

The Monthly Employment Report

Washington 4.6%

United States 3.7%

Seasonally adjusted

January 2024



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 data@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 decreased by 3,600 in January 2024.¹ BLS estimates that the private sector shed 5,300 jobs during the month and employers in the public sector added 1,700 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for January 2023 through January 2024 indicate an increase in employment of 50,100 for the state. The private sector added 29,000 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 21,100 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2024 was 4.6 percent. The revised estimated unemployment rate for December 2023 was 4.2 percent. The January 2023 unemployment rate was 4.6 percent.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The December 2023 preliminary estimated gain of 7,700 jobs was revised upward to a gain of 15,200 jobs.

For more information, call Anneliese Vance-Sherman at 564-900-0748

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, December 2022, January 2023, December 2023, and January 2024, Source: Employment Security Department/DATA Division; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	January 2024 (Preliminary)	December 2023 (Revised)	January 2023 (Revised)	November 2022 (Revised)
United States				
Unemployment rate	3.7%	3.7%	3.4%	3.5%
<i>Seasonally adjusted</i>				
Washington				
Unemployment rate	4.6%	4.2%	4.6%	4.5%
Resident labor force	4,032,808	4,059,627	4,022,870	4,015,286
Unemployed	183,847	170,380	184,387	182,517
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Unemployment rate	3.8%	3.6%	3.2%	3.2%
Resident labor force	1,811,621	1,820,891	1,782,027	1,781,209
Unemployed	68,674	66,198	56,947	57,086

Data Architecture, Transformation and Analytics Division
January 2024

¹Most of the employment numbers discussed in this report refer 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

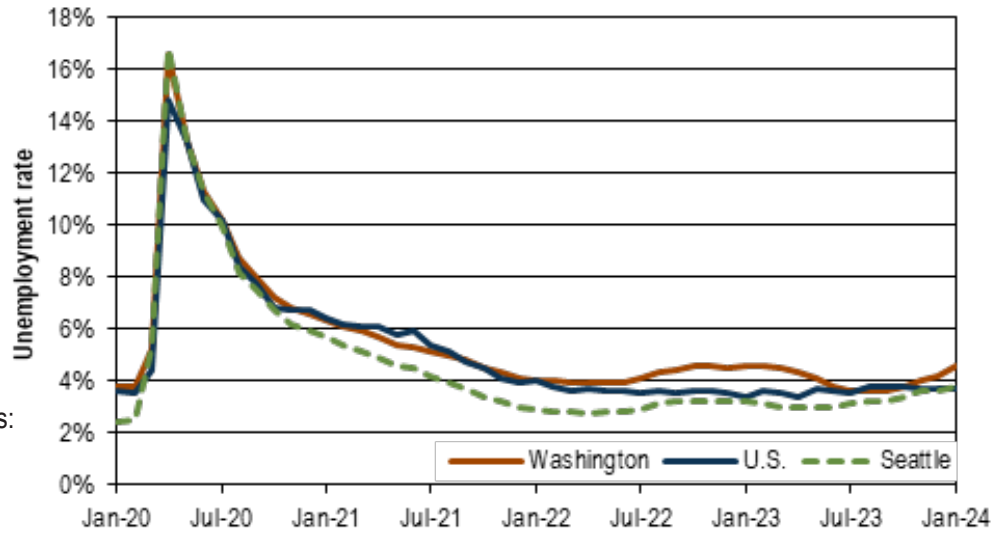
The BLS estimates Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2024 was 4.6 percent. The revised estimate for December 2023 was 4.2 percent.

According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed Washington residents increased by 13,467 in over the month. At the same time, the estimated number of employed Washington residents dropped by 40,286. Overall, this amounted to a decrease of 26,819 workers in the labor force from December 2023 to January 2024.

The preliminary January 2024 unemployment rate was no different than the rate observed 12 months ago.

