



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 27,900 in March 2019.<sup>1</sup> BLS estimates the private sector gained 28,400 jobs during the month and the public sector lost 500 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for March 2018 through March 2019 indicate an increase in employment of 81,600 for the state. The private sector added 88,100 jobs while the public sector lost an estimated 6,500 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March 2019 is 4.6 percent. The revised estimated February 2019 unemployment rate is at 4.5 percent. The March 2018 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. February's preliminary estimated loss of 8,700 jobs was revised to a loss of 14,400 jobs.

For more information, call Paul Turek, labor economist at 360-507-9599.

## 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, February and March, 2018 and 2019  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	March 2019 (Preliminary)	February 2019 (Revised)	March 2018 (Revised)	February 2018 (Revised)
<b>United States</b>				
Unemployment rate				
Seasonally adjusted	3.8%	3.8%	4.0%	4.1%
<b>Washington</b>				
Unemployment rate	4.6%	4.5%	4.6%	4.6%
Resident labor force	3,862,100	3,849,100	3,765,700	3,758,900
Unemployed	178,800	174,500	172,700	173,500
<b>Seattle/Bellevue/Everett</b>				
Unemployment rate	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%
Resident labor force	1,713,000	1,707,300	1,678,300	1,676,400
Unemployed	60,100	58,300	57,900	58,300



<sup>1</sup>Most of the employment numbers discussed in this report refers to jobs, not persons. 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 March 2019 is 4.6 percent. The revised estimated February 2019 unemployment rate is 4.5 percent.

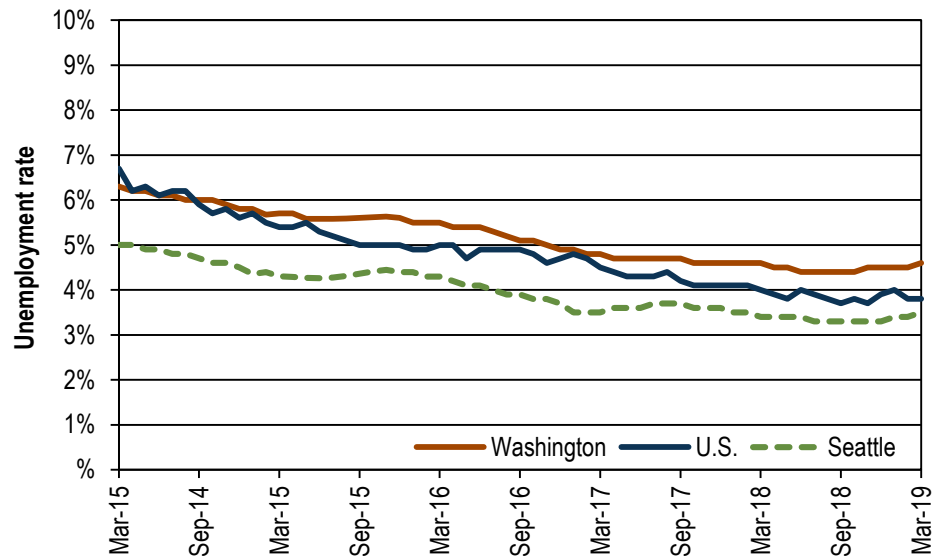
According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people rose by 4,300 in March 2019 compared to February 2019. At the same time, the number of employed people rose by an estimated 8,700. Overall, this amounted to an increase of 13,000 people in the labor force.

The preliminary March 2019 unemployment rate is the same as the March 2018 rate of 4.6 percent.

### Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted

U.S., Washington and Seattle, March 2015 through March 2019

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



### March 2019 preliminary unemployment rates:

U.S. (preliminary) 3.8%  
 Washington (preliminary) 4.6%  
 Seattle area (preliminary) 3.5%

## Employment change and moving average, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 27,900 jobs from February 2019 to March 2019.

