

# Northwest Washington Labor Area Summary

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This report marks the thirteenth 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 rose by 12,300 in April 2022.1 BLS estimates the private sector gained 12,800 jobs during the month and the public sector lost 500 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for April 2021 through April 2022 indicate an increase in employment of 186,800 for the state.

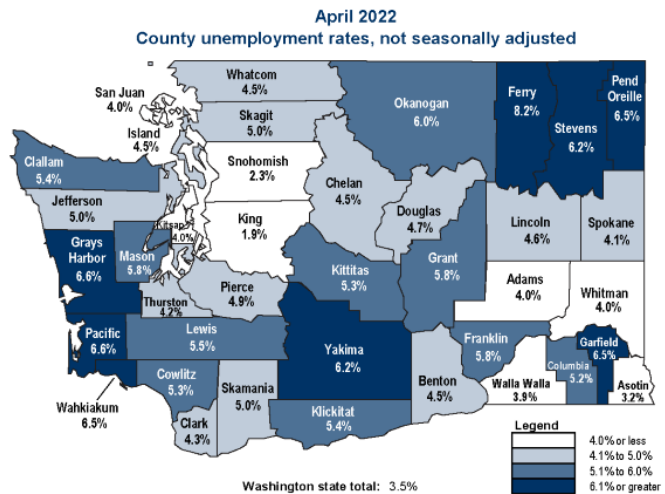
The private sector gained 180,700 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 6,100 jobs over the year.

Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2022 is 4.1 percent. The revised estimated March 2022 unemployment rate is at 4.1 percent. The April 2021 unemployment rate was 5.7 percent.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses.

Unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Area	(Prelim.) Apr-22	Mar-22	Apr-21	Year-to-Year Change
USA	3.3%	3.8%	5.7%	-2.4%
Washington state	3.5%	4.3%	5.4%	-1.9%
<b>Northwest Workforce Development Area</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>-1.6%</b>
Whatcom County	4.5%	5.2%	6.3%	-1.8%
Skagit County	5.0%	5.9%	6.5%	-1.5%
Island County	4.5%	5.2%	5.9%	-1.4%
San Juan County	4.0%	4.8%	5.4%	-1.4%



Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The March 2022 preliminary estimated gain of 8,800 jobs was revised to a gain of 9,000 jobs.

# Whatcom County

## Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Whatcom County was 4.5 percent in April 2022 (preliminary), down from 5.2 percent reported in March (revised). For comparison, the unemployment rate 12 months ago was 6.3 percent.

- Compared to April 2021, the labor force expanded by 5,763 workers. Within that estimate, the number of employed workers expanded by 7,498 (7.2 percent) and the number of unemployed workers contracted by 1,735 (24.9 percent). Whatcom County's estimated labor force was 117,231 in April 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 Apr-22	Revised Mar-22	Revised Apr-21	Change		
				Mar-22 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22
Total Nonfarm	95,800	94,600	89,800	1,200	6,000	6.7%
Total Private	77,700	76,700	72,600	1,000	5,100	7.0%
Goods Producing	18,500	18,100	17,200	400	1,300	7.6%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	9,000	8,700	8,300	300	700	8.4%
Manufacturing	9,500	9,400	8,900	100	600	6.7%
Service Providing	77,300	76,500	72,600	800	4,700	6.5%
Private Services Providing	59,200	58,600	55,400	600	3,800	6.9%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	16,700	16,900	15,800	-200	900	5.7%
Retail Trade	10,800	11,000	10,700	-200	100	0.9%
Financial Activities	4,000	4,000	4,000	0	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	9,000	8,900	8,200	100	800	9.8%
Leisure and Hospitality	10,700	10,300	8,700	400	2,000	23.0%
Government	18,100	17,900	17,200	200	900	5.2%
Federal Government	1,400	1,400	1,500	0	-100	-6.7%
Total State Government	6,200	6,200	5,900	0	300	5.1%
Total Local Government	10,500	10,300	9,800	200	700	7.1%

Total nonfarm payroll in Whatcom County (not seasonally adjusted) increased by 1,200 from March to April 2022. Over the year, nonfarm employment increased by 6,000 (6.7 percent).

- In April, employment expansions were observed in most sectors. The largest one-month changes were attributable to leisure and hospitality (+400). Retail trade (within trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities) dipped by 200 in April.
- Employment in all major sectors included in this report either added jobs over the year or remained unchanged. Leisure and hospitality added the largest number of jobs over the year (+2,000).

# Skagit County

## Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Skagit County was 5.0 percent (preliminary) in April 2022—down over the month from 5.9 percent (revised). The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 6.5 percent.

- Compared to April 2021, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 2,989 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ contracted by 817, bringing the unemployment rate down. Skagit County’s resident labor force was estimated at 62,786, increasing by 3.6 percent over the year.

