

# The Monthly Employment Report

April 2024

Prepared by Anneliese Vance-Sherman, chief labor economist

On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate nonfarm employment in Washington increased by 5,200 in April 2024.<sup>1</sup> BLS estimates that employment in the private sector expanded by 5,900 jobs over the month but employers in the public sector shed an estimated 700 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for April 2023 through April 2024 indicate an increase in employment of 50,600 for the state. The private sector added 31,900 jobs while the public sector gained an estimated 18,700 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2024 was unchanged from March, holding at 4.8%. The unemployment rate in April 2023 was 4.3%.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision. The March 2024 preliminary report estimated the addition of 5,300 jobs; this was revised up to a gain of 8,400 jobs.

For more information, call Anneliese Vance-Sherman at 564-900-0748.

## 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Most of the employment numbers discussed 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 section titled "Unemployment," these positions refer to individuals, not jobs. In this case, a person holding two jobs is counted only once.

Figure 1: Resident civilian labor force and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

United States and Washington, March and April 2023, and March and April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA Division; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

	April 2024 (Preliminary)	March 2024 (Revised)	April 2023 (Revised)	March 2023 (Revised)
<b>United States</b>				
Unemployment rate	3.9%	3.8%	3.4%	3.5%
<b>Washington</b>				
Unemployment rate	4.8%	4.8%	4.3%	4.5%
Resident labor force	4,016,161	4,019,792	4,057,028	4,047,314
Unemployed	194,705	193,275	174,456	180,382
<b>Seattle/Bellevue/Everett</b>				
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.1%	3.0%	3.0%
Resident labor force	1,799,905	1,804,108	1,792,609	1,787,758
Unemployed	75,067	73,298	52,978	53,162

## Unemployment, seasonally adjusted

The BLS estimates Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2024 was 4.8%. This is unchanged over the month. The revised unemployment rate for March 2024 was also 4.8%.

According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed Washington residents increased by 1,430 over the month. At the same time, the estimated number of employed Washington residents dropped by 5,061. Overall, this amounted to a decrease of 3,631 workers in the labor force from March to April.

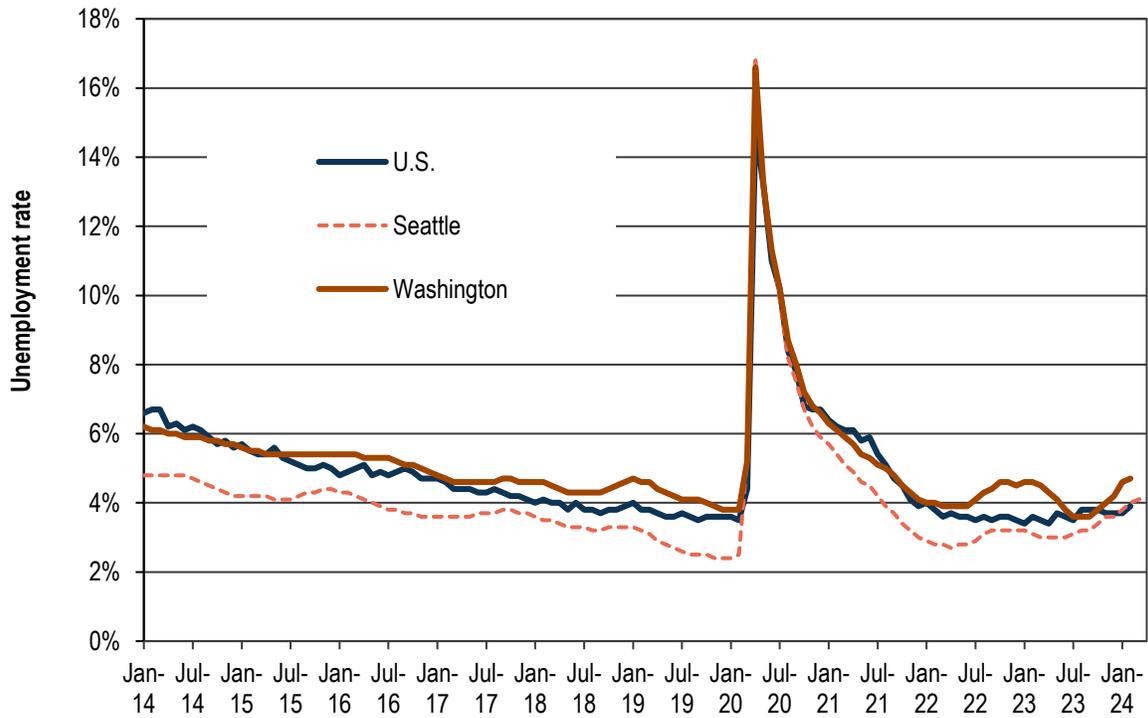
The preliminary April 2024 unemployment rate was 4.8% compared to 4.3% 12 months ago.