Recent employment change  
**January 2019:** up 10,400 jobs (revised)

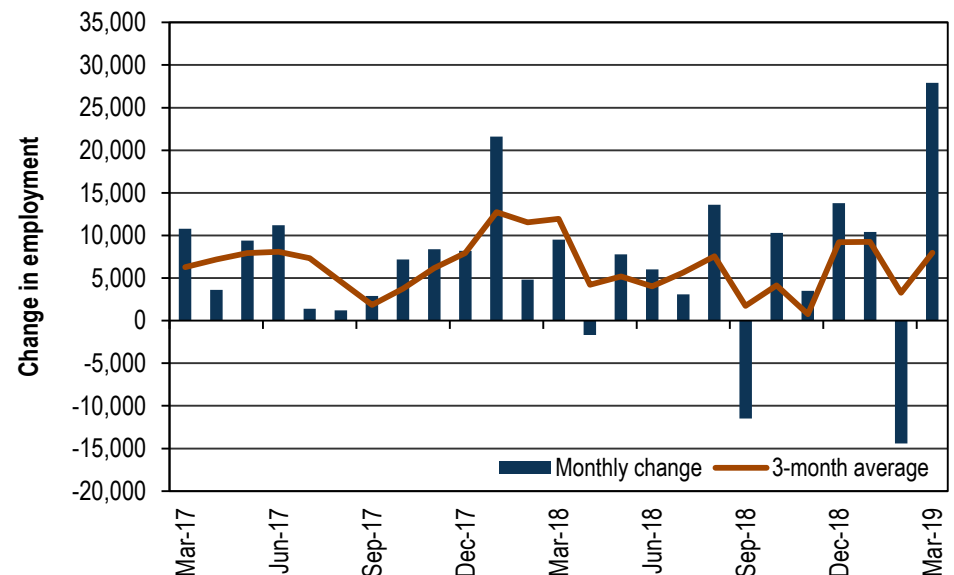
**February 2019:** down 14,400 jobs (revised)

**March 2019:** up 27,900 jobs (preliminary)

### Monthly employment change and three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, March 2017 through March 2019

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



## Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

### March 2008

(start of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 3,008,000  
Unemployment rate: 4.8%

### February 2010

(end of recent employment recession in Washington)

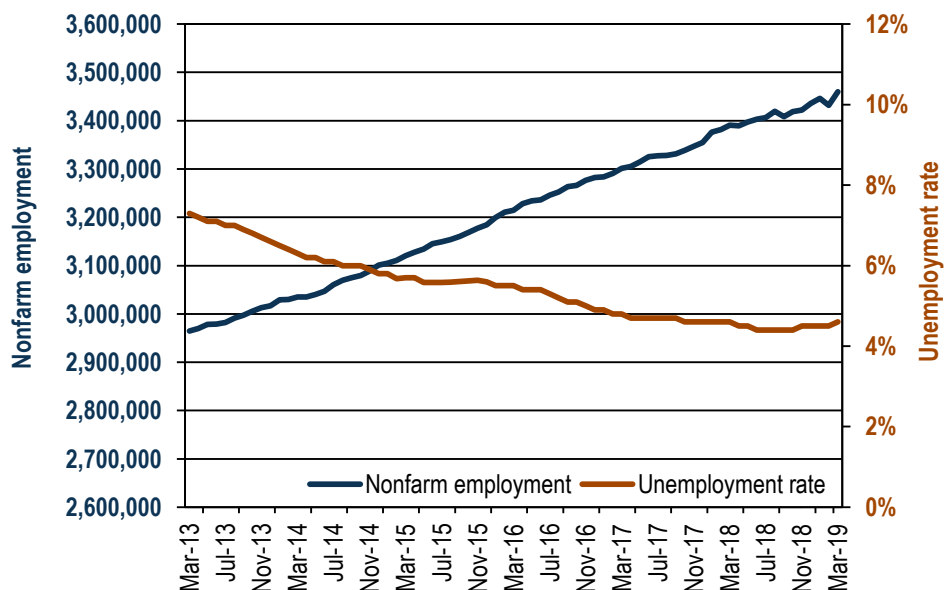
Nonfarm employment: 2,824,100  
Unemployment rate: 10.4%

### March 2019 (preliminary)

Nonfarm employment: 3,459,700  
Unemployment rate: 4.6%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted  
Washington state, March 2013 through March 2019

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



## Understanding what seasonally adjusted means

Over the course of a year, the size of the state's labor force and the levels of employment and unemployment undergo sharp fluctuations due to such seasonal events as changes in weather, reduced or expanded production, harvest, major holidays and the opening and closing of schools. The effect of such seasonal variation can be very large; seasonal fluctuations may account for as much as 95 percent of the month-to-month changes in unemployment at the national level.

