

# Monthly Employment Report



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 13,500 in April 2019.<sup>1</sup> BLS estimates the private sector gained 11,800 jobs during the month and the public sector gained 1,700 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for April 2018 through April 2019 indicate an increase in employment of 83,100 for the state. The private sector added 87,100 jobs while the public sector lost an estimated 4,000 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2019 is 4.7 percent. The revised estimated March 2019 unemployment rate is at 4.6 percent. The April 2018 unemployment rate was 4.5 percent.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. March's preliminary estimated gain of 27,900 jobs was revised to a gain of 27,700 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, March and April, 2018 and 2019  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	April 2019 (Preliminary)	March 2019 (Revised)	April 2018 (Revised)	March 2018 (Revised)
<b>United States</b>				
Unemployment rate				
Seasonally adjusted	3.6%	3.8%	3.9%	4.0%
<b>Washington</b>				
Unemployment rate	4.7%	4.6%	4.5%	4.6%
Resident labor force	3,870,100	3,862,000	3,771,800	3,765,700
Unemployed	181,100	178,800	171,300	172,700
<b>Seattle/Bellevue/Everett</b>				
Unemployment rate	3.5%	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%
Resident labor force	1,714,300	1,712,900	1,679,600	1,678,300
Unemployed	60,400	60,200	57,400	57,900



<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

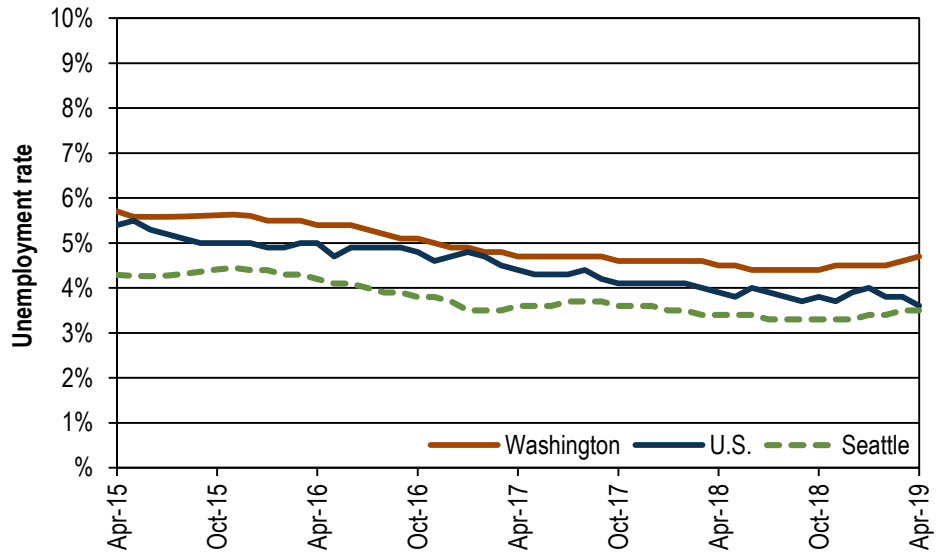
The BLS estimates Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2019 is 4.7 percent. The revised estimated March 2019 unemployment rate is 4.6 percent.

According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people rose by 2,300 in April 2019 compared to March 2019. At the same time, the number of employed people rose by an estimated 5,800. Overall, this amounted to an increase of 8,100 people in the labor force.

The preliminary April 2019 unemployment rate is a 0.2 percentage point higher than the April 2018 rate of 4.5 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted  
U.S., Washington and Seattle, April 2015 through April 2019

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



**April 2019 preliminary unemployment rates:**

U.S. (preliminary) 3.6%  
Washington (preliminary) 4.7%  
Seattle area (preliminary) 3.5%

## Employment change and moving average, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 13,500 jobs from March 2019 to April 2019.

