Chinese who worked for the railroad. Some of the Chinese panned gold and operated businesses in the rail towns.

There was unremarkable growth until World War II when the U.S. Army-Air Force base moved to Pasco and the Hanford project moved to Richland. In 1948, the first farm received water from the Grand Coulee Dam irrigation system. Manufacturing and storage facilities, including ice houses and fruit packing facilities, followed.

The 1990s and 2000s brought increasing industrial diversity with continued agriculture and food manufacturing as its economic base. The economic downturn, however, did not spare Franklin County. The county's rate of unemployment has risen and the length of joblessness has increased. Construction, real estate and rental and leasing were the industries that lost the most employment during the recession. Industries that are creating stability in the area include food manufacturing, agriculture and private and public educational and healthcare services.

Franklin County became the first Hispanic-majority county in the Pacific Northwest. It is also one of the region's fastest growing counties.

Geographic facts

	Franklin County	Rank in state
Land area, 2010 (square miles)	1,242.17	27
People per square mile, 2010	62.9	15

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

Outlook

Local population growth, which has increased by 17.9 percent since 2010, continues to drive demand for more educational and healthcare services.

The good news is that the housing market in the county is stable with growing housing inventories and affordable prices. Over the past year, there have been many industries that have contributed to the job growth in Franklin County including transportation and warehousing, accommodation and food services, construction and real estate and rental and leasing.

Average annual employment growth in Franklin County was 2.1 percent for the past five years.

Nonfarm employment projections are done for Benton and Franklin counties combined and two counties together are expected to grow at the rate of 1.6 percent a year through 2021.

Industries that are projected to add the most jobs include construction, information, private and public education, healthcare, and leisure and hospitality.

Labor force and unemployment

Current labor force and unemployment statistics are available on the [Labor area summaries](#) page on ESD's labor market information website.

The Franklin County total resident labor force was estimated at 40,873 in 2017, which was 2.6 percent higher than in 2016. The Franklin County unemployment rate was 6.3 percent in 2017, which was 1.0 percent less than in 2016. The resident labor force employment increased by 1,378 jobs over the year to 38,294, while the number of unemployed residents decreased by 349 to 2,579 in 2017.

The labor force picture is starting to improve after a slight decline in 2013. The labor force participation rate in Franklin County was around 64.9 percent as of 2015, with increases in both 2016 and 2017. The labor force participation rate at 68.0 percent in 2017, which little bit more volatile year to year in Franklin County than that in the state (64.3 percent) because of its core agricultural industry.

The most current data show that the Franklin County October 2018 preliminary unemployment rate was 4.6 percent, decreased by 0.3 percent from the 4.9 percent reading in October 2017.

Industry employment

Current industry employment statistics are available on the [Labor area summaries](#) page on ESD's labor market information website.

Total covered employment in Franklin County was 33,966 in 2017, which has grown by 0.7 percent or 249 jobs since 2016. The five-year average annual growth rate of Franklin County covered employment was 2.1 percent.

The average annual wage for covered employment in Franklin County was \$39,797 in 2017, an increase of 4.3 percent over the year. Franklin County total covered annual payroll in 2017 was \$1.35 billion, which is 4.8 percent higher than in 2016.

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA

Top 10 industries in Franklin County

Rank	Industry	Percent of total
1	Agriculture	20.1%
2	Government	18.8%
3	Manufacturing	10.8%
4	Retail trade	9.7%
5	Healthcare and social assistance	7.8%
6	Accommodation and food services	6.5%
7	Construction	5.7%
8	Wholesale trade	5.4%
9	Transportation and warehousing	4.4%
10	Administrative and waste services	3.1%

Goods-producing industries, which include natural resources, mining, construction and manufacturing, increased in employment from 2016 to 2017 by 2.0 percent, or 245 jobs.

Average annual employment in 2017 was 12,416 workers and annual wages totaled \$454.8 million, with an increase over the year of 6.8 percent. Total payrolls translated to a \$36,633 average annual wage for goods-producing workers.

- Manufacturing decreased employment over the year by 1.9 percent or by 70 jobs to 3,667 in 2017, with average annual pay of \$43,168. Manufacturing represented about 10.8 percent of total covered employment.
 - The food manufacturing subsector decreased by 3.8 percent over the year, and provides over 2,872 jobs with an average annual wage of \$41,467.
- Construction accounted for 5.7 percent of the total average annual employment in the county with 1,920 jobs.
 - The average annual wage in construction was \$48,469 in 2017.
 - Over the year, the construction sector increased by 3.2 percent. Construction activities are moving forward with new housing developments to accommodate the current population demand.

- Agriculture is number one industry in Franklin County, representing 20.1 percent of total employment. It is, however, highly seasonal and volatile from year to year.
 - Average annual employment in agriculture in 2017 was 6,829, with an increase over the year of 3.9 percent.
 - The average annual wage in agriculture was \$29,797, mainly due to the seasonality of agricultural activities.
 - Crop production represents 51.9 percent of total agriculture, which is largely in non-citrus fruit farming including apple orchards, grape vineyards and other produce.
 - Support activities shared 37.9 percent of employment, which includes post-harvest crop activity.

Service-providing industries in 2017 have a 63.4 percent share of Franklin County's total employment. There was an average of 21,550 jobs in this industry, which paid an average annual wage of \$41,619 in 2017. Over the year, service-providing industries increased slightly but not statistically recordable.

Retail trade is the largest employing private service industry in Franklin County, representing 9.7 percent of total employment and the fourth largest of all industries after agriculture, government and manufacturing. Retail trade is a very stable industry and in 2017, this industry had an average of 3,292 jobs, which paid an average annual wage of \$34,013. Retail trade industry marks 1.1 percent decrease over the year, with slight decreases throughout industry segments.

