

The Monthly Employment Report

November 2024

Prepared by Anneliese Vance-Sherman, chief labor economist

On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) show nonfarm employment in Washington increased by 30,900 in November 2024.^a

Employment in the private sector increased by 29,200 jobs over the month and employers in the public sector added 1,700 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for November 2023 through November 2024 show an increase of 27,300 jobs for the state. The private sector added 3,700 jobs while the public sector added an estimated 23,600 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2024 decreased from 4.7% to 4.6%. The unemployment rate in November 2023 was 4.0%.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The October 2024 preliminary estimated loss of 35,900 jobs was revised down to a loss of 33,600 jobs.

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^a Most of the employment numbers in this report refer to jobs, not people. For example, if a person holds two positions, these positions are counted as two jobs in the employment series. In the unemployment section, these positions refer to individuals, not jobs. In this case, a person holding two jobs is counted only once.

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 older.

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.

Figure 1: Resident civilian labor force and unemployment, seasonally adjusted, United States and Washington state, October and November 2023, October and November 2024

	November 2024 preliminary	October 2024 revised	November 2023 revised	October 2023 revised
United States				
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.1%	3.7%	3.8%
Washington				
Unemployment rate	4.6%	4.7%	4.0%	3.8%
Resident labor force	3,990,151	3,995,674	4,057,720	4,055,976
Unemployed	185,430	187,734	161,573	153,315
Seattle/Bellevue/Everett				
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.3%	3.6%	3.4%
Resident labor force	1,804,026	1,792,746	1,820,884	1,817,235
Unemployed	76,248	77,063	64,745	61,097

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

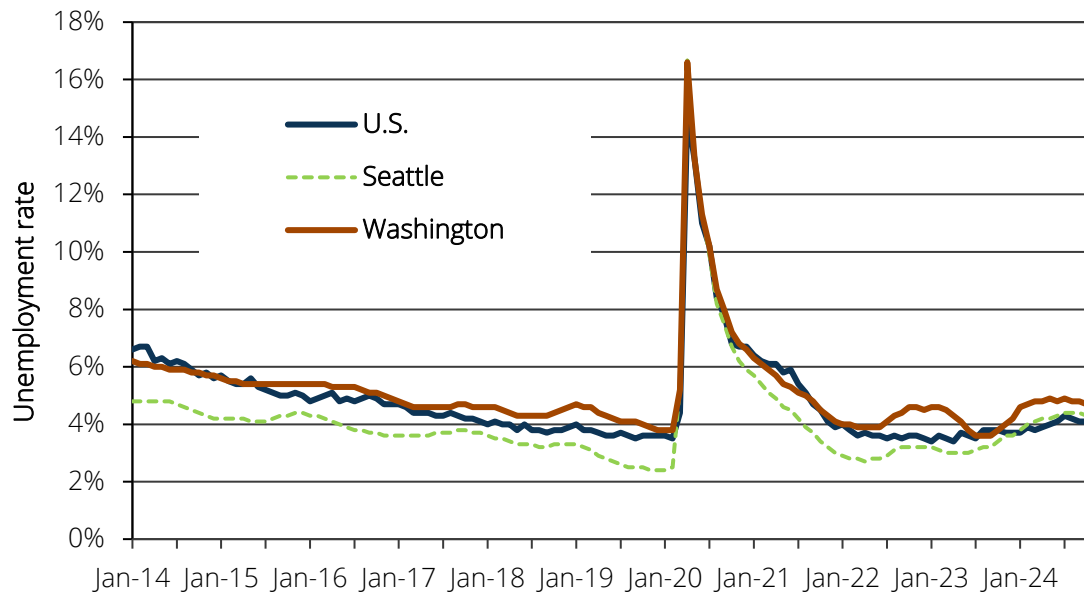
Unemployment, seasonally adjusted

The BLS estimates Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2024 was 4.6%, down one tenth of a percentage point from October. The revised estimate for November 2023 was 4.0%.

