

Northwest Washington Labor Area Summary

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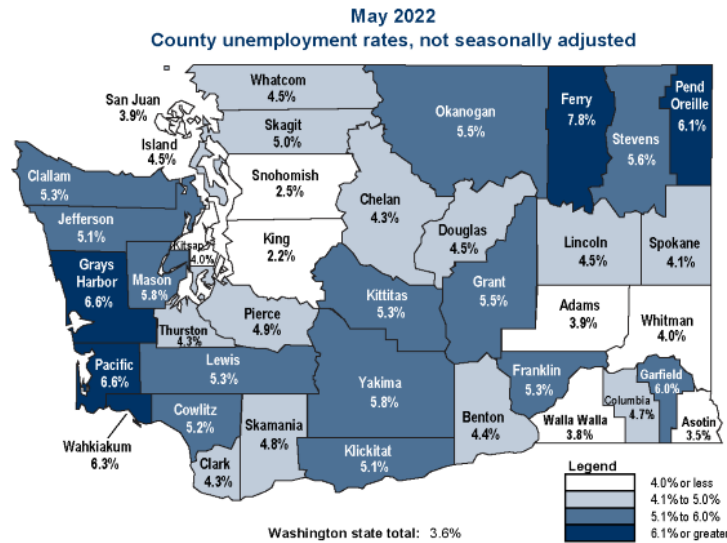
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This report marks the fourteenth report whereby the year-over-year narrative shifts from pandemic-related losses to recovery since the start of the economic crisis. Pandemic-related employment effects began to show up in March 2020, and swiftly led to unprecedented levels of unemployment in April 2020. Many jobs have recovered in the meantime, with significant variation by location and industry. This report describes a moment in that recovery.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington fell by 2,300 in May 2022. BLS estimates the private sector lost 2,100 jobs during the month and the public sector lost 200 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for May 2021 through May 2022 indicate an increase in employment of 181,800 for the state. The private sector gained 174,600 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 7,200 jobs over the year.



Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) May-22	Apr-22	May-21	Year-to-Year Change
USA	3.4%	3.3%	5.5%	-2.1%
Washington state	3.6%	3.5%	5.1%	-1.5%
Northwest Workforce Development Area	4.5%	5.4%	6.2%	-1.7%
Whatcom County	4.5%	4.4%	5.8%	-1.3%
Skagit County	5.0%	4.9%	6.0%	-1.0%
Island County	4.5%	4.4%	5.5%	-1.0%
San Juan County	3.9%	3.9%	4.5%	-0.6%

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for May 2022 is 3.9 percent. The revised estimated April 2022 unemployment rate is at 4.1 percent. The May 2021 unemployment rate was 5.5 percent.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The April 2022 preliminary estimated gain of 12,300 jobs was revised to a gain of 17,600 jobs.

Whatcom County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.5 percent in May 2022 (preliminary), slightly higher than 4.4 percent reported in April (revised). For comparison, the unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.8 percent.

- Compared to May 2021, the labor force expanded by 4,612 workers (4.1 percent). Within that estimate, the number of employed workers expanded by 5,836 and the number of unemployed workers contracted by 1,224. Whatcom County's estimated labor force was 116,604 in May 2022.

Whatcom County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted
Bellingham Metropolitan Statistical Area (Whatcom County)
Data benchmarked through December 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim May-22	Revised Apr-22	Revised May-21	Change		
				Apr-22 May-22	May-21 May-22	May-21 May-22
Total Nonfarm	96,000	95,800	90,500	200	5,500	6.1%
Total Private	78,000	77,700	73,100	300	4,900	6.7%
Goods Producing	18,600	18,400	17,000	200	1,600	9.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	8,900	8,900	8,000	0	900	11.3%
Manufacturing	9,700	9,500	9,000	200	700	7.8%
Service Providing	77,400	77,400	73,500	0	3,900	5.3%
Private Services Providing	59,400	59,300	56,100	100	3,300	5.9%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,800	16,600	15,900	200	900	5.7%
Retail Trade	10,700	10,800	10,800	-100	-100	-0.9%
Financial Activities	4,000	4,000	4,000	0	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	9,000	9,000	8,300	0	700	8.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	10,700	10,600	9,100	100	1,600	17.6%
Government	18,000	18,100	17,400	-100	600	3.4%
Federal Government	1,400	1,400	1,500	0	-100	-6.7%
Total State Government	6,100	6,200	5,900	-100	200	3.4%
Total Local Government	10,500	10,500	10,000	0	500	5.0%

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County (not seasonally adjusted) increased by 200 from April to May 2022. Over the year, nonfarm employment increased by 5,500 (6.1 percent).

- In May, employment expansions were observed in manufacturing, trade, transportation, warehousing, and utilities (with losses in retail), and leisure and hospitality. Employment in government dipped over the month.
- Employment in all major sectors included in this report either added jobs over the year or remained unchanged. Retail trade, within trade, transportation warehousing and utilities dipped over the year. Leisure and hospitality added the largest number of jobs over the year (+1,600).

Skagit County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 5.0 percent (preliminary) in May 2022—up slightly over the month from 4.9 percent (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 6.0 percent.

- Compared to May 2021, the labor force expanded by 1,542 (2.5 percent). Within that, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 2,105 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ contracted by 563, bringing the unemployment rate down. Skagit County’s resident labor force was estimated at 62,546.