January 2024 preliminary unemployment rates:
 U.S. (preliminary) 3.7%
 Washington (preliminary) 4.6%
 Seattle area (preliminary) 3.8%

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted
 U.S., Washington and Seattle, January 2020 through January 2024
 Source: Employment Security Department/DATA Division; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Employment change, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment decreased by 3,600 from December 2023 to January 2024.

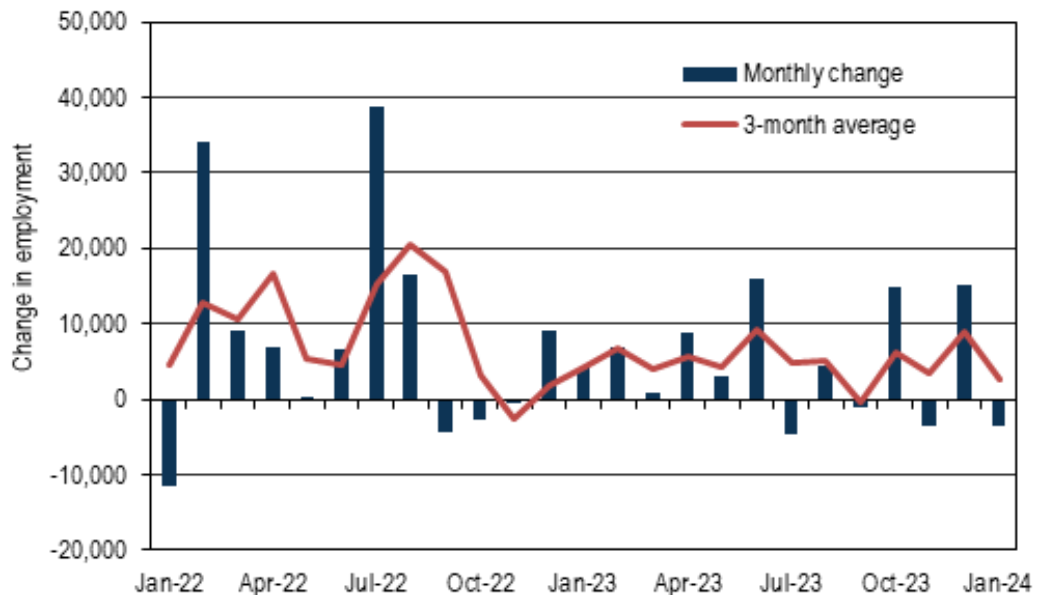
Recent employment change

November 2023: down 3,500 jobs (revised)

December 2023: up 15,200 jobs (revised)

January 2024: down 3,600 jobs (preliminary)

Monthly employment change, seasonally adjusted
 Washington state, January 2022 through January 2024
 Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; 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: 3,511,900

Unemployment rate: 3.8%

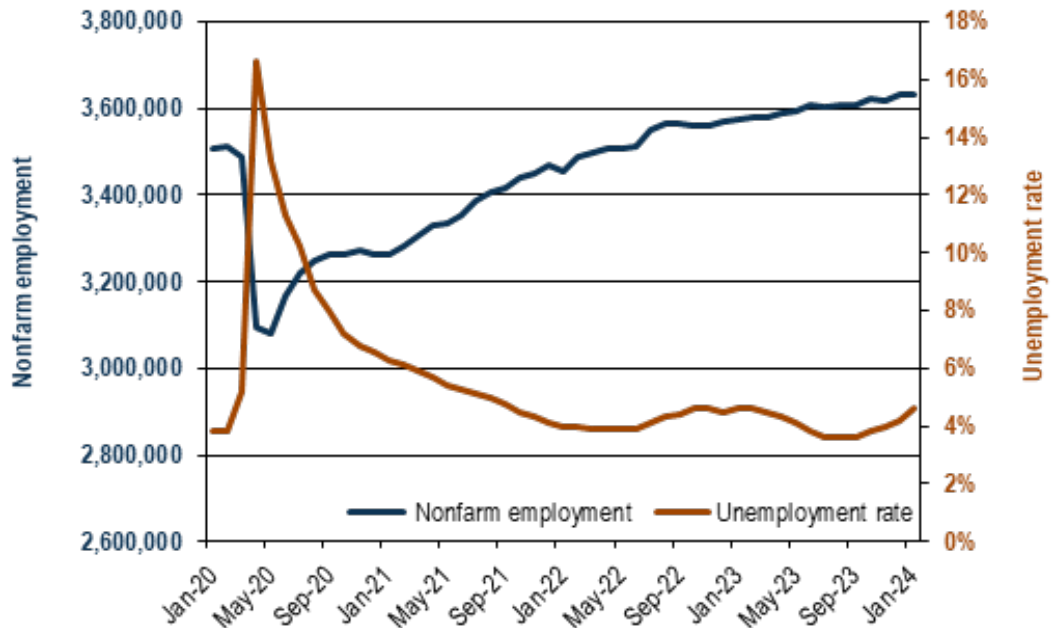
January 2024 (preliminary)