### April 2024 preliminary unemployment rates:

- United States (preliminary) 3.9%
- Washington (preliminary) 4.8%
- Seattle area (preliminary) 4.2%

Figure 2: Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted

U.S., Washington and Seattle, January 2014 through April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA Division; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



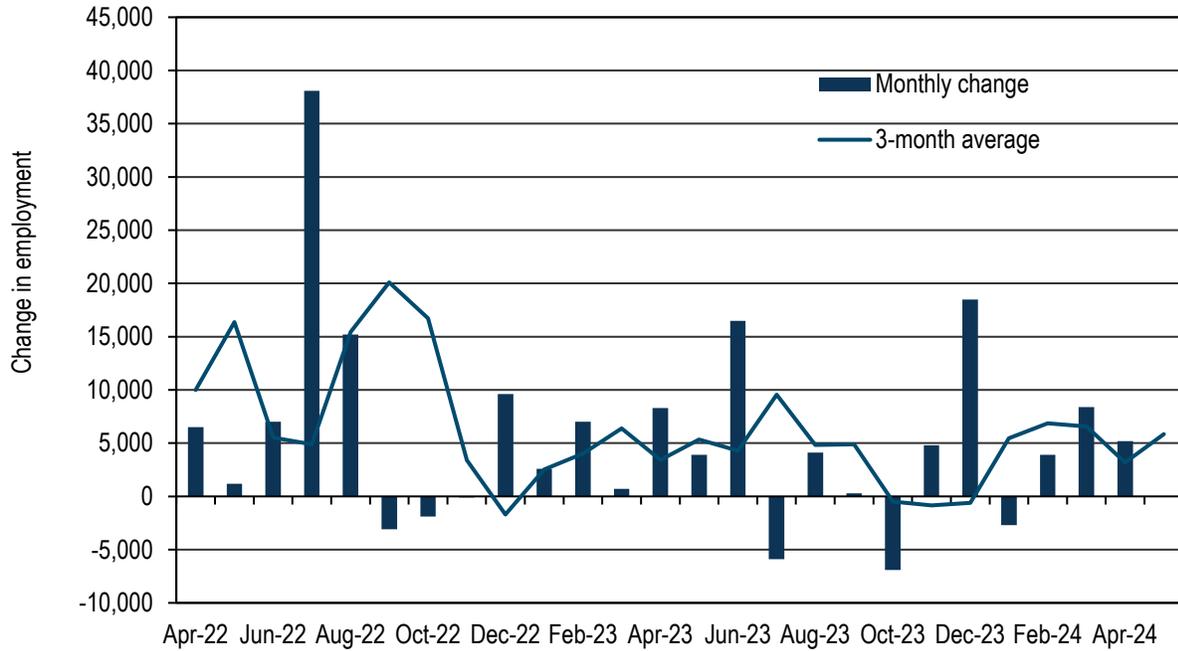
## Employment change, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment increased by 5,300 from February to April 2024. Recent employment change:

- February 2024: up 3,900 (revised)
- March 2024: up 8,400 (revised)
- April 2024: up 5,200 (preliminary)

Figure 3: Monthly employment change, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, April 2022 through April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics



## Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

### February 2020 (start of 2020 employment recession in Washington)

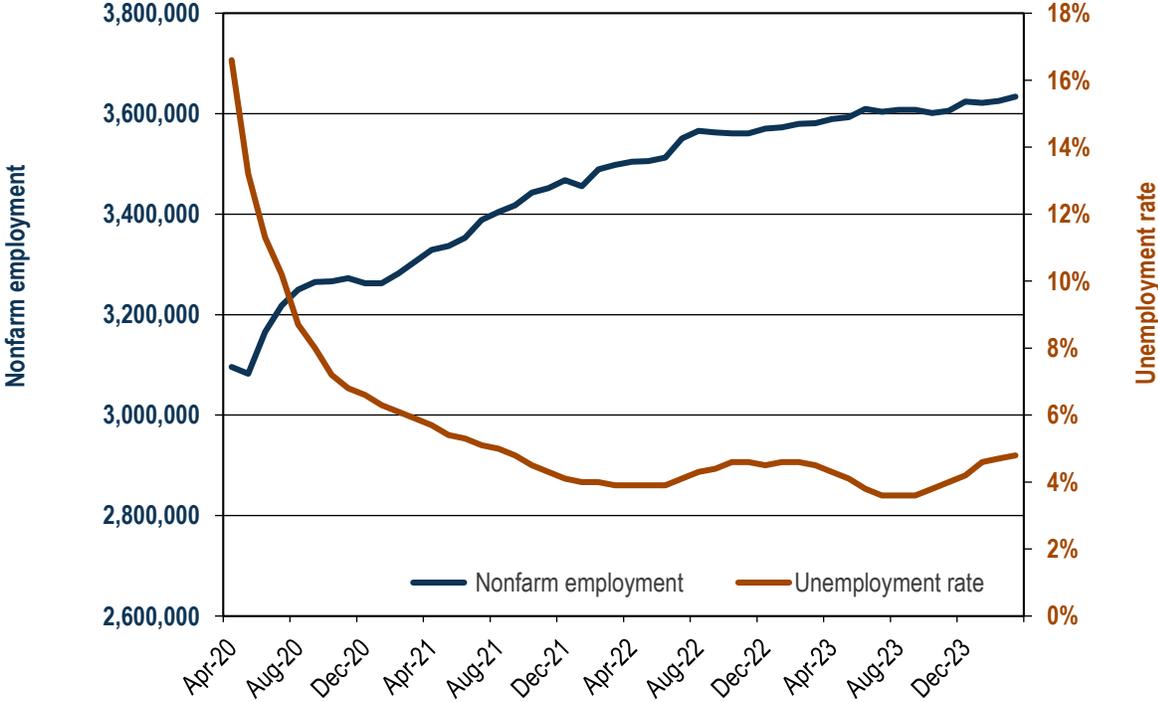
- Nonfarm employment: 3,511,900
- Unemployment rate: 3.8%

### April 2024 (preliminary)

- Nonfarm employment: 3,639,100
- Unemployment rate: 4.8%

Figure 4: Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted

Washington, April 2020 through April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics



### U-6: Broader annual average unemployment measure increased in the four-quarter period through fourth quarter 2023

BLS recently updated its “alternative measures of labor underutilization” for states to include four-quarter rates through the fourth quarter of 2023. 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 fourth quarter 2023 for Washington state was 8.1%. 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 fourth quarter 2023 was 6.9%.