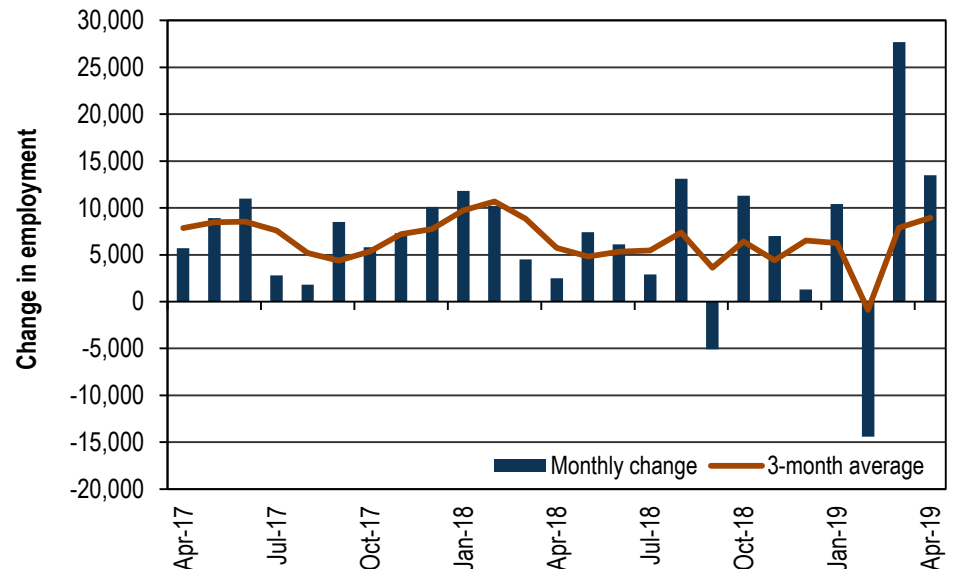
Recent employment change  
**February 2019:** down 14,400 jobs (revised)

**March 2019:** up 27,700 jobs (revised)

**April 2019:** up 13,500 jobs (preliminary)

Monthly employment change and three-month moving average, seasonally adjusted  
Washington state, April 2017 through April 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%

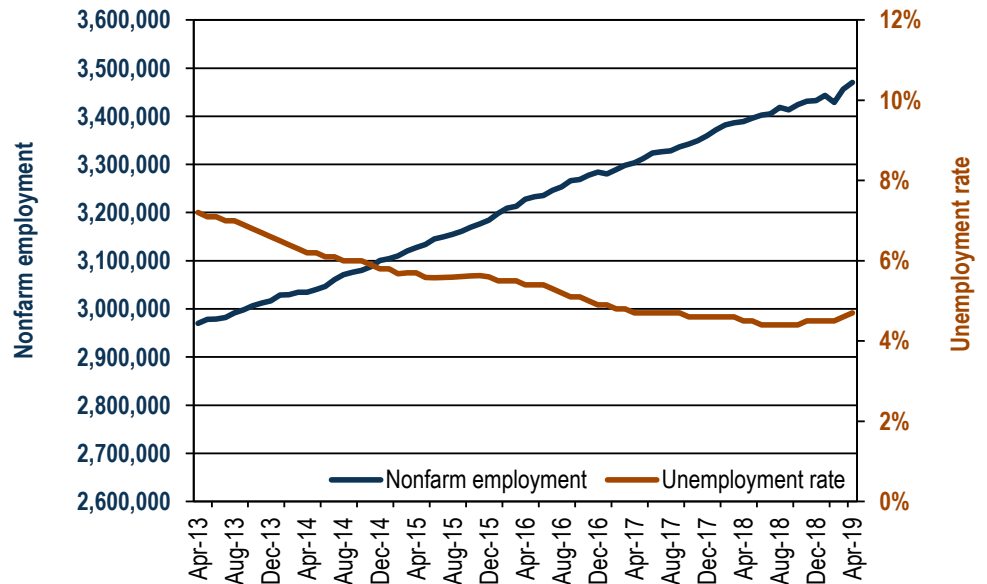
### April 2019 (preliminary)

Nonfarm employment: 3,470,000  
Unemployment rate: 4.7%

### Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, April 2013 through April 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 March 2019

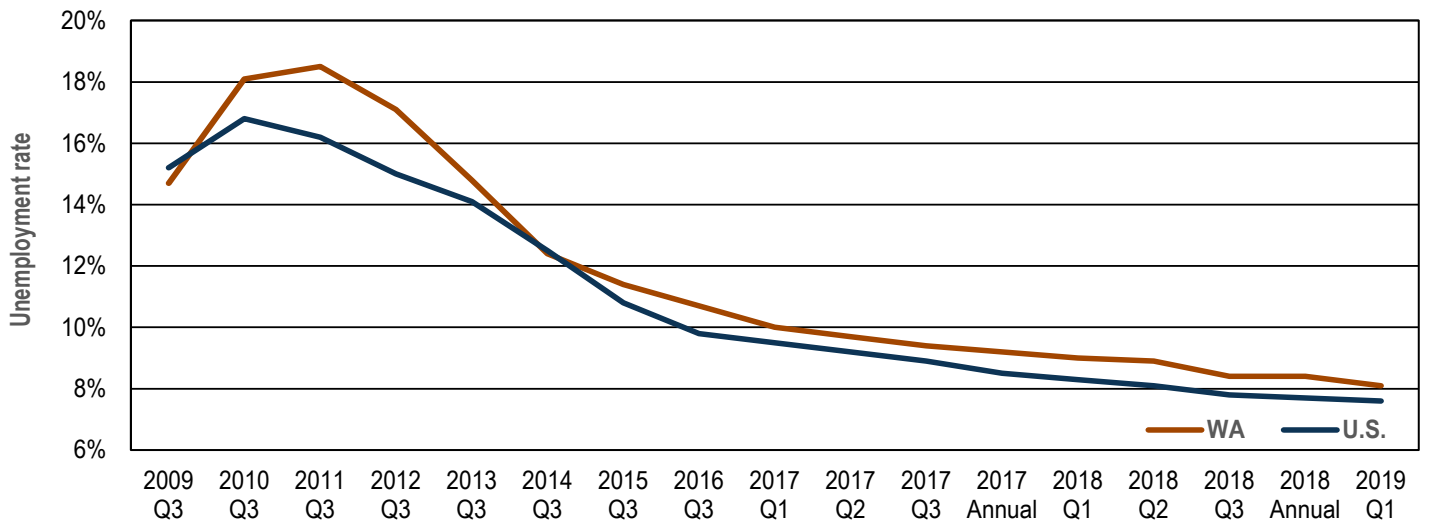
The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include the annual average for 2018. One such alternative measure is the U-6 rate, which considers not only the unemployed population in