Healthcare and social assistance employment in the private sector was 2,662 jobs, which represented about 7.8 percent of total employment in 2017. The average annual wage in this industry was \$40,005. Five-year average annual growth rate in this industry has been over 7.0 percent, with continuous growth due to population expansion and demand.

Public administration is the largest service-providing industry in Franklin County with an 18.8 percent share of total employment. The largest share of employment in this industry is in the local school administration and healthcare services as there is more demand by growing population. This industry had an average annual employment of 6,370 in 2017, and an average annual wage of \$50,101.

For historical industry employment data, [*contact an economist*](#).

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA, QCEW

Industry employment by age and gender

The Local Employment Dynamics (LED) database, a joint project of state employment departments and the U.S. Census Bureau, matches state employment data with federal administrative data. Among the products is industry employment by age and gender. All workers covered by state unemployment insurance data are included; federal workers and non-covered workers, such as the self-employed, are not. Data are presented by place of work, not place of residence.

Franklin County highlights:

In 2017, the largest share of employment was held by those 25 to 34 years of age with 22.2 percent share. Second largest share is in 35 to 44 year-olds at 21.9 percent. County numbers are close to the state's figure of 23.1 and 22.4 percent, respectively. In addition, 45 to 54 years olds had a 19.7 percent share of employment in the Franklin County.

- The county's demographics showed male workers held 56.2 percent and females held 43.8 percent of all jobs.
- Male-dominated industries included mining (84.0 percent), wholesale trade (80.8 percent), transportation and warehousing (78.4 percent), construction (78.1 percent) and utilities (71.8 percent).
- Female-dominated industries included healthcare and social assistance (79.8 percent), finance and insurance (69.5 percent), educational services (68.8 percent), professional, scientific and technical services (59.3), and accommodation and food services (55.0 percent).

Source: The Local Employment Dynamics

Wages and income

In 2017, there were 33,966 jobs in Franklin County covered by unemployment insurance, with a total payroll of over \$1.35 billion.

The average annual wage was \$39,797, well below the state's average annual wage of \$62,077. The median hourly wage in 2017 was at \$17.83, below the state's median hourly wage of \$24.89.

Personal income

Personal income includes earned income, investment income, and government payments such as Social Security and Veterans Benefits. Investment income includes income imputed from pension funds and from owning a home. Per capita personal income equals total personal income divided by the resident population.

In 2016, Franklin County's personal income totaled \$3.2 million, which translates into a \$35,339 per capita personal income. Franklin County's per capita personal income was 35.3 percent less than the state (\$54,579) and 28.2 percent less than the nation (\$49,246).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, the median household income was \$58,284 in 2016. The county's median was less than that of the state (\$62,848) during the same period.

Franklin County's poverty rate of 13.4 percent was higher than Washington state's rate of 11.0 percent and the nation's rate of 12.3 percent in 2016, according to U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts.

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; Bureau of Labor Statistics; Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Census Bureau; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Population

In 2017, Franklin County's population was 92,125. Since 2010, Franklin County has had a 17.9 percent growth rate. In comparison, the state grew by 10.1 percent from 2010 to 2017.

The largest city in Franklin County is Pasco, the county seat, with a population of 71,680 in 2017.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population facts

	Franklin County	Washington state
Population 2017	92,125	7,405,743
Population 2010	78,163	6,724,540
Percent change, 2010 to 2017	17.9%	10.1%

Age, gender and ethnicity

Franklin County has a much younger population than does the state.

- Almost one-third of Franklin County's population (32.5 percent) was under 18 years of age compared to the state (22.2 percent) in 2017.
- Residents under the age of 5 years old made up 9.0 percent of the county's total population compared to 6.2 percent in the state in 2017.
- In 2017, Franklin County's population 65 years and older made up 8.9 percent of the total compared to 15.1 percent of the state's population.

The county was 48.3 percent female compared to 50.0 percent for the state in 2017.

Franklin County was the first county in the region to have a majority of Hispanics in its population. In 2017, Franklin County was 40.3 percent white alone and not Hispanic compared to 68.7 percent in the state. Hispanics or Latinos were 53.3 percent of the population compared with 12.7 percent in the state.

Demographics

	Franklin County	Washington state
Population by age, 2017		
Under 5 years old	9.0%	6.2%
Under 18 years old	32.5%	22.2%
65 years and older	8.9%	15.1%
Females, 2017	48.3%	50%
Race/ethnicity, 2017		
White, not Hispanic	40.3%	68.7%
Black	2.8%	4.2%
American Indian, Alaskan Native	1.7%	1.9%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander	3.0%	9.7%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	53.3%	12.7%

Educational attainment

High school graduates among Franklin County's population 25 years and older totaled 73.6 percent, lower than the state (90.4 percent) in 2016.

Those holding a bachelor's degree or higher made up 15.8 percent of Franklin County residents age 25 and older compared to 33.6 percent of state residents over the same period.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

Useful links

- [County data tables](#)
- [Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council](#)
- [City of Pasco](#)
- [City of Connell](#)
- [Franklin County on ChooseWashington.com](#)
- [Franklin County on HistoryLink.org](#)
- [Franklin County on ofm.wa.gov](#)
- [Franklin County home page](#)
- [Self Sufficiency Calculator for Washington State](#)
- [Tri-City Industrial Development Council](#)
- [Census Bureau QuickFacts](#)
- [Port of Pasco](#)
- [Washington Ports](#)
- [Washington State University Tri-Cities](#)
- [Workforce Development Areas and WorkSource Office Directory](#)

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