According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed Washington residents decreased by 2,304 over the month. The estimated number of employed Washington residents decreased by 3,219. Overall, this amounted to a decrease of 5,523 workers in the labor force from October to November 2024. November 2024 preliminary unemployment rates:

- United States (preliminary) 4.2%
- Washington (preliminary) 4.6%
- Seattle area (preliminary) 4.2%

Figure 2: Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted, U.S., Washington and Seattle, January 2014 through November 2024



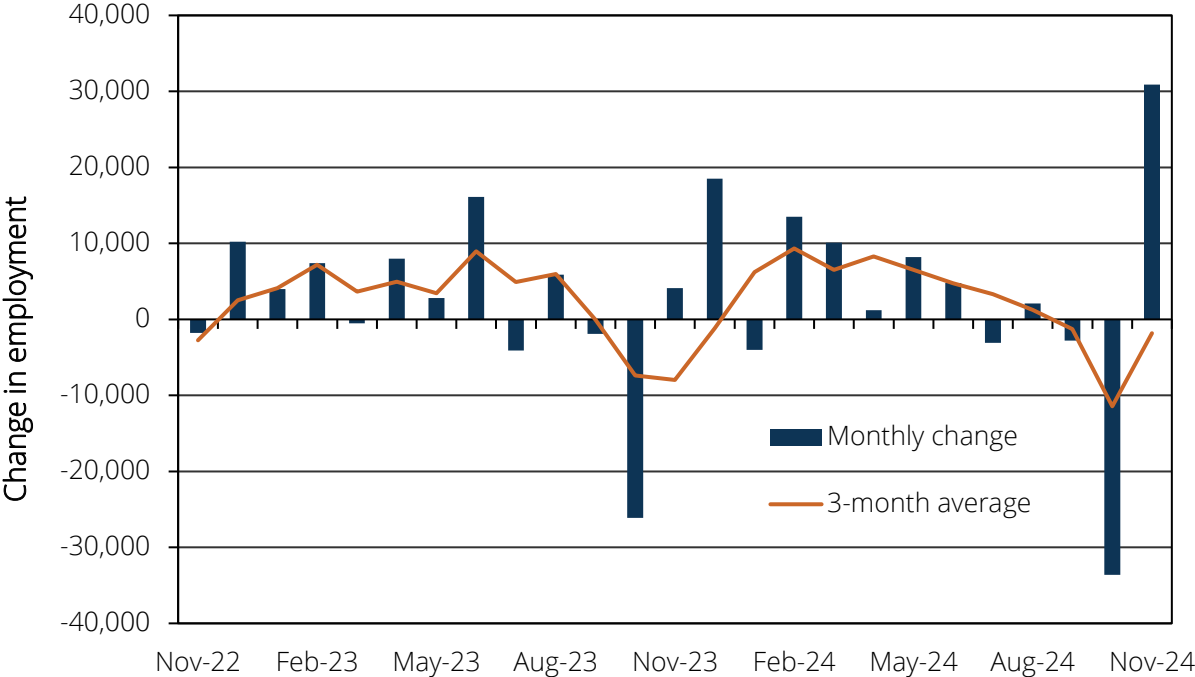
Source: Employment Security Department/LMIR Division; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Employment change, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 30,900 from October to November 2024. Recent employment change:

- September 2024: down 2,800 (revised)
- October 2024: down 33,600 (revised)
- November 2024: up 30,900 (preliminary)

Figure 3: Monthly employment change, seasonally adjusted, Washington state, November 2022 through November 2024



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

Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

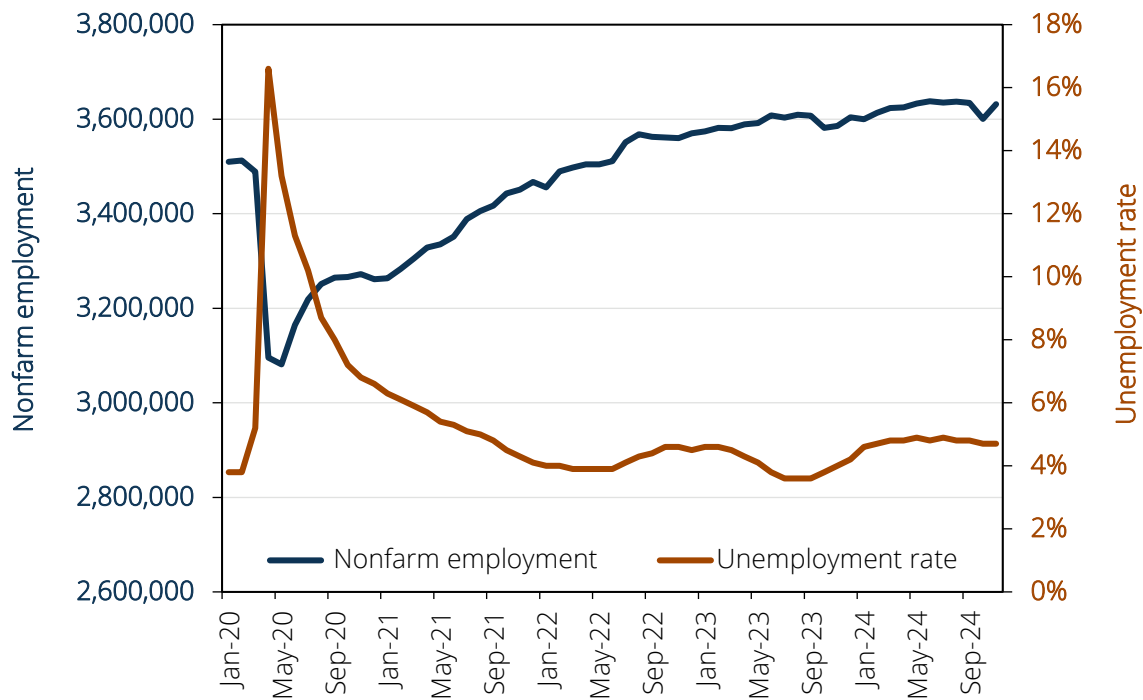
February 2020 (start of 2020 employment recession in Washington)