Nonfarm employment: 3,630,700

Unemployment rate: 4.6%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, January 2020 through January 2024

Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; 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
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- WorkSource system
- Unemployment insurance
- Training

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

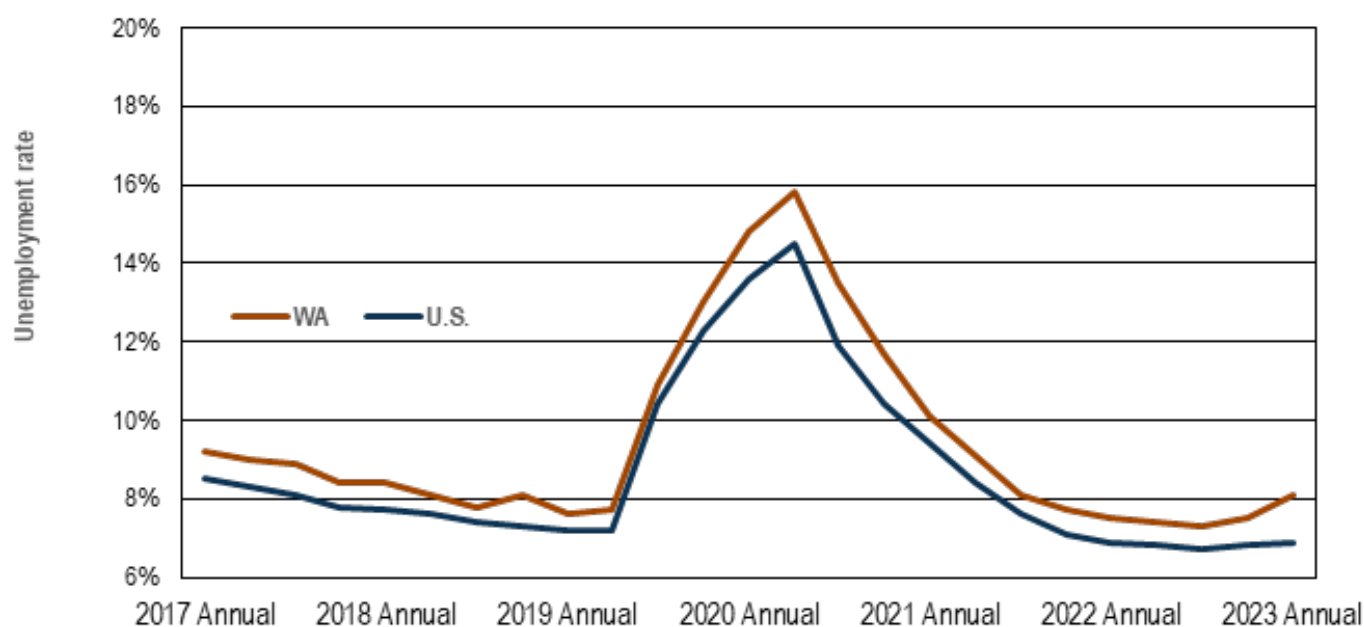
U-6: Broader annual average unemployment measure increased in the four-quarter period through fourth quarter 2023

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include four-quarter rates through the third quarter of 2023. 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 annual average unemployment rate for the four-quarter period through fourth quarter 2023 for Washington state was 8.1%. This is above the 7.5% average for the four-quarter period through third quarter 2023. The U.S. U-6 average for the four-quarter period through fourth quarter 2023 was 6.9%.