Figure 5: Alternative measures of labor underutilization, four-quarter moving average

Washington state and U.S. U-6 unemployment rate. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

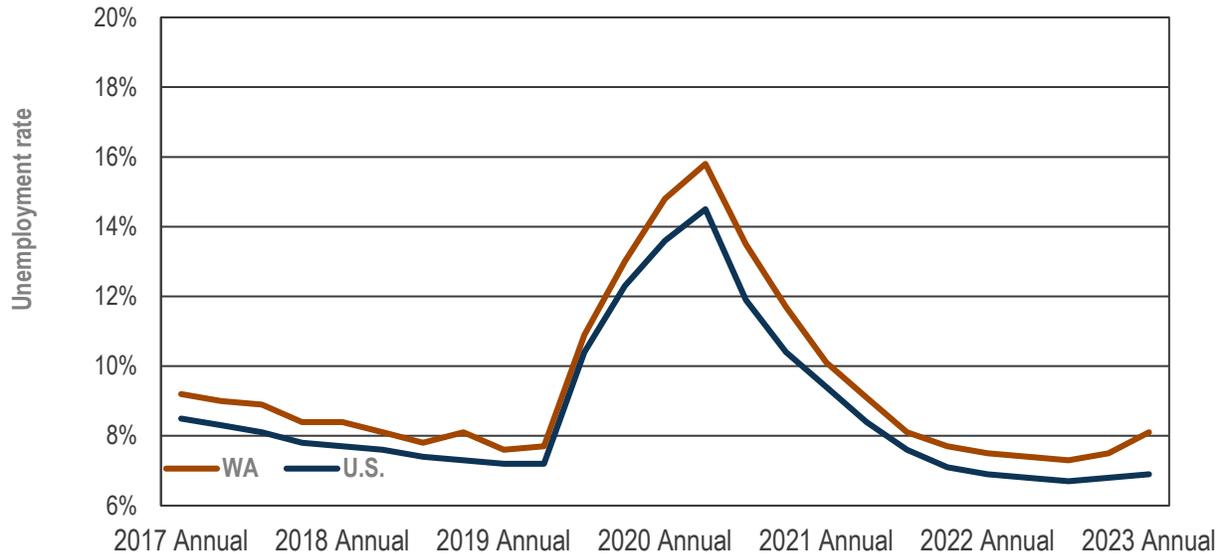


Figure 6: Alternate measures of labor underutilization, four quarter moving average

Washington state versus U.S. U-6 unemployment rate for 2009 through 2023. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Year	Location	Q1	Q2	Q3	Annual average
2023	Washington	7.4%	7.3%	7.5%	8.1%
	U.S.	6.8%	6.7%	6.8%	6.9%
2022	Washington	9.1%	8.1%	5.0%	7.5%
	U.S.	8.4%	7.6%	7.1%	6.9%
2021	Washington	15.8%	13.5%	11.7%	10.1%
	U.S.	14.5%	11.9%	10.4%	9.4%
2020	Washington	8.1%	10.9%	13.0%	14.8%
	U.S.	7.7%	10.4%	12.3%	13.6%
2019	Washington	8.1%	7.8%	8.1%	7.6%
	U.S.	7.6%	7.4%	7.3%	7.2%
2018	Washington	9.0%	8.9%	8.4%	8.4%
	U.S.	8.3%	8.1%	7.8%	7.7%
2017	Washington	10.0%	9.7%	9.4%	9.2%
	U.S.	9.5%	9.2%	8.9%	8.5%

Year	Location	Q1	Q2	Q3	Annual average
2016	Washington	10.9%	10.7%	10.7%	10.3%
	U.S.	10.1%	9.9%	9.8%	9.6%
2015	Washington	12.0%	11.7%	11.4%	11.0%
	U.S.	11.6%	11.3%	10.8%	10.4%
2014	Washington	13.3%	12.8%	12.4%	12.5%
	U.S.	13.4%	12.9%	12.5%	12.0%
2013	Washington	16.4%	15.7%	14.8%	14.0%
	U.S.	14.5%	14.3%	14.1%	13.8%
2012	Washington	17.6%	17.0%	17.1%	16.9%
	U.S.	15.6%	15.3%	15.0%	14.7%
2011	Washington	18.4%	18.7%	18.5%	17.8%
	U.S.	16.5%	16.3%	16.2%	15.9%
2010	Washington	17.2%	17.4%	18.1%	18.4%
	U.S.	16.7%	16.8%	16.8%	16.7%
2009	Washington	11.9%	13.5%	14.7%	16.2%
	U.S.	12.1%	13.7%	15.2%	16.2%