- Nonfarm employment: 3,511,900
- Unemployment rate: 3.8%

November 2024 (preliminary)

- Nonfarm employment: 3,631,400
- Unemployment rate: 4.6%

Figure 4: Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, Washington, January 2020 through November 2024



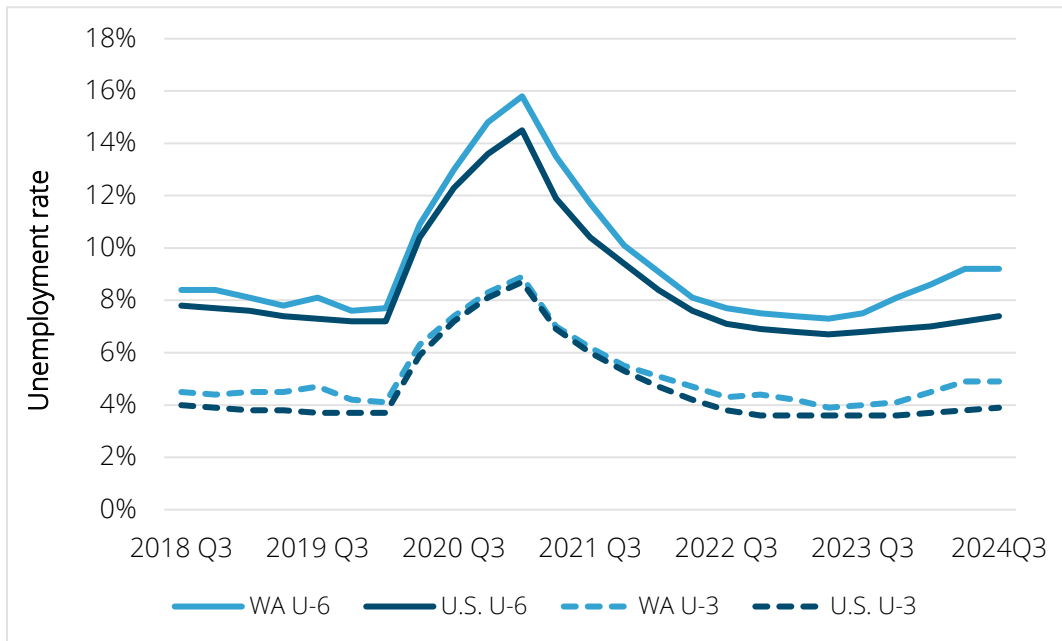
Source: Employment Security Department/LMIR; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

U-6: Broader annual average unemployment remained unchanged

BLS recently updated its alternative measures of labor underutilization for states to include four-quarter rates through the third quarter of 2024. 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 annual average unemployment rate for the four-quarter period through the third quarter of 2024 for Washington state was 9.2%. This is above the 7.5% average for the four-quarter period through third quarter 2023. The U.S. U-6 average for the four-quarter period through the third quarter of 2024 was 7.4%. Washington’s U-6 rate tends to run higher than the national rate.

Figure 5: Alternative measures of labor underutilization, four-quarter moving average, Washington state and U.S. U-6 unemployment rate



Source: Employment Security Department/LMIR; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 6: Alternate measures of labor underutilization, four quarter moving average, Washington state versus U.S. U-6 unemployment rate for 2009 through Q3 2024

