

Monthly Employment Report for April 2015



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 8,200 from March 2015 to April 2015.¹ BLS estimates the private sector gained 8,200 jobs during the month and public sector employment was unchanged.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for April 2014 through April 2015 indicate an increase in employment of 110,700 for the state. The private sector added 98,300 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 12,400 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2015 is 5.5 percent. The revised estimated March 2015 unemployment rate was at 5.9 percent. The April 2014 unemployment rate was 6.2 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 10,500 jobs was revised to a gain of 12,000 jobs.

For more information, call Paul Turek, labor economist at 360-407-2306.

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, 2014 and 2015
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	April 2015 (Preliminary)	March 2015 (Revised)	April 2014 (Revised)	March 2014 (Revised)
United States				
Unemployment rate <i>Seasonally adjusted</i>	5.4%	5.5%	6.2%	6.6%
Washington				
Unemployment rate	5.5%	5.9%	6.2%	6.3%
Resident labor force	3,549,000	3,549,500	3,467,400	3,465,400
Unemployed	196,600	209,300	215,100	217,200
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Unemployment rate	4.3%	4.5%	4.9%	4.9%
Resident labor force	1,585,700	1,578,900	1,549,400	1,549,100
Unemployed	67,600	71,000	75,200	76,000

¹Most 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 2015 was 5.5 percent. The revised estimated March 2015 unemployment rate was 5.9 percent.

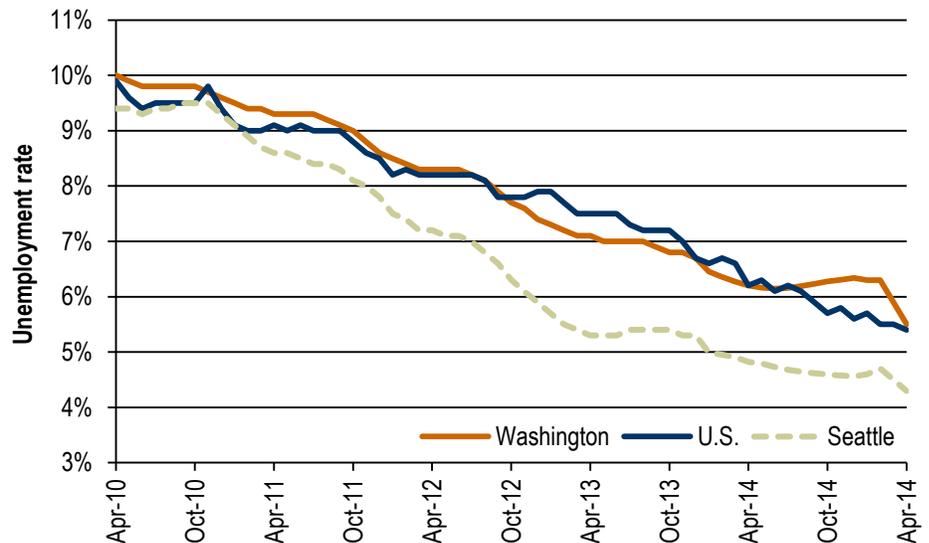
According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people fell by 12,700 in April 2015 compared to March 2015. At the same time, the number of employed people rose by an estimated 12,200. Overall, this amounted to a decrease of 500 people in the labor force.

The preliminary April 2015 unemployment rate is 0.7 percentage points below the April 2014 rate of 6.2 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted

U.S., Washington and Seattle, April 2010 through April 2015

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



April 2015 preliminary unemployment rates:

U.S. (preliminary) 5.4%
 Washington (preliminary) 5.5%
 Seattle area (preliminary) 4.3%

Employment change and moving average, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 8,200 jobs from March 2015 to April 2015.