## Industry employment in Washington, seasonally adjusted

### One-month employment change by industry

- Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington employers added an estimated 5,320 jobs during the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:
- March 2024 estimates were revised up by 3,100 jobs.
- Overall, employment increased in eight major industry sectors and decreased in four.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have increased by 5,900; government employment decreased by 700 in April.
- All construction industries detailed in this report added jobs over the month, with the largest gains attributable to hiring in construction of buildings (up 1,300 with gains in both residential and nonresidential construction) and heavy and civil engineering (up 1,200).
- The largest gains in leisure and hospitality were attributable to hiring in arts, entertainment, and recreation (up 1,300).
- One-month losses were observed in professional and business services (down 2,700), information (down 700), government (down 700) and manufacturing (down 100).
- One-month losses were widespread within professional and business services. Professional, scientific and technical services was down 1,200, with losses concentrated in computer systems design and related services. Administrative and support services was down 900 jobs in April, with concentrated losses in employment services (down 2,300 in April).

- Losses in information were attributable to software publishers (down 900).

Figure 7: Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted

Washington state, March 2024 to April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>5,200</b>
Construction	3,100
Leisure and hospitality	1,500
Retail Trade	1,100
Other Services	1,000
Financial Activities	900
Education and Health Services	800
Wholesale Trade	700
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	300
Mining and logging	0
Manufacturing	-100
Government	-700
Information	-700
Professional and Business Services	-2,700

## Industry employment in Washington, not seasonally adjusted

### Change by industry over the year

Based on a BLS survey of businesses and governments, Washington gained an estimated 50,600 jobs from April 2023 to April 2024. This is a 1.4% increase in employment over the year.

- Overall, employment in eleven major industries expanded and two decreased.
- Private sector employment rose 1.1%, up an estimated 31,900 jobs.
- Public sector employment increased 3.2%, up an estimated 18,700 jobs. The largest number of public sector jobs was added in local government.
- The largest private sector gains were attributable to hiring in education and health services (up 18,100) and transportation, warehousing and utilities (up 13,200); the deepest one-year losses were observed in information (down 8,900) and retail trade (down 3,700).
- Education and health services employment gains were primarily attributable to health services and social assistance, with particularly robust gains in nursing and residential care facilities (up 4,800) and social assistance organizations (up 5,300).

- The largest employment gains in transportation, warehousing and utilities were observed in air transportation (up 400) and warehousing and storage (up 500).
- Employment in information dropped by 8,900 overall; within that, the software publishing industry shed an estimated 4,700 jobs.

**Figure 8: Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted**

Washington state, April 2023 through April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

<b>Total nonfarm</b>	<b>57,800</b>
Government	18,700
Education and health services	18,100
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	13,200
Wholesale trade	2,800
Manufacturing	2,600
Leisure and hospitality	2,200
Professional and business services	2,000
Construction	1,700
Financial activities	1,400
Other services	400
Mining and logging	100
Retail trade	-3,700
Information	-8,900

## 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. Considering 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, April 2024. Source: Employment Security Department/DATA; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	<b>12,900</b>	<b>18,100</b>	<b>5,200</b>
Construction	5,300	8,400	3,100
Leisure and Hospitality	6,100	7,600	1,500
Retail Trade	1,300	2,400	1,100
Other Services	1,100	2,100	1,000
Financial Activities	900	1,800	900
Education and Health Services	500	1,300	800
Wholesale Trade	500	1,200	700
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	-1,200	-900	300
Mining and logging	0	0	0
Manufacturing	-1,300	-1,400	-100
Government	600	-100	-700
Information	-800	-1,500	-700
Professional and Business Services	-100	-2,800	-2,700

## Contact us

For more Washington Labor Market Information, visit us at [www.esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo](http://www.esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo). Contact us at [data@esd.wa.gov](mailto:data@esd.wa.gov) with any questions. County level information will be available at 10 a.m., May 21, 2024. The publication schedule for 2024 can be found at: <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/monthly-employment-report>.

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