Because these seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on statistical trends can be eliminated by adjusting the statistics from one month to the next. These adjustments make non-seasonal developments, such as declines in economic activity, easier to spot. For example, the large number of youth entering the labor force each June is likely to obscure any other changes that have taken place relative to May, making it difficult to

determine if the level of economic activity has risen or declined. However, because the effect of students finishing school in previous years is known, the statistics for the current year can be adjusted to allow for a comparable change. The adjusted figure provides a more useful tool with which to analyze changes in economic activity.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

## U-6 unemployment rate

### U-6: Broader unemployment measure declined in the four quarter period ending December 2018

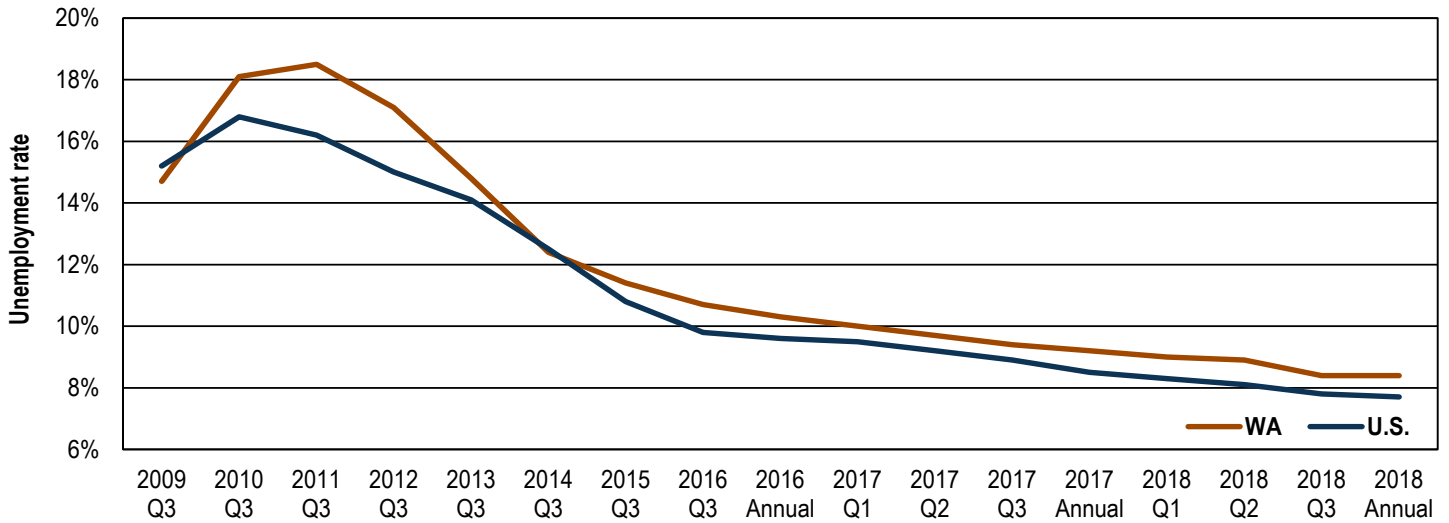
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include the annual average for 2018. One such alternative measure is the U-6 rate, which considers not only the unemployed population in

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 first quarter of 2018 through the fourth quarter of 2018 for Washington state was 8.4 percent. This was lower compared to the 9.2 percent U-6 unemployment rate one year prior. The U.S. U-6 unemployment rate was 7.7 percent over the same time period.