Recent employment change
February 2015: up 2,600 jobs (revised)

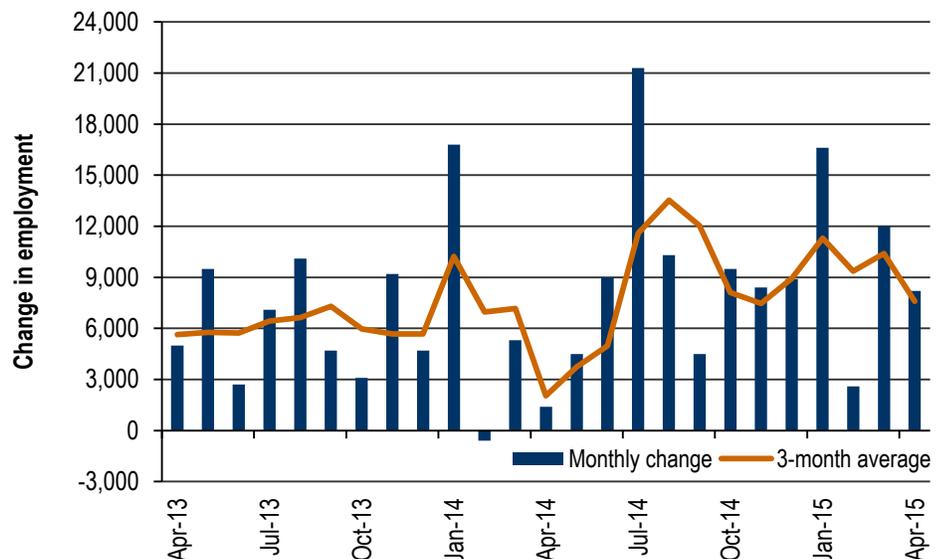
March 2015: up 12,000 jobs (revised)

April 2015: up 8,200 jobs (preliminary)

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

Washington state, April 2013 through April 2015

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



Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

February 2008

(start of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 3,010,900

Unemployment rate: 4.6%

February 2010

(end of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 2,821,400

Unemployment rate: 10.2%

April 2015 (preliminary)

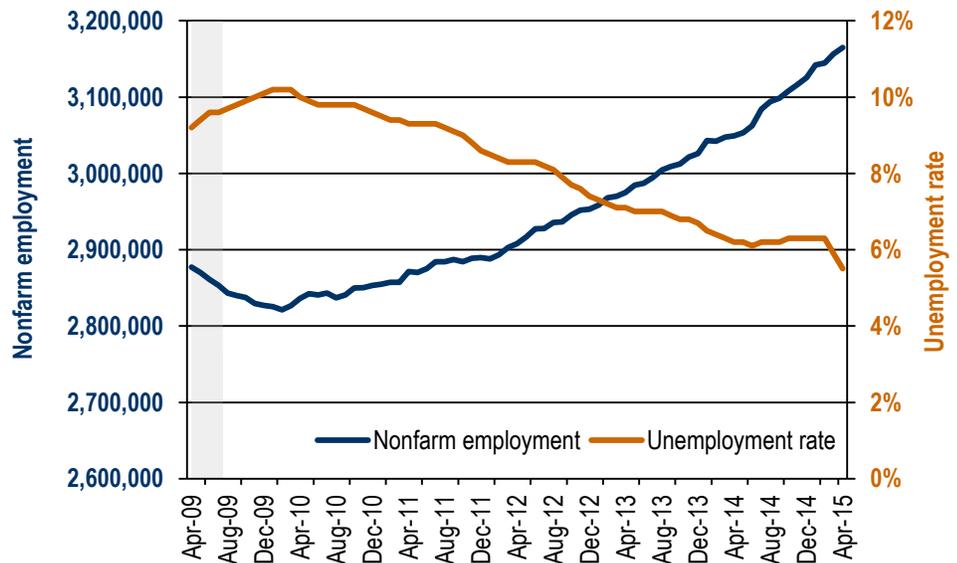
Nonfarm employment: 3,164,000

Unemployment rate: 5.5%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, April 2009 through April 2015

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



U.S. recession is shaded in gray.