Year	Location	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Annual average
2024	WA	8.6%	9.2%	9.2%	
	U.S.	7.0%	7.2%	7.4%	
2023	WA	7.4%	7.3%	7.5%	8.1%
	U.S.	6.8%	6.7%	6.8%	6.9%
2022	WA	9.1%	8.1%	5.0%	7.5%
	U.S.	8.4%	7.6%	7.1%	6.9%
2021	WA	15.8%	13.5%	11.7%	10.1%
	U.S.	14.5%	11.9%	10.4%	9.4%
2020	WA	8.1%	10.9%	13.0%	14.8%
	U.S.	7.7%	10.4%	12.3%	13.6%
2019	WA	8.1%	7.8%	8.1%	7.6%
	U.S.	7.6%	7.4%	7.3%	7.2%
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%
	U.S.	15.6%	15.3%	15.0%	14.7%
2011	WA	18.4%	18.7%	18.5%	17.8%
	U.S.	16.5%	16.3%	16.2%	15.9%
2010	WA	17.2%	17.4%	18.1%	18.4%
	U.S.	16.7%	16.8%	16.8%	16.7%

Source: Employment Security Department/LMIR; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Industry employment in Washington, seasonally adjusted

One-month employment change by industry: Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington employers collectively added an estimated 30,900 jobs over the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- October 2024 estimates were revised up by 2,300 jobs.
- Overall, employment increased in six major industry sectors and decreased in six. One industry sector (mining and logging) remained unchanged.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 29,200; government employment increased by 1,700 in November. The largest one-month sector level gains in private industry were observed in manufacturing (up 31,200) and leisure and hospitality (up 3,600).
- The large one-month gains in manufacturing were reflective of the machinists strike at the Boeing company. November employment estimates for aerospace employment dropped by 30,700 during the strike in October and recovered by 31,000 in November as workers returned to their jobs.
- The largest one-month increases in the leisure and hospitality sector were observed in the arts, entertainment and recreation industries which recovered 3,600 jobs.
- The deepest one-month sector losses were observed in retail trade (down 1,800), construction (down 1,700) and wholesale trade (down 1,600).

Figure 7: Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted, Washington state, October 2024 to November 2024

Total nonfarm	30,900
Manufacturing	31,200
Leisure and hospitality	3,600
Government	1,700
Financial activities	1,100
Information	400
Other services	400
Mining and logging	0
Professional and business services	-400
Education and health services	-800
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	-1,200
Wholesale trade	-1,600
Construction	-1,700
Retail trade	-1,800

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

Industry employment in Washington, not seasonally adjusted

Change by industry over the year: Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington businesses collectively added an estimated 27,300 jobs from November 2023 to November 2024. This is a 0.76% increase in employment over the year.

- Overall, employment in six major industries increased and seven decreased.
- Private sector employment increased 0.12%, up an estimated 3,700 jobs.
- Public sector employment rose 4.0%, up an estimated 23,600 jobs. The largest number of public sector jobs was added in state government, with just over half attributable to hiring by the state’s public higher education system.
- The largest private sector gains were attributable to hiring in education and health services (up 17,500), manufacturing (up 2,200), transportation, warehousing and utilities (up 1,900) and professional and business services (up 1,200); the deepest one-year losses were observed in wholesale trade (down 4,700), leisure and hospitality (down 4,600), and construction (down 4,400).
- Education and health services employment gains were primarily attributable to hiring in health and social services; within that, ambulatory health care services added the most jobs (6,300).
- Losses in wholesale trade were observed throughout the sector but were deepest in nondurable goods (down 2,400) and electronic markets and agents and brokers (down

1,600). Losses in leisure and hospitality were concentrated in food services and drinking places (down 7,000).

Figure 8: Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted, Washington state, November 2023 through November 2024

Total nonfarm	27,300
Government	23,600
Education and health services	17,500
Manufacturing	2,200
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	1,900
Professional and business services	1,200
Financial activities	900
Mining and logging	-100
Information	-1,800
Other services	-1,900
Retail trade	-2,500
Construction	-4,400
Leisure and hospitality	-4,600
Wholesale trade	-4,700

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

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.

Figure 9: Normal seasonal change, estimated change and seasonally adjusted change, Washington state, November 2024

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
Total nonfarm	-8,400	22,500	30,900
Manufacturing	-1,600	29,600	31,200
Leisure and hospitality	-4,800	-1,200	3,600

Government	1,600	3,300	1,700
Financial activities	-400	700	1,100
Other services	-800	-400	400
Information	-500	-100	400
Mining and logging	0	0	0
Professional and business services	-1,400	-1,800	-400
Education and health services	-200	-1,000	-800
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	1,600	400	-1,200
Wholesale trade	-900	-2,500	-1,600
Construction	-5,700	-7,400	-1,700

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

Contact us

For more Washington Labor Market Information, visit [Employment Security's website](#). Contact us at lmir@esd.wa.gov with any questions. County level information will be available at 10 a.m., December 24, 2024. The 2024 publication schedule can be found on [Employment Security's website](#)

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