

# Pacific County Profile

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## Overview

### *Regional context*

Pacific County is located in the southwestern part of the state with the Pacific Ocean on its western border. It was established as a county in 1851, and its boundaries were adjusted multiple times from 1860 to 1925. The Chinook and Chehalis tribes inhabited the area, and found their numbers greatly reduced by disease introduced by Europeans.

### *Local economy*

Some of the early settlers arrived via shipwreck due to the difficulty in navigating the estuary at the mouth of the Columbia. The Hudson Bay Company attracted fur trappers who settled in the area. The 1845 California Gold Rush created a housing boom in San Francisco, which opened markets for timber and oysters, mainstays of Pacific County. Willapa Bay in the county is the nation's largest farmed shellfish producer. Cranberry bogs, forest-products, manufacturing and dairy farms are also important to the counties industrial mix. Tourism is also a critical feature of the Pacific County economy. In 2018, 21.6 percent of earned income came from residents working outside the county.

## Geographic facts

	Pacific County	Rank in state
Land area, 2010 (square miles)	932.66	30
People per square mile, 2010	22.4	24

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

## Outlook

Nonfarm job growth has been stagnant in the county since the Great Recession. Particularly hard hit has been the goods-producing sector, including manufacturing and construction. In fact most sectors of the economy continue to lag pre-recession totals. At the current rate of growth, the economy will take several more years to exceed the losses posted during the recession. In 2019, nonfarm jobs are still down 470 from their 2008 totals.

## 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 unemployment rate in the county was 7.4 percent in 2019. So far, the 2010 unemployment rate of 14.0 percent has dropped each year since. There have been declines in labor force over this time frame as well.

The civilian labor force in the county was 8,402 in 2019, well below that of 9,299 in 2009. The number of unemployed residents rose by 42 in 2019 compared to 2018.

Source: Employment Security Department

## Industry employment

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

Nonfarm employment in the county is primarily in service-providing industries, with government being the largest employer. In 2019, service industries accounted for 4,750 of the 5,860 nonfarm jobs in the county. In the services sector, government held 1,830 jobs followed by leisure and hospitality (980) and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (720). In the goods-producing sector, manufacturing provides the bulk of employment (670) jobs.

While annual job growth turned positive starting in 2012, this increase in nonfarm employment continues to lag pre-recession totals. In 2019 nonfarm jobs averaged 5,860 compared to the 2006 average of 6,330 jobs.

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

Source: Employment Security Department

### *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.

#### *Pacific County highlights:*

In 2018, the largest job holder age group in Pacific County was the 55 and older age category, making up 29.1 percent of employment across all industries. The next largest share was among people age 45 to 54 with 20.8 and 35 to 44 with 20.8 percent of employment.

In 2018, the county's workers mirrored state patterns with workers ages 14 to 24 dominating the accommodation and food services jobs in the county with 24.3 percent of the positions. This age group was also well represented in arts, entertainment and recreation and retail trade.

Workers in the 55 year and older age category were prevalent in transportation and warehousing, other services, and mining.

Females made up 50.7 percent of the labor force in Pacific County with males making up the difference at 49.3 percent in 2018. Men were more often represented in higher paying industries

- Male-dominated industries included mining (85.3 percent), construction (83.6 percent), manufacturing (69.9 percent), wholesale trade (72.3 percent) and transportation and warehousing (72.8 percent).
- Female-dominated industries included finance and insurance (83.1 percent), healthcare and social assistance (76.6 percent) and educational services (69.2 percent).

Source: The Local Employment Dynamics

## **Wages and income**

In 2018, there were 6,484 jobs covered by unemployment insurance in Pacific County, with a total payroll of over \$239.8 million.

The county's average annual wage in 2018 was \$36,991. That total lags both the state (\$66,156) and the U.S. (\$50,525).

The median hourly wage in 2018 was \$19.69, below the state's median hourly wage of \$25.98 and the state excluding King County median hourly wage of \$22.37.

### *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.

Personal income in 2018 lagged both the state and nation as Pacific County's per capita personal income was \$41,740. The U.S. average was \$54,446 and the state rate was \$62,026. Pacific County ranked 31st in the state in its per capita personal income in 2018.

The median household income in Pacific County was \$44,846 in 2014 to 2018 according to U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts. The county's median was less than the state's (\$74,073) and the nation's (\$61,937).

Over the period 2014 to 2018, 15.4 percent of Pacific County's population was living below the poverty level, compared with 10.3 percent for the state and the nation at 13.1 percent. The state and national rates are not directly comparable to the county rate because they each use different data sources.

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

## Population

The population of Pacific County has grown over the years but not by much adding just over 700 individuals to the total since 2010. The largest city is Raymond, with a population of 2,885, followed by South Bend (1,625) and Long Beach (1,445).

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; Washington of Financial Management

### *Population facts*

	Pacific County	Washington state
Population 2018	21,640	7,535,591
Population 2010	20,919	6,724,540
Percent change, 2010 to 2018	5.3%	12.1%

### *Age, gender and ethnicity*

The population of Pacific County is considerably older than that of the state, as evidenced by the percentage in the 65 and older group.

The county is much less diverse than the state in terms of race and ethnicity, with over 89.9 percent white and just 1.2 percent black. The American Indians and Alaskan Natives make up 2.9 percent of the county population.

### *Demographics*

	Pacific County	Washington state
<b>Population by age, 2019</b>		
Under 5 years old	4.2%	6.1%
Under 18 years old	15.9%	22.1%
65 years and older	30.7%	15.4%
<b>Females, 2019</b>	50.1%	50.0%
<b>Race/ethnicity, 2019</b>		
White	89.9%	78.9%
Black	1.2%	4.3%
American Indian, Alaskan Native	2.9%	1.9%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander	2.3%	10.1%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	9.8%	12.9%

### *Educational attainment*

Most Pacific County residents age 25 and older (88.0 percent) were high school graduates, which compares with 91.1 percent of Washington state's residents and 87.7 percent of U.S. residents in the period 2014 to 2018.

Those with a bachelor's degree or higher made up 18.0 percent of Pacific County residents age 25 and older compared to 35.3 percent of state residents and 31.5 percent of U.S. residents during the same period.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

## Useful links

- [County data tables](#)
- [Census Bureau Profile](#)
- [Pacific County on ofm.wa.gov](#)
- [Pacific County on ChooseWashington.com](#)
- [Pacific County History](#)
- [Pacific County home page](#)
- [Long Beach Peninsula Visitor's Bureau](#)
- [Ocean Park Area Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Tokeland-North Cove Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Port of Ilwaco](#)
- [Port of Peninsula](#)
- [Self Sufficiency Calculator for Washington State](#)
- [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts](#)
- [Willapa Harbor Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Pacific County Economic Development Council](#)
- [Workforce Development Areas and WorkSource Office Directory](#)

Employment Security Department is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Language assistance services for limited English proficient individuals are available free of charge. Washington Relay Service: 711.