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
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%
2014	WA	13.3%	12.8%	12.4%	12.5%
	U.S.	13.4%	12.9%	12.5%	12.0%
2013	WA	16.4%	15.7%	14.8%	14.0%
	U.S.	14.5%	14.3%	14.1%	13.8%
2012	WA	17.6%	17.0%	17.1%	16.9%
	U.S.	15.6%	15.3%	15.0%	14.7%
2011	WA	18.4%	18.7%	18.5%	17.8%
	U.S.	16.5%	16.3%	16.2%	15.9%

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 27,900 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, twelve industries expanded employment in March and one contracted.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 28,400 and government employment decreased by 500.
- Employment in construction increased by 14,800, led by a loss of 7,300 by specialty trade contractors.
- Education and health services employment grew by 3,700, with 3,100 jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Professional and business services employment rose by 2,900, with administrative and support services adding 1,400 jobs.
- The number of jobs in leisure and hospitality increased by 1,400, mostly as a result of gains in employment in food services and drinking places.
- Employment in other services increased by 1,300 overall, with 300 jobs added in repair and maintenance.

Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted  
Washington state, February 2019 to March 2019

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

<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>27,900</b>
Construction	14,800
Education and health services	3,700
Professional and business services	2,900
Leisure and hospitality	1,400
Other services	1,300
Wholesale trade	1,100
Information	900
Manufacturing	800
Retail trade	600
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	600
Financial activities	200
Mining and logging	100
Government	-500

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## Industry employment in Washington, not seasonally adjusted

### Change by industry over the year

Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington added an estimated 81,600 jobs from March 2018 through March 2019:

- Overall, twelve major industries expanded and one contracted.
- Private sector employment rose 3.2 percent, up an estimated 88,100 jobs.
- Public sector employment decreased 1.1 percent, a net loss of 6,500 jobs.
- Education and health services employment increased by 19,500 with 17,600 of the jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Employment in leisure and hospitality is up by 12,700, led by a gain of 12,100 jobs in food services and drinking places.
- Employment in construction is up 12,600 with the number employed as specialty trade contractors up 8,800.
- Manufacturing added 10,800 jobs, with 8,700 jobs added in durable goods production and 2,100 jobs added in nondurable goods production.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 6,800, led by a 3,400 increase in professional, scientific and technical services.

Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted  
Washington state, March 2018 through March 2019

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

<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>81,600</b>
Education and health services	19,500
Leisure and hospitality	12,700
Construction	12,600
Manufacturing	10,800
Information	8,000
Professional and business services	6,800
Retail trade	5,000
Financial activities	4,800
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	4,200
Other services	2,100
Wholesale trade	1,500
Mining and logging	100
Government	-6,500

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The Labor Market and Economic Analysis (LMEA) Division is pleased to announce our new Labor Market Information Director, Mr. Steven Ross. Steven presides over the LMEA team and their products, services and publications.

Steven can be reached by phone at: 360-507-9615 and email at: [SRoss@esd.wa.gov](mailto:SRoss@esd.wa.gov)

#### Monthly unemployment rates

##### March 2019

Washington State:  
4.6% seasonally adjusted

Nationwide:  
3.8% seasonally adjusted

[Labor force by county snapshot](#)  
not seasonally adjusted

## 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, March 2019

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

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>19,600</b>	<b>47,500</b>	<b>27,900</b>
Leisure and hospitality	5,500	6,900	1,400
Professional and business services	4,100	7,000	2,900
Construction	2,900	17,700	14,800
Government	2,300	1,800	-500
Manufacturing	1,400	2,200	800
Retail trade	1,100	1,700	600
Other services	900	2,200	1,300
Information	500	1,400	900
Financial activities	500	700	200
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	400	1,000	600
Education and health services	0	3,700	3,700
Mining and logging	0	100	100
Wholesale trade	0	1,100	1,100

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically increases by 19,600 from February to March. This year the state gained an estimated 47,500 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted increase of 27,900 jobs