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 nonseasonal 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

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 8,200 jobs, during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, eight industries expanded employment in April, three contracted and two remained unchanged.
- Private-sector employment is estimated to have increased by 8,200 and government employment remained unchanged.
- Leisure and hospitality employment increased by 2,500, with 1,400 of the increase occurring in arts, entertainment and recreation.
- The increase of 1,500 jobs in education and health services was driven by a gain of 1,000 in education services.
- Employment in financial activities increased by 800, with a gain of 1,600 jobs in real estate, rental and leasing offsetting a loss of 800 jobs in finance and insurance.
- The number of jobs in professional and business services was down by 200. Gains and losses within the sector were mixed. Most of the jobs that were added occurred in professional, scientific and technical services, while most of the jobs that were lost occurred in administrative and support services.

Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted Washington state, March 2015 to April 2015

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

Total nonfarm	8,200
Leisure and hospitality	2,500
Wholesale trade	2,300
Education and health services	1,500
Financial activities	800
Other services	600
Information	600
Manufacturing	500
Retail trade	200
Government	0
Mining and logging	0
Professional and business services	-200
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-200
Construction	-400

- Construction employment decreased by 400 overall, with employment primarily declining in residential building construction.

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 110,700 jobs from April 2014 through April 2015:

- Overall, twelve major industries expanded and one contracted.
- Private-sector employment rose 4.0 percent, up an estimated 98,300 jobs.
- Public-sector employment increased 2.2 percent, a net gain of 12,400 jobs.
- Employment in construction is up 19,500 with the number of employed in the specialty trade contractor sector up 14,000.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 18,800, led by a 9,000 increase in professional, scientific and technical services.
- Education and health services employment increased by 13,200 with 10,700 jobs added in health services and social assistance.
- Retailers added 13,200 jobs. Other retail trade, which includes online retail trade, was up by 7,500 jobs.
- Employment in the leisure and hospitality industry is up by 8,100, with 7,400 jobs added in accommodation and food services.

Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted Washington state, April 2014 through April 2015

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

Total nonfarm	110,700
Construction	19,500
Professional and business services	18,800
Education and health services	13,200
Retail trade	13,200
Government	12,400
Leisure and hospitality	8,100
Manufacturing	5,400
Financial activities	5,300
Wholesale trade	5,100
Other services	4,700
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	2,800
Information	2,400
Mining and logging	-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.

Based on historical patterns, Washington employment typically rises by 17,900 from March to April. This year the state gained an estimated 26,100 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted increase of 8,200 jobs.

- Employment in leisure and hospitality normally rises by 4,600. It is estimated to have increased by 7,100 this April yielding a gain of 2,500 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

Normal seasonal change, estimated change and seasonally adjusted change
Washington state, April 2015

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

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
Total nonfarm	17,900	26,100	8,200
Leisure and hospitality	4,600	7,100	2,500
Professional and business services	3,600	3,400	-200
Construction	3,200	2,800	-400
Retail trade	2,600	2,800	200
Government	2,400	2,400	0
Financial activities	800	1,600	800
Manufacturing	700	1,200	500
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	400	200	-200
Other services	200	800	600
Information	100	700	600
Mining and logging	0	0	0
Wholesale trade	-100	2,200	2,300
Education and health services	-600	900	1,500

- The estimated employment increase in professional and business services was 3,400. The normal seasonal increase is 3,600, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, professional and business services employment fell by 200.
- The change on a seasonally adjusted basis was an estimated loss of 400 jobs in construction in April. The normal seasonal increase is 3,200. It is estimated to have increased by 2,800 this April.
- The normal seasonal gain in retail trade employment is 2,600 in April. The estimated increase was 2,800 yielding a 200 gain on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- Typically government employment increases by 2,400 in April. On a seasonally adjusted basis, government employment was unchanged as the estimated increase was 2,400.

Contact an economist

We have seven regional economists serving local labor markets in Washington. Regional economists can help you find and use labor-market data, fulfill special data requests and answer questions about the labor market in your area. They serve professionals and organizations in their areas for WorkSource offices, workforce development councils, non-profit organizations, higher education, businesses and the news media.

