

Stevens County Profile

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Updated November 2019



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Overview

Regional context

Stevens County is located near the northeast corner of Washington, bordering both Canada and Spokane County. The County is rural and ranks fifth in the state in terms of land area and 28th in the state for population density. Most of the Spokane Indian Reservation is located in Stevens County on 237.5 square miles. Colville is the largest town in the county.

Local economy

From the 1850s through 1910, Stevens County was one of the state's top silver and copper producers. Forest products have also dominated the economy. Over the past 20 years, the economy has diversified from its dependence on resource extraction. This diversification has been the result of increasing service-providing jobs and increases in manufacturing.

Stevens County tends to have one of the highest unemployment rates as well as a lower labor force participation rate in the state. Over the last four years, total employment in the county has increased modestly.

Geographic facts

	Stevens County	Rank in state
Land area, 2010 (square miles)	2,477.76	5
People per square mile, 2010	17.96	28

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

Outlook

For Stevens County, recovery from the recession has been long and slow. Recently, jobs have increased but job growth still hasn't reached pre-recession levels. Recent demand in the housing and recreational markets along with machinery manufacturing have helped the county recover foundation-type jobs.

With an increase in retirees within the region and changing demographics, total health care employment has grown, especially in assisted care centers. However, consolidation of hospitals, clinics and labs will keep increases modest.

Government is the largest employment sector in the county, accounting for more than 30 percent of total jobs. Federal budget increases are expected in Border Protection and Forest Service (Fire Fighting) and are likely to increase government employment in 2019 and 2020. In addition, education, a sub sector of government did post-employment increases in the first half of 2019.

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.

Through the first 10 months of 2019, the Stevens County civilian labor force averaged 19,101. This was an increase from the same period in 2018 (18,290). The county unemployment rate has decreased in 2019, but is still averaging 7.4 percent for the year.

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA

Industry employment

Stevens County averaged 10,679 jobs in 2018, which was a slight increase from 2017 (10,640).

- Goods-producing employment decreased slightly 2018. Most of the decrease was posted in the construction and agriculture sectors.
- Service-providing employment in 2018 increased from 2017 levels. Almost all of the increase was in education, leisure/hospitality and retail trade.

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

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA

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.

Stevens County highlights:

The largest job holder age group in Stevens County in 2018 was the 55+ age cohort with 28.6 percent of the workforce. This percentage was followed by job holders age 45 to 54 at 21.2 percent of the workforce.

In 2018, men held 50.0 percent and women held 50.0 percent of the jobs in Stevens County. There were substantial differences in gender dominance by industry.

- Male-dominated industries included mining (92.0 percent), agriculture (81.5 percent), construction (84.8 percent), manufacturing (81.4 percent) and utilities (79.3 percent).

- Female-dominated industries included healthcare and social assistance (81.3 percent), educational services (69.7 percent) and finance and insurance (79.3 percent).

Source: The Local Employment Dynamics

Wages and income

In 2018, there were approximately 10,678 jobs covered by unemployment insurance, with a total payroll of over \$420.7 million.

The 2018 average annual wage was \$39,395, well below the state’s average annual wage of \$66,195.

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 2017, the per capita personal income in Stevens County was \$37,499 and ranked 36th among Washington counties.

According to the U.S. Census QuickFacts, the county’s median household income was \$47,272 in the period 2013 through 2017. The county’s median was less than the state’s (\$66,174).

Over the period 2013-2017, 14.8 percent of the population was living below the poverty level, higher than the state at 10.3 percent.

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

Population

Stevens County’s population was 45,260 in 2018, with 78 percent of the residents living in unincorporated areas. The population increased 4 percent from 2010 to 2018, compared to the state’s growth rate of 12.1 percent. The largest city in Stevens County is Colville.

Population facts

	Stevens County	Washington state
Population 2018	45,260	7,535,591
Population 2010	43,523	6,724,540
Percent change, 2010 to 2018	4.0%	12.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

Age, gender and ethnicity

Proportionately, more of Stevens County’s population was 65 years and older compared with the state.

Stevens County showed much less diversity in 2018 than the state in all racial/ethnic categories except American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Demographics

	Stevens County	Washington state
Population by age, 2018		
Under 5 years old	5.4%	6.1%
Under 18 years old	21.6%	22.1%
65 years and older	23.3%	15.4%
Females, 2018	50.1%	50.0%
Race/ethnicity, 2018		
White	89.2%	78.9%
Black	0.6%	4.3%
American Indian, Alaskan Native	5.8%	1.9%
Asian, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander	1.0%	10.1%
Hispanic or Latino, any race	3.8%	12.9%

Educational attainment

Most of Stevens County residents age 25 and older (89.4 percent) were high school graduates, which compares favorably with that of the state (90.8 percent) and the nation (87.3) over the period 2013 through 2017.

Those with a bachelor's degree or higher made up 18.6 percent of Stevens County residents age 25 and older compared to 34.5 percent of state and 30.9 percent of the nation's residents.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts

Useful links

- [County data tables](#)
- [Census Bureau Profile](#)
- [Self-sufficiency calculator for Washington state](#)
- [Stevens County](#)
- [Stevens County on ChooseWashington.com](#)
- [Stevens County History](#)
- [Stevens County on ofm.wa.gov](#)
- [Tri County Economic Development District](#)
- [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts](#)
- [Washington Ports](#)
- [Workforce Development Areas and WorkSource Office Directory](#)
- [Northeast Washington Trends](#)

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