

Monthly Employment Report for September 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 fell by 2,200 from August 2015 to September 2015.¹ BLS estimates the private sector lost 2,200 jobs during the month and public sector employment remained unchanged.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for September 2014 through September 2015 indicate an increase in employment of 81,700 for the state. The private sector added 71,900 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 9,800 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2015 is 5.2 percent. The revised estimated August 2015 unemployment rate was at 5.3 percent. The September 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. August's preliminary estimated gain of 1,600 jobs was revised to a gain of 5,200 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, August and September, 2014 and 2015
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	September 2015 (Preliminary)	August 2015 (Revised)	September 2014 (Revised)	August 2014 (Revised)
United States				
Unemployment rate <i>Seasonally adjusted</i>	5.1%	5.1%	5.9%	6.1%
Washington				
Unemployment rate	5.2%	5.3%	6.2%	6.2%
Resident labor force	3,526,300	3,531,200	3,502,700	3,493,800
Unemployed	184,400	185,800	218,300	216,200
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Unemployment rate	3.7%	3.6%	4.6%	4.6%
Resident labor force	1,584,000	1,582,600	1,557,400	1,554,500
Unemployed	57,900	56,500	71,900	72,200

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 September 2015 was 5.2 percent. The revised estimated August 2015 unemployment rate was at 5.3 percent.

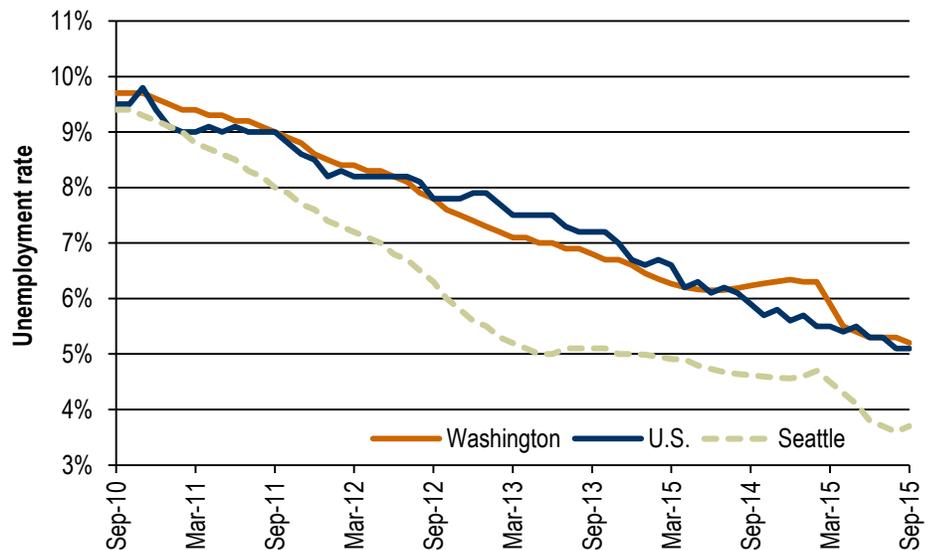
According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed people fell by 1,400 in September 2015 compared to August 2015. At the same time, the number of employed people fell by an estimated 3,500. Overall, this amounted to a decrease of 4,900 people in the labor force.

The preliminary September 2015 unemployment rate is 1.0 percentage points below the September 2014 rate of 6.2 percent.

Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted

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

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



September 2015 preliminary unemployment rates: U.S. (preliminary) 5.1%
Washington (preliminary) 5.2%
Seattle area (preliminary) 3.7%

Employment change and moving average, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment decreased by 2,200 jobs from August 2015 to September 2015.

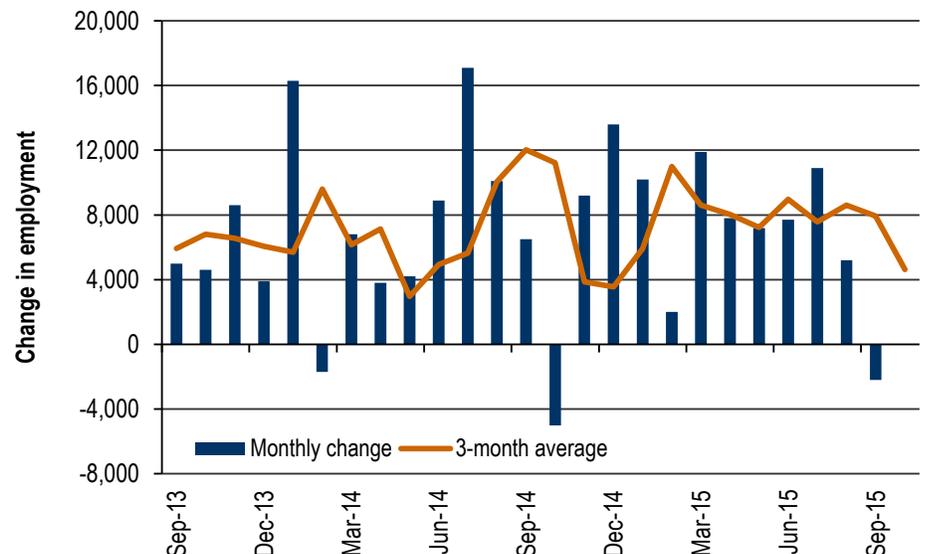
Recent employment change
July 2015: up 10,900 jobs (revised)