## 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 Apr-22	Revised Mar-22	Revised Apr-21	Change		
				Mar-22 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22
Total Nonfarm	50,300	49,800	48,900	500	1,400	2.9%
Total Private	38,600	38,200	37,600	400	1,000	2.7%
Goods Producing	10,400	10,300	10,100	100	300	3.0%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	4,300	4,200	4,100	100	200	4.9%
Manufacturing	6,100	6,100	6,000	0	100	1.7%
Service Providing	39,900	39,500	38,800	400	1,100	2.8%
Private Services Providing	28,200	27,900	27,500	300	700	2.5%
Trade, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	9,200	9,400	9,600	-200	-400	-4.2%
Retail Trade	6,600	6,700	6,900	-100	-300	-4.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	4,800	4,600	4,500	200	300	6.7%
Government	11,700	11,600	11,300	100	400	3.5%
Federal Government	400	300	400	100	0	0.0%
State Government	1,200	1,200	1,200	0	0	0.0%
Local Government	10,100	10,100	9,700	0	400	4.1%

Total nonfarm employment in Skagit County increased by 500 jobs over the month. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 1,400 or 2.9 percent.

- One-month employment gains were observed in leisure and hospitality, construction, and government. Manufacturing remained unchanged over the month and retail trade (within trade, transportation, warehousing and utilities) shed jobs in April.
- 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 (+400), and leisure and hospitality (+300).

## Island County

### Local Area Unemployment Statistics

The unemployment rate in Island County was 4.5 percent (preliminary) in April 2022, down from 5.2 percent (revised) over the month. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.9 percent.

- Compared to April 2021, the number of people counted as ‘employed’ increased by 1,455 and the number of people counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work contracted by 467. Island County’s civilian labor force was estimated as 36,848 up 2.8 percent.

### 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 Apr-22	Revised Mar-22	Revised Apr-21	Change		
				Mar-22 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22
Total Nonfarm	17,360	17,210	16,960	150	400	2.4%
Total Private	12,890	12,790	12,510	100	380	3.0%
Goods Producing	2,000	1,990	1,870	10	130	7.0%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	1,410	1,390	1,230	20	180	14.6%
Manufacturing	590	600	640	-10	-50	-7.8%
Service Providing	15,360	15,220	15,090	140	270	1.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,710	2,680	2,760	30	-50	-1.8%
Retail Trade	2,210	2,180	2,210	30	0	0.0%
Information and Financial Activities	870	870	870	0	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	1,560	1,570	1,610	-10	-50	-3.1%
Education and Health Services	2,470	2,470	2,410	0	60	2.5%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,450	2,370	2,170	80	280	12.9%
Government	4,470	4,420	4,450	50	20	0.4%
Federal Government	1,260	1,260	1,270	0	-10	-0.8%
State and Local Government	3,210	3,160	3,180	50	30	0.9%
State and Local Government Education	1,420	1,400	1,390	20	30	2.2%

Total nonfarm payroll jobs in Island County expanded by 150 from March to April 2022. Year-over-year, the tally of nonfarm jobs expanded by 400 or 2.4 percent.

- From March to April, leisure and hospitality and government added the largest number of jobs (80 and 50 respectively). Information and financial activities and education and health services remained unchanged, and employment in manufacturing and professional and business services dipped slightly.
- Year-over-year, the largest employment gains were attributable to leisure and hospitality (+280). Employment in manufacturing, trade transportation and utilities, and professional and business services were each down over the year.

*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 4.0 percent in April 2022 (preliminary), down from 4.8 percent (revised) over the month. The unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.4 percent.

- Compared to April 2021, the number of residents counted as ‘employed’ increased by 187 and the number counted as ‘unemployed’ or actively seeking work decreased by 115. Altogether, the San Juan County labor force consisted of an estimated 8,119 resident workers and expanded by 0.9 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 Apr-22	Revised Mar-22	Revised Apr-21	Change		
				Mar-22 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22	Apr-21 Apr-22
Total Nonfarm	5,400	5,360	5,320	40	80	1.5%
Total Private	4,640	4,600	4,470	40	170	3.8%
Goods Producing	1,080	1,080	980	0	100	10.2%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	820	820	760	0	60	7.9%
Manufacturing	260	260	220	0	40	18.2%
Service Providing	4,320	4,280	4,340	40	-20	-0.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,000	1,000	990	0	10	1.0%
Information and Financial Activities	370	360	390	10	-20	-5.1%
Professional and Business Services	530	530	470	0	60	12.8%
Education and Health Services	470	480	530	-10	-60	-11.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	990	960	940	30	50	5.3%
Government	760	760	850	0	-90	-10.6%

Net nonfarm payroll in San Juan County expanded by 40 in April. Year-over-year, total nonfarm employment was up 80 or 1.5 percent. Employment in San Juan County is highly seasonal.

- From March to April 2022, most industries detailed in this report maintained employment levels. Leisure and hospitality and information and financial activities each expanded employment (+30 and +10 respectively). Employment in education and health services was down over the month.
- Over the year, the employment situation in San Juan County expanded by 1.5 percent. All but two sectors detailed in this report expanded employment over the year, with the largest employment gains attributable to construction and professional and business services (+60 each). Government, education and health services and information and financial activities reported 12-month job losses.

### **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](http://www.erfc.wa.gov) for more information.

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