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 second quarter of 2018 through the first quarter of 2019 for Washington state was 8.1 percent. This was lower compared to the 9.0 percent U-6 unemployment rate one year prior. The U.S. U-6 unemployment rate was 7.6 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
2019	WA	8.1%			
	U.S.	7.6%			
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%

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 13,500 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, eleven industries expanded employment in April and two contracted.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 11,800 and government employment increased by 1,700.
- Professional and business services employment rose by 2,800, with employment services adding 1,500 jobs.
- Education and health services employment grew by 2,300, with 1,300 jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Employment in financial activities increased by 1,900, led by a gain of 1,000 in real estate, rental and leasing.
- The number of jobs in leisure and hospitality increased by 1,600, led by a gain of 900 in arts, entertainment and recreation.
- Employment in other services increased by 1,200 overall, with 900 jobs added in personal and laundry services.

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

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

<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>13,500</b>
Professional and business services	2,800
Education and health services	2,300
Financial activities	1,900
Government	1,700
Leisure and hospitality	1,600
Other services	1,200
Manufacturing	1,000
Information	700
Wholesale trade	600
Retail trade	500
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	400
Mining and logging	-100
Construction	-1,100

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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 83,100 jobs from April 2018 through April 2019:

- Overall, ten major industries expanded, two contracted, and one remained unchanged.
- Private sector employment rose 3.1 percent, up an estimated 87,100 jobs.
- Public sector employment decreased 0.7 percent, a net loss of 4,000 jobs.
- Education and health services employment increased by 18,200 with 14,900 of the jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 16,900, led by a 9,200 increase in professional, scientific and technical services.
- Employment in leisure and hospitality is up by 12,500, led by a gain of 9,600 jobs in food services and drinking places.
- Employment in construction is up 10,300 with the number employed as specialty trade contractors up 7,000.
- Manufacturing added 7,900 jobs, with 6,000 jobs added in durable goods production and 1,900 jobs added in nondurable goods production.

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

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

<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>83,100</b>
Education and health services	18,200
Professional and business services	16,900
Leisure and hospitality	12,500
Construction	10,300
Manufacturing	7,900
Retail trade	6,600
Information	6,100
Financial activities	4,000
Wholesale trade	4,000
Other services	2,100
Mining and logging	0
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-1,500
Government	-4,000

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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

##### April 2019

Washington state:  
4.7% seasonally adjusted

Nationwide:  
3.6% 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, April 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>14,300</b>	<b>27,800</b>	<b>13,500</b>
Leisure and hospitality	5,200	6,800	1,600
Professional and business services	3,600	6,400	2,800
Government	2,100	3,800	1,700
Construction	1,900	800	-1,100
Retail trade	1,300	1,800	500
Other services	1,100	2,300	1,200
Wholesale trade	800	1,400	600
Financial activities	200	2,100	1,900
Information	200	900	700
Mining and logging	0	-100	-100
Manufacturing	-200	800	1,000
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-900	-500	400
Education and health services	-1,000	1,300	2,300

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically increases by 14,300 from March to April. This year the state gained an estimated 27,800 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted increase of 13,500 jobs.

- The normal seasonal gain in leisure and hospitality employment is 5,200 in April. The estimated gain was 6,800, so employment increased by 1,600 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- The employment increase on a seasonally adjusted basis was 2,800 in professional and business services in April. The normal seasonal increase is 3,600. It is estimated to have increased by 6,400 this April.
- The estimated employment increase in construction was 800. The normal seasonal increase is 1,900, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, construction employment fell by 1,100.
- Employment in retail trade normally rises by 1,300. It is estimated to have increased by 1,800 this April, so it increased by 500 on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- Typically, manufacturing decreases by 200 in April. On a seasonally adjusted basis, manufacturing employment increased by 1,000 as the estimated increase was 800.