August 2015: up 5,200 jobs (revised)

September 2015: down 2,200 jobs (preliminary)

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

Washington state, September 2013 through September 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: 3,010,800

Unemployment rate: 4.6%

February 2010

(end of recent employment recession in Washington)

Nonfarm employment: 2,821,000

Unemployment rate: 10.3%

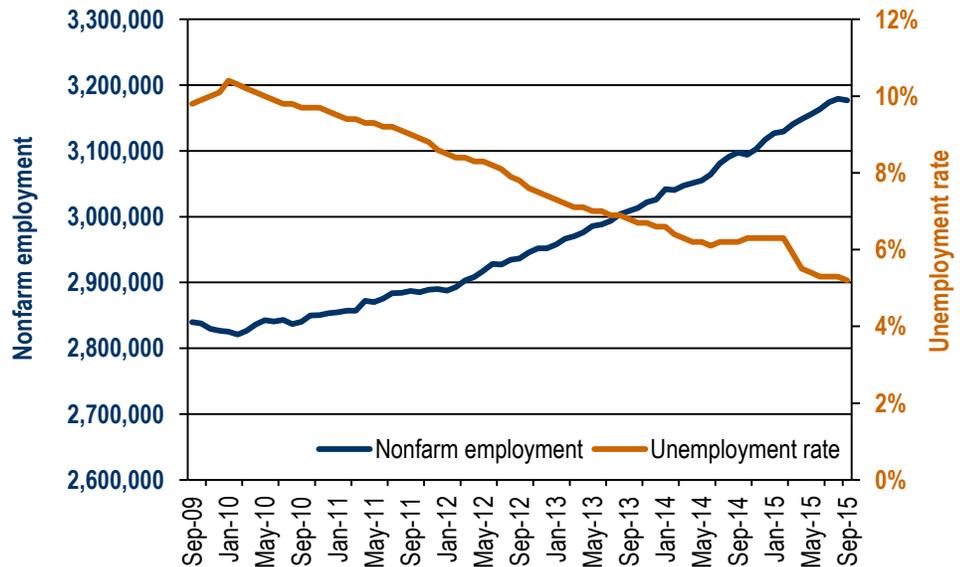
September 2015 (preliminary)

Nonfarm employment: 3,177,000

Unemployment rate: 5.2%

Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, September 2009 through September 2015

Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; 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 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 lost an estimated 2,200 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- Overall, four industries expanded employment in September, seven contracted and two were unchanged.
- Private-sector employment is estimated to have decreased by 2,200 and government employment remained unchanged.
- Employment in other services increased by 2,300 with membership associations and organizations adding 1,800 jobs.
- Manufacturing employment rose by 900, with 1,200 jobs added in durable goods manufacturing offsetting the loss of 300 jobs in nondurable goods manufacturing.
- Construction employment decreased by 800 overall, with job losses of 700 each in specialty trade contractors and heavy and civil engineering offsetting an increase in employment of 600 in building construction.

Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted
Washington state, August 2015 to September 2015

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

Total nonfarm	-2,200
Other services	2,300
Wholesale trade	1,100
Manufacturing	900
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	600
Information	0
Government	0
Mining and logging	-100
Retail trade	-200
Leisure and hospitality	-600
Education and health services	-700
Construction	-800
Financial activities	-800
Professional and business services	-3,900

- Employment in financial activities decreased by 800, with the greatest losses occurring in real estate, rental and leasing.
- The number of jobs in professional and business services decreased by 3,900, with the greatest losses in employment occurring in administrative and support services.

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 81,700 from September 2014 through September 2015:

- Overall, twelve major industries expanded and one was unchanged.
- Private-sector employment rose 2.8 percent, up an estimated 71,900 jobs.
- Public-sector employment increased 1.8 percent, a net gain of 9,800 jobs.
- Retailers added 14,500 jobs. Other retail trade, which includes online retail trade, was up by 7,200 jobs.
- Professional and business services employment increased by 14,100, led by an 9,200 increase in professional, scientific and technical services.
- Employment in the leisure and hospitality industry is up by 11,700, with 11,900 jobs added in food services and drinking places offsetting employment losses in accommodation.

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

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

Total nonfarm	81,700
Retail trade	14,500
Professional and business services	14,100
Leisure and hospitality	11,700
Construction	10,400
Government	9,800
Education and health services	5,000
Other services	4,300
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	3,700
Wholesale trade	3,600
Manufacturing	2,000
Information	1,900
Financial activities	700
Mining and logging	0

- Employment in construction was up 10,400 with the number employed in the specialty trade contractor sector up 5,700.
- Education and health services employment increased by 5,000 with all 5,000 jobs added in health services and social assistance.

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 6,100 from August to September. This year the state gained an estimated 3,900 jobs, amounting to a seasonally adjusted decrease of 2,200 jobs.