Skagit County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Mount Vernon-Anacortes Metropolitan Statistical Area (Skagit County)

Data benchmarked through December 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim May-22	Revised Apr-22	Revised May-21	Change		
				Apr-22 May-22	May-21 May-22	May-21 May-22
Total Nonfarm	50,500	50,400	49,400	100	1,100	2.2%
Total Private	38,800	38,700	38,000	100	800	2.1%
Goods Producing	10,500	10,400	10,200	100	300	2.9%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,300	4,300	4,200	0	100	2.4%
Manufacturing	6,200	6,100	6,000	100	200	3.3%
Service Providing	40,000	40,000	39,200	0	800	2.0%
Private Services Providing	28,300	28,300	27,800	0	500	1.8%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,300	9,300	9,600	0	-300	-3.1%
Retail Trade	6,500	6,600	6,900	-100	-400	-5.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	5,000	4,800	4,700	200	300	6.4%
Government	11,700	11,700	11,400	0	300	2.6%
Federal Government	400	400	400	0	0	0.0%
State Government	1,200	1,200	1,300	0	-100	-7.7%
Local Government	10,100	10,100	9,700	0	400	4.1%

Total nonfarm employment in Skagit County increased by 100 jobs over the month. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 1,100 or 2.2 percent.

- One-month employment gains were observed in leisure and hospitality and manufacturing. Employment in retail trade dipped by 100 and all other sectors remained unchanged over the month.
- Each major industry sector detailed in this report, with the exception of trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities (including retail trade) expanded employment over the year. The largest 12-month increases detailed in this report were attributable to government and leisure and hospitality (+300 each).

Island County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 4.5 percent (preliminary) in May 2022, up slightly from 4.4 percent (revised) over the month. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.5 percent.

- Compared to May 2021, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 563 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work contracted by 343. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 36,460, up 220 or 0.6 percent over the year.

Island County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

Oak Harbor Micropolitan Statistical Area (Island County)

Data benchmarked through December 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim May-22	Revised Apr-22	Revised May-21	Change		
				Apr-22 May-22	May-21 May-22	May-21 May-22
Total Nonfarm	17,220	17,300	17,130	-80	90	0.5%
Total Private	12,720	12,830	12,650	-110	70	0.6%
Goods Producing	1,990	2,000	1,870	-10	120	6.4%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,400	1,410	1,240	-10	160	12.9%
Manufacturing	590	590	630	0	-40	-6.3%
Service Providing	15,230	15,300	15,260	-70	-30	-0.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,650	2,710	2,790	-60	-140	-5.0%
Retail Trade	2,160	2,200	2,250	-40	-90	-4.0%
Information and Financial Activities	860	860	900	0	-40	-4.4%
Professional and Business Services	1,590	1,560	1,600	30	-10	-0.6%
Education and Health Services	2,440	2,470	2,410	-30	30	1.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,350	2,400	2,250	-50	100	4.4%
Government	4,500	4,470	4,480	30	20	0.4%
Federal Government	1,250	1,260	1,260	-10	-10	-0.8%
State and Local Government	3,250	3,210	3,220	40	30	0.9%
State and Local Government Education	1,470	1,420	1,430	50	40	2.8%

Total nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County contracted by 80 from April to May 2022. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 90 or 0.5 percent.

- From April to May, two sectors (professional and business services and government) added jobs. All other sectors either shed jobs or remained unchanged. The largest one-month losses were observed in trade, transportation, and utilities (including losses attributable to retail trade).
- Year-over-year, the largest employment gains were attributable to construction (+160). The deepest losses were observed in trade, transportation and utilities (-140).

Employment statistics for Island County do not include military employment.

San Juan County

Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in San Juan County was 3.9 percent in May 2022 (preliminary), unchanged over the month. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 4.5 percent.

- Compared to May 2021, the number of residents counted as ‘employed’ decreased by 528 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 454. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 7,979 resident workers and contracted by 6.2 percent over the year.

San Juan County local area payroll jobs

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

San Juan County

Data benchmarked through December 2021

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim May-22	Revised Apr-22	Revised May-21	Change		
				Apr-22 May-22	May-21 May-22	May-21 May-22
Total Nonfarm	5,300	5,400	5,650	-100	-350	-6.2%
Total Private	4,520	4,630	4,780	-110	-260	-5.4%
Goods Producing	1,070	1,080	1,010	-10	60	5.9%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	810	820	780	-10	30	3.8%
Manufacturing	260	260	230	0	30	13.0%
Service Providing	4,230	4,320	4,640	-90	-410	-8.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	970	1,000	1,040	-30	-70	-6.7%
Information and Financial Activities	360	360	400	0	-40	-10.0%
Professional and Business Services	530	530	460	0	70	15.2%
Education and Health Services	480	470	530	10	-50	-9.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	920	990	1,150	-70	-230	-20.0%
Government	780	770	870	10	-90	-10.3%

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County contracted by 100 in May. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was down 350 or 6.2 percent. Employment in San Juan County is highly seasonal.

- From April to May 2022, education and health services and government each expanded slightly. The deepest one-month change was a drop in leisure and hospitality (-70).
- Over the year, the payroll tally in San Juan County contracted by 350. Gains were reported in the goods-producing sectors of construction and manufacturing, as well as professional and business services. All other industries included in this report shed jobs. The deepest one-year losses were observed in the tourism-dependent leisure and hospitality sector (-230).

Forecast information for Washington state:

The Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council (ERFC) issues quarterly forecasts that address Washington's projected economic health. The February forecast by Washington's Economic and Revenue Forecast Council estimates that the statewide unemployment rate averaged 6.7 percent in 2021. The unemployment rate is expected to average about 4.5 percent in 2022, (down from the November forecast) and drop to 4.0 percent in 2023. Employment is expected to recover to pre-recession levels in 2022. See www.erfc.wa.gov for more information.

The Employment Security Department is an equal-opportunity employer and provider of programs and services. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to people with disabilities. Washington Relay Service 711.