Alternative measures of labor underutilization, four-quarter moving average, Washington state and U.S. U-6 unemployment rate, Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics



Year	WA/U.S.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Annual average
2023	WA	7.4%	7.3%	7.5%	8.1%
	U.S.	6.8%	6.7%	6.8%	6.9%
2022	WA	9.1%	8.1%	7.7%	7.5%
	U.S.	8.4%	7.6%	7.1%	6.9%
2021	WA	15.8%	13.5%	11.7%	10.1%
	U.S.	14.5%	11.9%	10.4%	9.4%
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%

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 employers shed an estimated 3,600 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- December 2023 estimates were revised up by more than 7,500 jobs.
- Overall, employment increased in five major industry sectors and decreased in six.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have decreased by 5,300 and government employment increased by 1,700 in January. The largest government employment gains were observed in local government.
- The largest sector level gains in private industry were observed in professional and business services (up 1,200) and education and health services (up 1,100); The deepest losses came from leisure and hospitality (down 4,300).
- The largest gains in the professional and business services sector were attributable to hiring in computer systems design and related services (up 800) and architectural and engineering services (up 700).
- Hiring in education and health services was concentrated in ambulatory health care services such as doctors' offices (up 2,000).
- Losses from the leisure and hospitality sector were observed throughout the sector, but the deepest losses came from arts, entertainment and recreation (down 2,500).

Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, December 2023 to January 2024

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

Total nonfarm	-3,600
Government	1,700
Professional and Business Services	1,200
Education and Health Services	1,100
Financial Activities	500
Wholesale Trade	100
Information	0
Mining and logging	0
Manufacturing	-300
Other Services	-300
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	-600
Retail Trade	-1,200
Construction	-1,500
Leisure and hospitality	-4,300

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 50,100 jobs from January 2023 to January 2024. This is a 1.4% increase in employment over the year.

- Overall, employment in nine major industries expanded and four decreased.
- Private sector employment rose 1.0 percent, up an estimated 29,000 jobs.
- Public sector employment rose 3.7 percent, up an estimated 21,100 jobs. The largest number of public sector jobs was added in local government.
- The largest private sector gains were attributable to hiring in education and health services (up 24,000) and leisure and hospitality (up 16,600); the deepest one year losses were observed in construction (down 9,300) and information (down 7,800).
- Education and health services employment gains were attributable to ambulatory health care services (up 9,700).
- The largest employment gains in leisure and hospitality were observed in accommodation and food services. (up 13,200).
- Employment in construction dropped by 9,300 overall, with losses observed in all contributing industries. Specialty trade contractors shed the largest number of jobs over the year (down 7,000).
- Information sector employment dropped by 7,800 over the year. The software publishing industry shed 2,90 jobs.

Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted
Washington state, January 2023 through January 2024

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

Total nonfarm	50,100
Education and health services	24,000
Government	21,100
Leisure and hospitality	16,600
Manufacturing	5,300
Wholesale trade	3,200
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	2,400
Other services	1,800
Mining and logging	200
Financial activities	100
Professional and business services	-2,500
Retail trade	-5,000
Information	-7,800
Construction	-9,300