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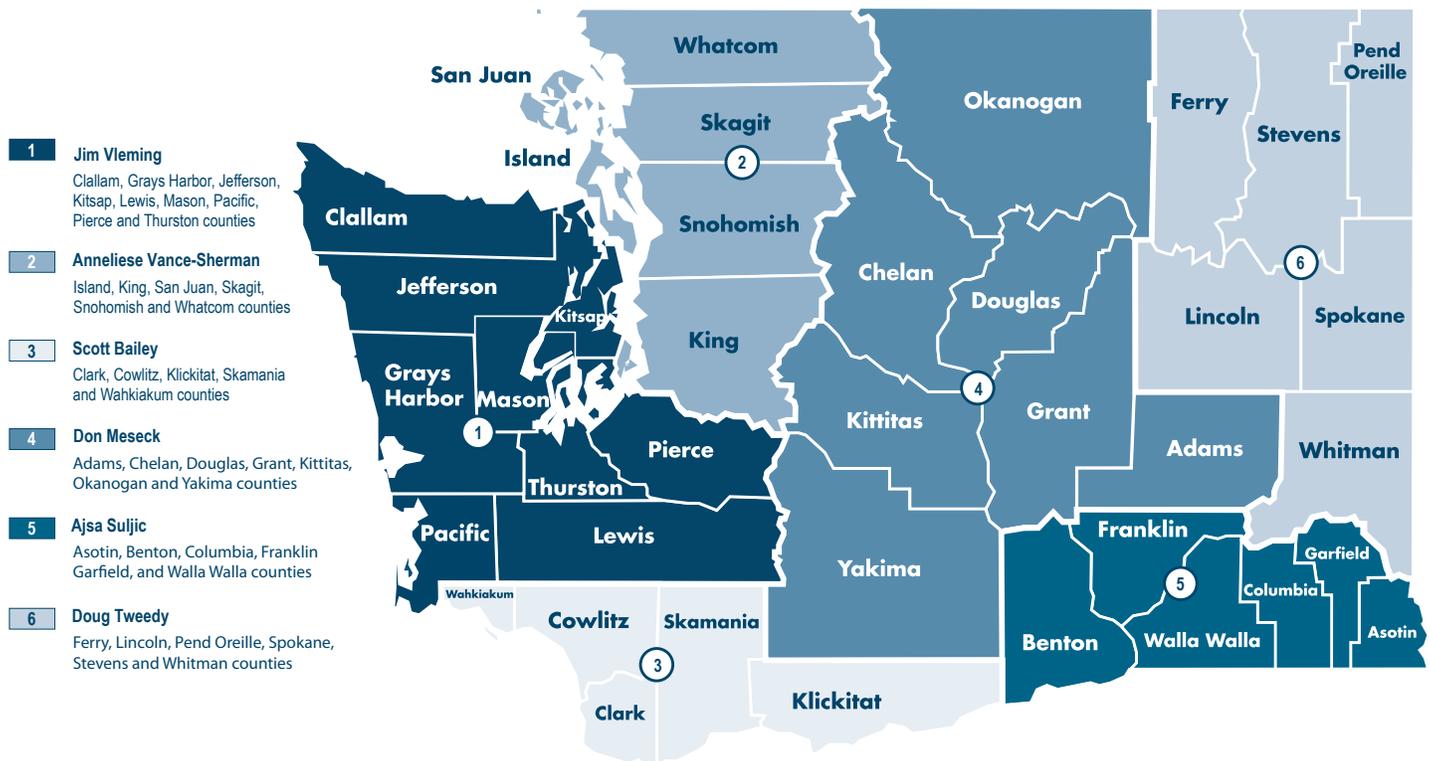
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Contact an economist online!

Washington State Regional Labor Economist Reporting Areas



Note: Due to changes in the processing of the monthly employment data by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the county-level information will be available at 10 a.m., May 26, 2015. The publication schedule for 2015 can be found at: <https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/employmentdata/reports-publications/economic-reports/monthly-employment-report>

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