

The Monthly Employment Report

Washington 4.9%

United States 4.8%

Seasonally adjusted

September 2021



Employment Security Department
WASHINGTON STATE



For workers and businesses affected by COVID-19, Employment Security has updated information on the website at esd.wa.gov. For labor market information questions, please send your emails to lmea@esd.wa.gov.

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 17,600 in September 2021.¹ BLS estimates the private sector gained 18,100 jobs during the month and the public sector lost 500 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for September 2020 through September 2021 indicate an increase in employment of 167,200 for the state. The private sector gained 159,200 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 8,000 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2021 is 4.9 percent. The revised estimated August 2021 unemployment rate is at 5.1 percent. The September 2020 unemployment rate was 8.0 percent.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The August 2021 preliminary estimated gain of 16,800 jobs was revised to a gain of 16,400 jobs.

For more information, call Jeff Robinson at 360-485-8442.

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 2020 and 2021
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	September 2021 (Preliminary)	August 2021 (Revised)	September 2020 (Revised)	August 2020 (Revised)
Unemployment rate	4.8%	5.2%	7.8%	8.4%
Washington				
Resident labor force	3,936,900	3,923,000	3,870,000	3,886,100
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Resident labor force	1,757,000	1,754,800	1,733,100	1,728,900

Labor Market and Economic Analysis
October 2021

¹Most of the employment numbers discussed in this report refers to jobs, not people. 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 2021 is 4.9 percent. The revised estimated August 2021 unemployment rate is 5.1 percent.

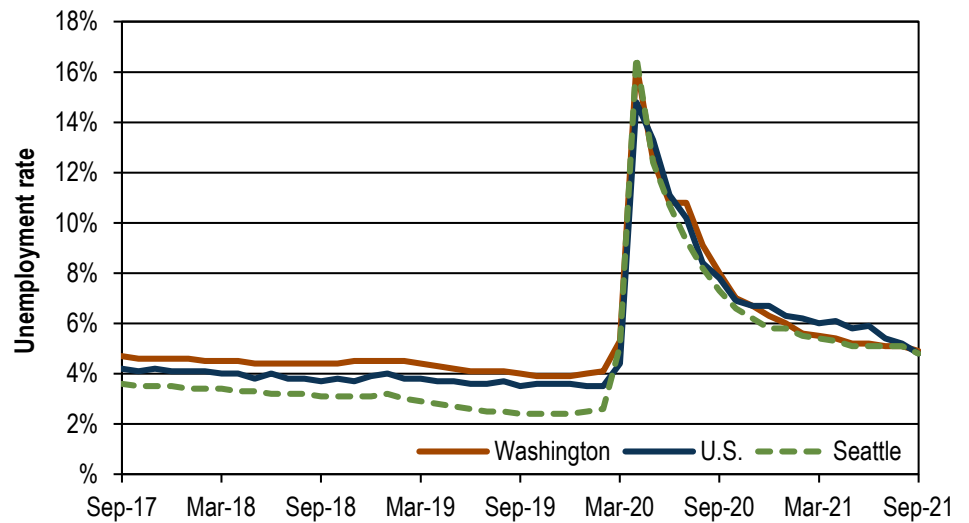
According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people fell by 4,800 in September 2021 compared to August 2021. At the same time, the number of employed people rose by an estimated 18,700. Overall, this amounted to an increase of 13,900 people in the labor force.

The preliminary September 2021 unemployment rate is 3.1 percentage points lower than the September 2020 rate of 8.0 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted

U.S., Washington and Seattle, September 2017 through September 2021

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



September 2021 preliminary unemployment rates:

U.S. (preliminary) 4.8%
 Washington (preliminary) 4.9%
 Seattle area (preliminary) 4.8%

Employment change, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 17,600 jobs from August 2021 to September 2021.

Recent employment change:

July 2021: up 24,300 jobs (revised)

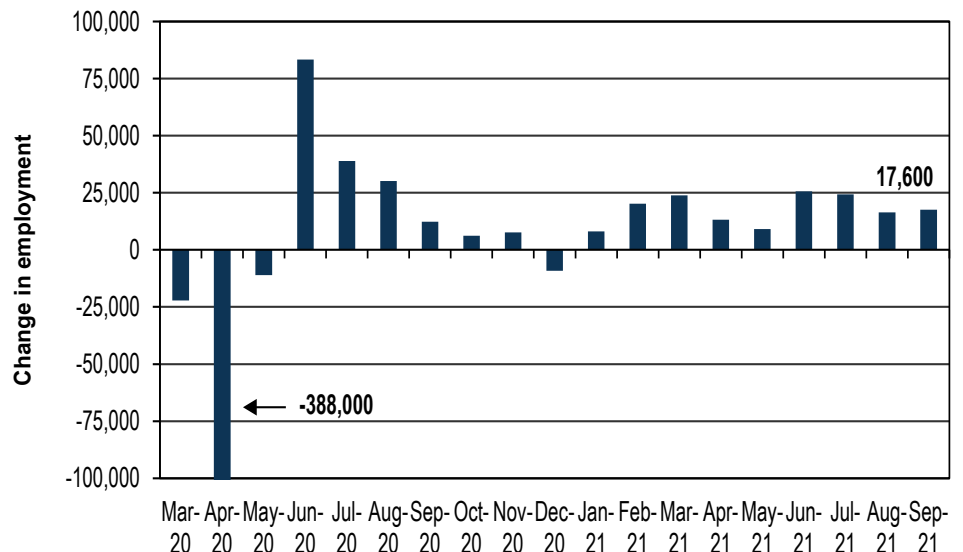
August 2021: up 16,400 jobs (revised)