## Benchmarking highlights

Benchmarking is a process that replaces employment estimates with the actual number of job gains or losses.

Each month, economists estimate monthly job gains and losses based on a survey of employers. Each quarter, economists benchmark the estimates by replacing them with data from employer tax records before applying seasonal adjustments.

Benchmarked employment data are now available through December 2018. Employment estimates for April 2018 presented in this report were based on the new data, plus seasonal adjustments.

Based on benchmarked December 2018 data:

- The two largest upward revisions were for professional and business services and for government, up 5,400 and 4,300, respectively.
- Transportation, warehousing and utilities had the largest downward revision, 4,200.

Quarterly benchmarked industry employment, seasonally adjusted  
Washington state, December 2018  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics,  
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Industry sector	Revisions to December 2018 employment level
<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>-3,000</b>
Professional and business services	5,400
Government	4,300
Wholesale trade	1,800
Leisure and hospitality	1,100
Mining and logging	0
Construction	-600
Information	-1,100
Retail trade	-1,200
Education and health services	-1,400
Other services	-1,400
Financial activities	-2,200
Manufacturing	-3,500
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-4,200



## 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.

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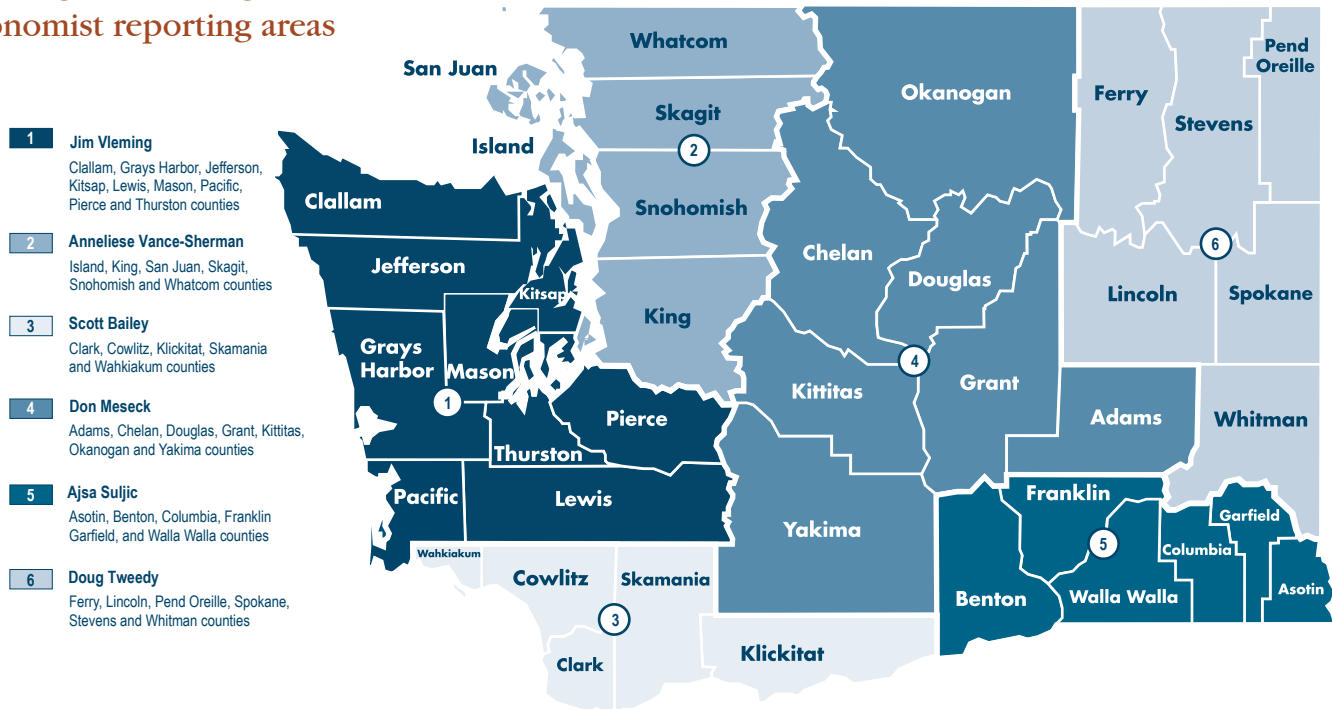
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## Washington state regional labor economist reporting areas



The county level information will be available at 10 a.m., May 21, 2019. The publication schedule for 2019 is posted at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>.

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