- The normal seasonal gain in leisure and hospitality employment is 5,500 in March. The estimated gain was 6,900, so employment increased by 1,400 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- The employment increase on a seasonally adjusted basis was 2,900 in professional and business services in March. The normal seasonal increase is 4,100. It is estimated to have increased by 7,000 this March.
- The estimated employment increase in construction was 17,700. The normal seasonal decrease is 2,900, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, construction employment rose by 14,800.
- Typically, manufacturing increases by 1,400 in March. On a seasonally adjusted basis, manufacturing employment increased by 800 as the estimated increase was 2,200.
- Employment in retail trade normally rises by 1,100. It is estimated to have increased by 1,700 this March, so it increased by 600 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

## Contact an economist

Our statewide economist and six regional economists serve customers in their areas for WorkSource offices, workforce development councils, non-profit organizations, higher education, businesses and the news media. They can help you find and use labor market data, fulfill special data requests and answer questions about the state and local labor markets. Get in touch with your regional economist to get the local information you need.

### Statewide labor economist:

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### Regional labor economists:

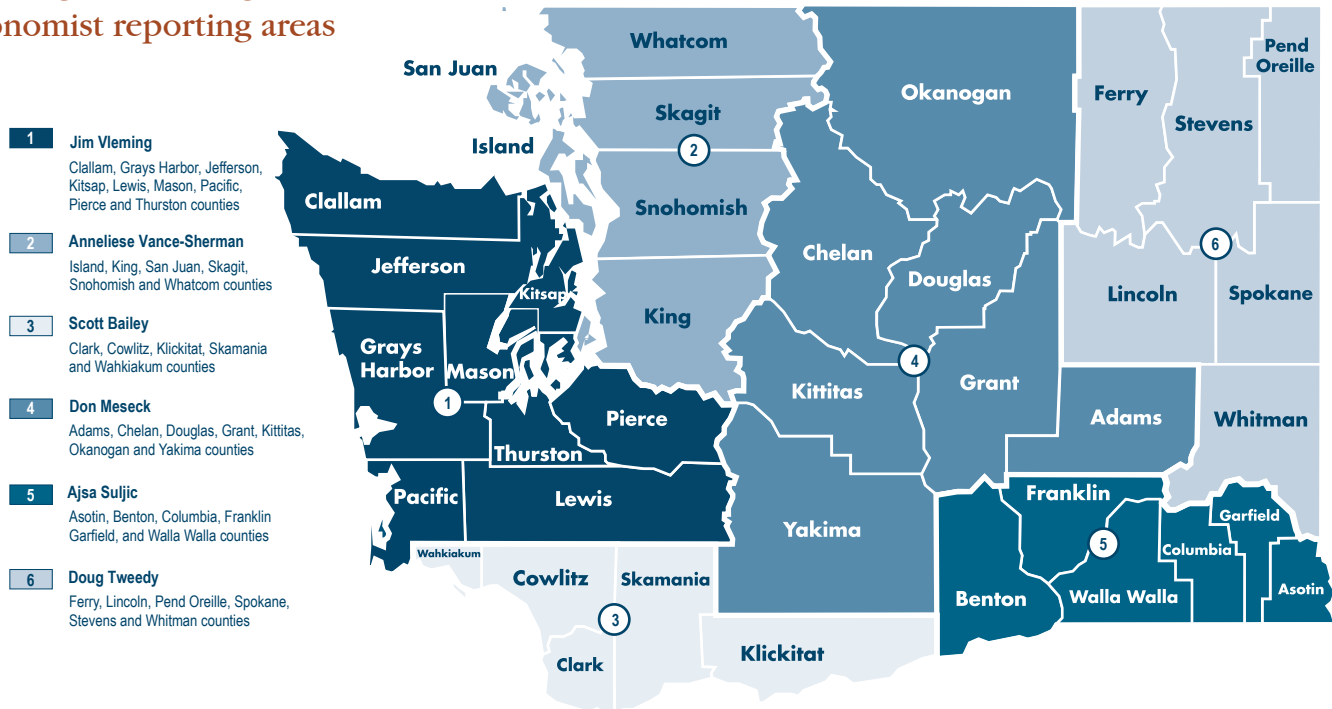
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## Washington state regional labor economist reporting areas



The county level information will be available at 10 a.m., April 23, 2019. The publication schedule for 2019 is posted at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>.

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