September 2021: up 17,600 jobs (preliminary)

Monthly employment change, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, March 2020 through September 2021

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



Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

February 2020

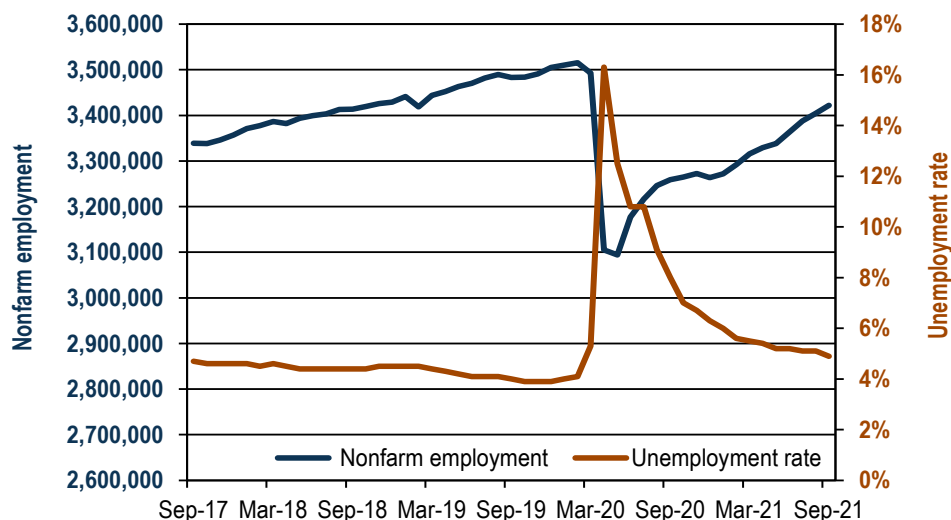
(Start of 2020 employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 3,515,300
Unemployment rate: 4.1%

September 2021 (preliminary)

Nonfarm employment: 3,422,000
Unemployment rate: 4.9%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, September 2017 through September 2021
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Workers and businesses affected by COVID-19

Employment Security's **COVID-19 online information page** covers topics for businesses and workers impacted by COVID-19. Topics include:

- Subscribing for updates
- Frequently asked questions
- Workers Q&A
- Business Q&A
- CARES ACT
- COVID-19 rulemaking
- COVID-19 resources
- Action alerts and updates

We are all in this together. The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented demand for services, but we are building capacity, updating technology, and we thank you for your patience while we work to serve you better.

Did you know that you can subscribe for email updates on a number of Employment Security Department topics all at once? Go to esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo and select the email icon at the top of the page.



Enter your email address and subscribe by checking the boxes for topics such as:

COVID-19
Labor market information
News releases
Employer news and resources
Paid Family and Medical Leave
Employer information
SharedWork program
WorkSource system
Unemployment insurance
Training

Many more to come, so sign up today for your email updates!