- Typically government employment increases by 18,400 in September. On a seasonally adjusted basis, government employment was unchanged as the estimated increase was 18,400.

Normal seasonal change, estimated change and seasonally adjusted change
Washington state, September 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	6,100	3,900	-2,200
Government	18,400	18,400	0
Education and health services	3,800	3,100	-700
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	200	800	600
Mining and logging	0	-100	-100
Manufacturing	-300	600	900
Professional and business services	-300	-4,200	-3,900
Financial activities	-900	-1,700	-800
Information	-1,200	-1,200	0
Wholesale trade	-1,200	-100	1,100
Construction	-1,800	-2,600	-800
Other services	-2,500	-200	2,300
Retail trade	-3,200	-3,400	-200
Leisure and hospitality	-4,900	-5,500	-600

- The change on a seasonally adjusted basis was an estimated loss of 700 jobs in education and health services in September. The normal seasonal increase is 3,800. It is estimated to have increased by 3,100 this September.
- The normal seasonal loss in manufacturing employment is 300 in September. The estimated increase was 600 yielding a 900 gain on a seasonally adjusted basis.
- The estimated employment decrease in construction was 2,600. The normal seasonal decrease is 1,800, so on a seasonally adjusted basis, construction employment fell by 800.
- Employment in leisure and hospitality normally falls by 4,900. It is estimated to have decreased by 5,500 this September yielding a loss of 600 on a seasonally adjusted basis.

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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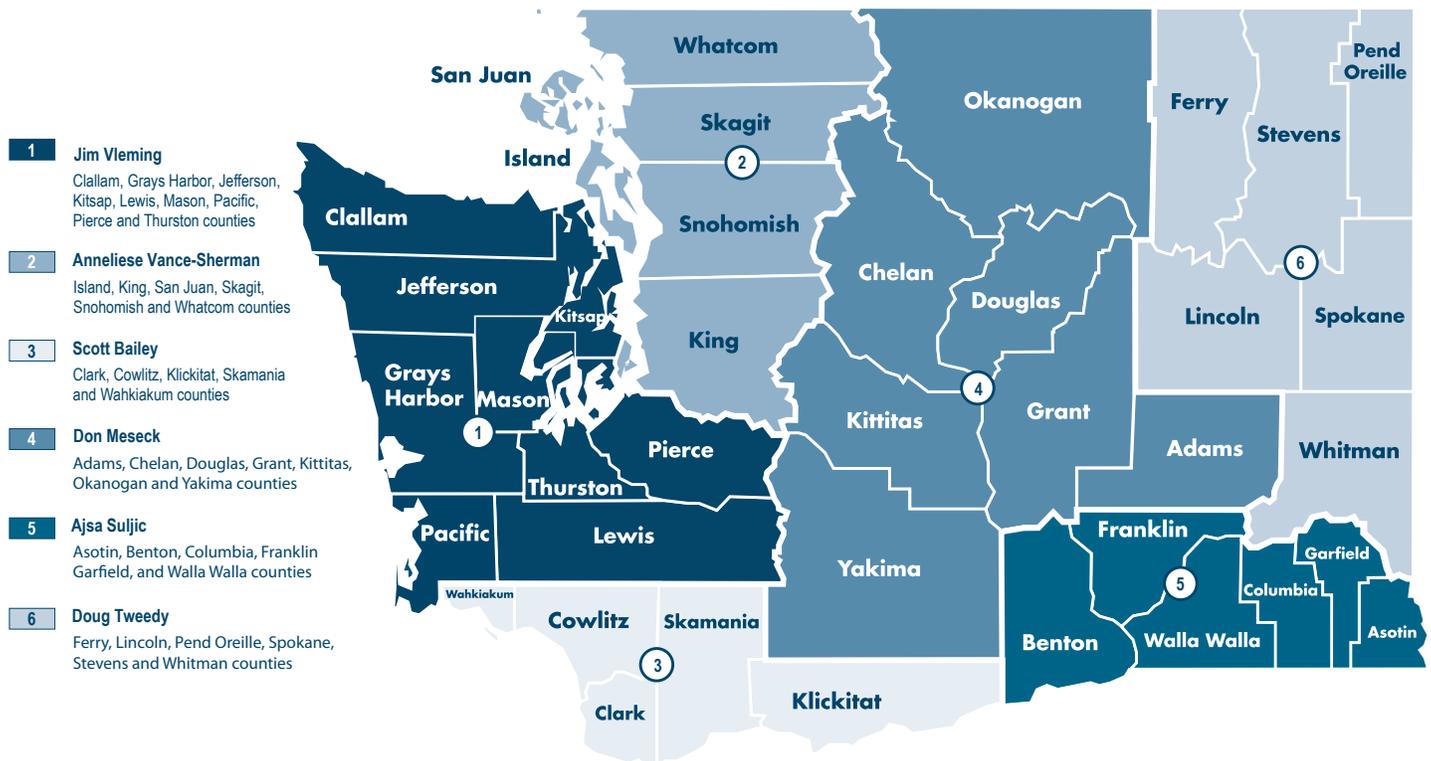
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Contact an economist online!

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., October 20, 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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