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, January 2024

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

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
Total nonfarm	-49,700	-53,300	-3,600
Government	-100	1,600	1,700
Professional and Business Services	-7,600	-6,400	1,200
Education and Health Services	-5,200	-4,100	1,100
Financial Activities	-1,400	-900	500
Wholesale Trade	-900	-800	100
Information	-300	-300	0
Mining and Logging	-100	-100	0
Manufacturing	-2,800	-3,100	-300
Other Services	-2,100	-2,400	-300
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	-5,400	-6,000	-600
Retail Trade	-10,200	-11,400	-1,200
Construction	-7,400	-8,900	-1,500
Leisure and Hospitality	-6,200	-10,500	-4,300

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically decreases from December to January. This year, the expected one-month decrease was 49,700. Actual estimated employment in January included the reduction of 53,300 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted decrease of 3,600 jobs.

- The largest seasonally adjusted increase in employment in January was observed in government. The normal seasonal change would have been a reduction of 100 jobs however 1,600 jobs were added, resulting in a seasonally adjusted increase of 1,700 jobs.
- Employers in the leisure and hospitality sector typically shed and estimated 6,200 jobs in January. In January 2024, the sector lost 10,500 jobs, resulting in a seasonally adjusted loss of 4,300 jobs.

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 data@esd.wa.gov.

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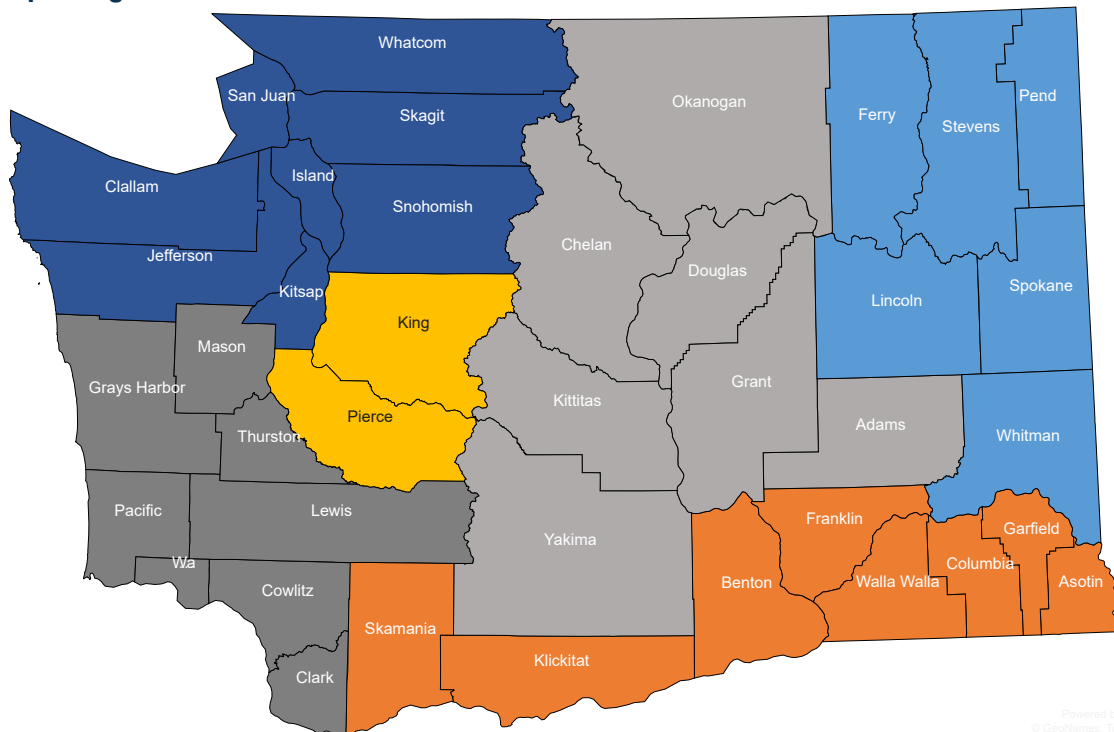
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Washington state regional labor economist reporting areas



The county level information will be available at 10 a.m., March 12, 2024. The publication schedule for 2024 can be found at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>

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