U-6 unemployment rate

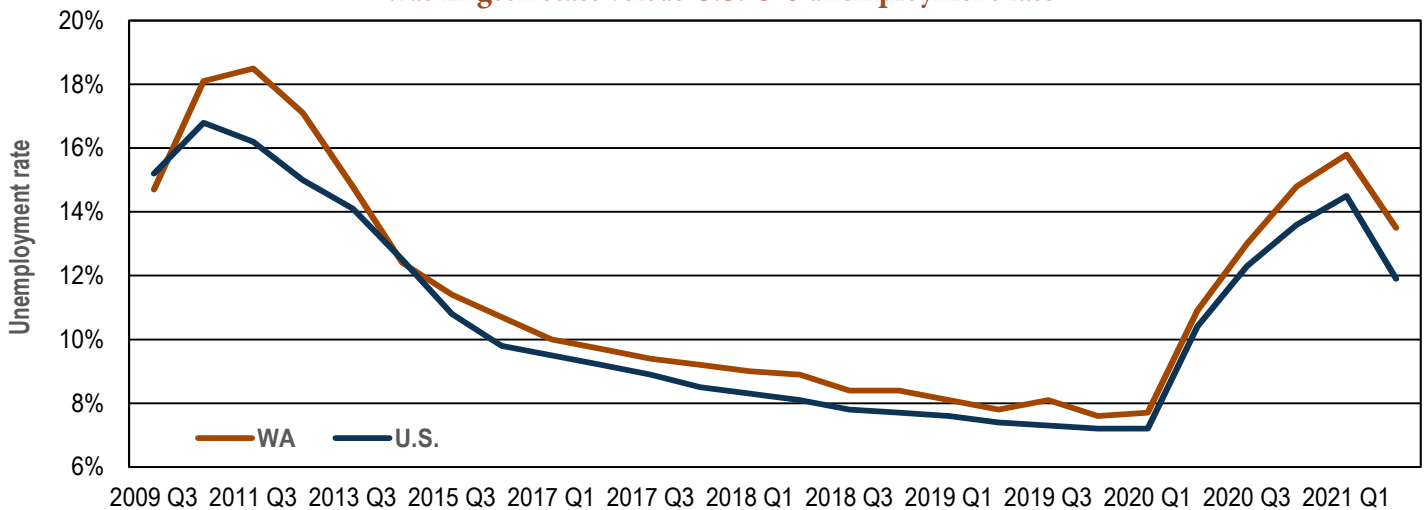
U-6: Broader unemployment measure decreased in the four-quarter period ending second quarter 2021

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include annual averages for second quarter 2021. 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 2020 through the second quarter 2021 for Washington state was 13.5 percent. This was lower compared to the 15.8 percent U-6 unemployment rate for the second quarter 2020 through the first quarter 2021. The U.S. U-6 unemployment rate for the third quarter 2020 through the second quarter 2021 was 11.9 percent.

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
2021	WA	15.8%	13.5%		
	U.S.	14.5%	11.9%		
2020	WA	8.1%	10.9%	13.0%	14.8%
	U.S.	7.7%	10.4%	12.3%	13.6%
2019	WA	8.1%	7.8%	8.1%	7.6%
	U.S.	7.6%	7.4%	7.3%	7.2%
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%

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 17,600 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, employment increased in eight major industries, decreased in four, and was unchanged in one in September.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 18,100 and government employment decreased by 500.
- Employment in the information sector increased by 3,900 over the month.
- The number of jobs in construction increased by 3,600 overall, with 1,900 jobs gained by specialty trade contractors.
- Retail trade employment increased by 2,900 overall, with 1,500 jobs gained in general merchandise stores.
- Manufacturing employment rose by 800, with 800 jobs gained in durable goods manufacturing.
- Employment in professional and business services fell by 2,900 overall, with 1,700 jobs lost in computer systems design and related services.

Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, August 2021 to September 2021

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

Total nonfarm	17,600
Leisure and hospitality	6,500
Information	3,900
Construction	3,600
Retail trade	2,900
Other services	1,700
Education and health services	1,300
Wholesale trade	900
Manufacturing	800
Mining and logging	-
Financial activities	(100)
Government	(500)
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	(500)
Professional and business services	(2,900)

As we navigate the COVID-19 developments in Washington state and beyond, we know Washington state businesses, nonprofits, city and county municipalities, educational institutions, as well as economic and workforce development professionals, are looking for sound data about the short and long term economic and workforce impacts to their individual businesses, industries and regions.

If you have specific questions regarding labor market information, please send your emails to lmea@esd.wa.gov.

Industry employment in Washington, not seasonally adjusted

Change by industry over the year

Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington gained an estimated 167,200 jobs from September 2020 through September 2021.

- Overall, twelve major industries expanded, and one contracted.
- Private sector employment rose 5.9 percent, up an estimated 159,200 jobs.
- Public sector employment rose 1.4 percent, up an estimated 8,000 jobs.
- Employment in leisure and hospitality is up by 58,700, with food services and drinking places adding 37,300 jobs.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 26,200, with 17,500 jobs added in professional, scientific and technical services.
- Education and health services employment increased by 18,100, with 9,300 jobs added in education services.
- Retail trade employment rose 7,900 overall, with 4,600 jobs gained in food and beverage stores.
- Employment in manufacturing is down 1,200, led by a decrease of 5,800 in aerospace product and parts manufacturing.

Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted
Washington state, September 2020 through September 2021
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

Total nonfarm	167,200
Leisure and hospitality	58,700
Professional and business services	26,200
Education and health services	18,100
Wholesale trade	13,200
Information	10,400
Construction	10,000
Government	8,000
Retail trade	7,900
Financial activities	7,600
Other services	7,300
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	900
Mining and logging	100
Manufacturing	-1,200

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 2021

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

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
Total nonfarm	-4,700	12,900	17,600
Professional and business services	-2,700	-2,800	-100
Information	-1,100	2,800	3,900
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-1,600	-2,100	-500
Wholesale trade	-700	200	900
Construction	-700	2,900	3,600
Other services	-1,700	0	1,700
Mining and logging	0	0	0
Financial activities	-800	-900	-100
Manufacturing	600	1,400	800
Education and health services	3,300	4,600	1,300
Leisure and hospitality	-6,300	200	6,500
Retail trade	-2,600	300	2,900
Government	10,100	9,600	-500

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically decreases by 4,700 from August to September. This year the state gained an estimated 12,900 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted increase of 17,600 jobs.

- The employment decrease on a seasonally adjusted basis was -100 in professional and business services in September. The normal seasonal decrease is 2,700. It is estimated to have decreased this September by 2,800.
- The estimated employment increase in construction was 2,900. The normal seasonal decrease is 700, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, construction employment increased by 3,600.
- Typically, manufacturing employment increases by 1,400 in September. On a seasonally adjusted basis, manufacturing employment increased by 800 as the estimated increase was 600.
- The normal seasonal loss in leisure and hospitality employment is 6,300 in September. The estimated gain was 200, so employment increased by 6,500 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- Employment in retail trade normally falls by 2,600. It is estimated to have increased by 300 this September so it increased by 2,900 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Media inquiries and contact information

Due to the high volume of requests for information, please send your emails to media@esd.wa.gov so that we can forward your requests to the appropriate staff.

For labor market information questions, please send your emails to lmea@esd.wa.gov.

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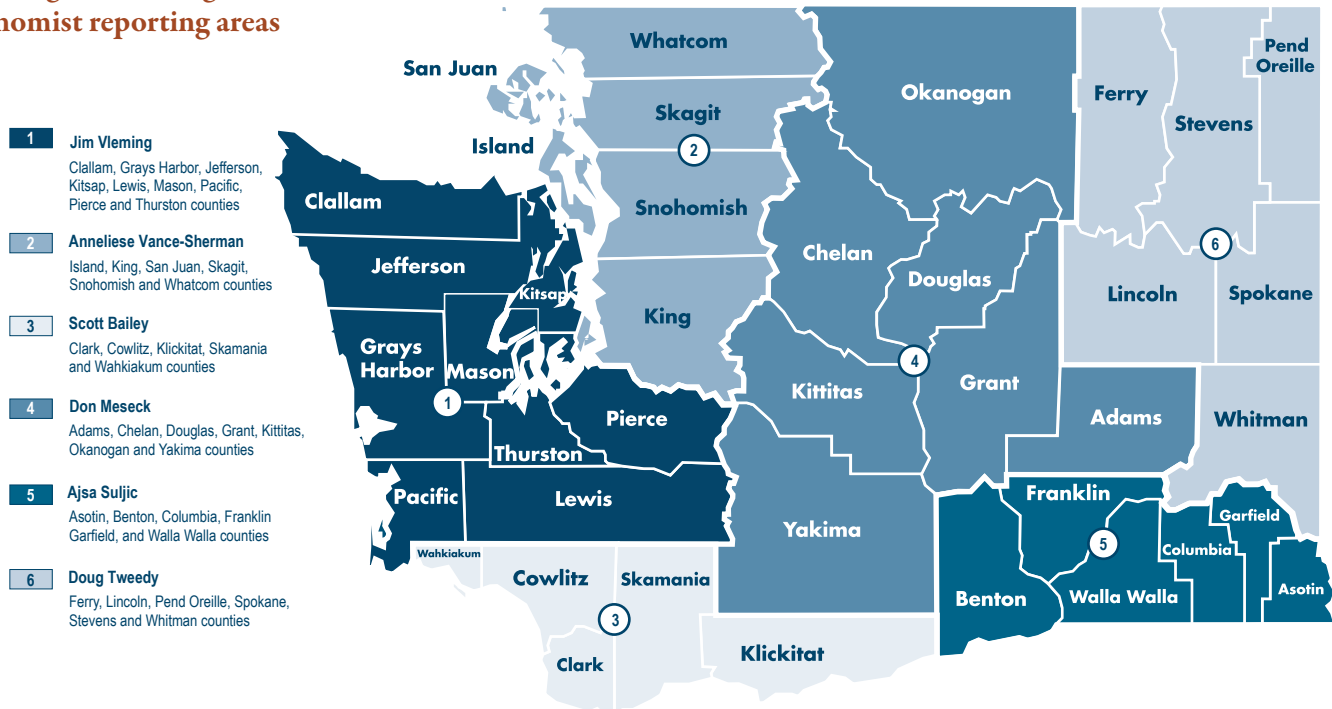
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Washington state regional labor economist reporting areas



The county level information will be available at 10 a.m., October 26, 2021.

The publication schedule for 2021 is posted at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>.

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