

The Monthly Employment Report

January 2025

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On a seasonally adjusted basis, preliminary estimates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) show nonfarm employment in Washington decreased by 1,100 in January 2025.^a Employment in the private sector decreased by 400 jobs over the month and employers in the public sector shed 700 jobs.

On a not seasonally adjusted basis, estimates for January 2024 through January 2025 show an increase of 24,000 jobs for the state. The private sector added 14,000 jobs while the public sector added an estimated 10,000 jobs over the year.

Washington's preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2025 decreased from 4.4% to 4.3%. The unemployment rate in January 2024 was 4.6%.

BLS estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. Preliminary estimates are subject to revision.

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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, December 2023, January and December 2024, and January 2025

	January 2025 preliminary	December 2024 revised	January 2024 revised	December 2023 revised
United States				
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.0%	3.7%	3.8%
Washington				
Unemployment rate	4.3	4.4	4.6%	4.6%
Resident labor force	4,067,014	4,063,184	4,048,833	4,048,089
Unemployed	176,278	178,069	185,526	185,412
Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue				
Unemployment rate	4.0%	4.1%	4.4%	4.4%
Resident labor force	2,350,415	2,343,860	2,314,262	2,314,604
Unemployed	94,669	95,010	101,359	100,805

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

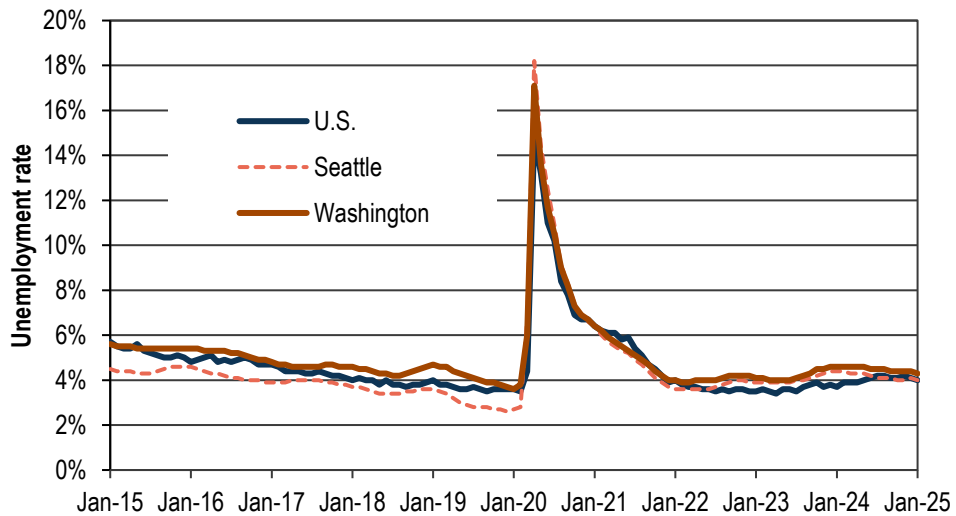
Unemployment, seasonally adjusted

The BLS estimates Washington’s preliminary seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2025 was 4.3%, down one tenth of a percentage point from December 2024. The revised estimate for January 2024 was 4.6%.

According to BLS estimates, the number of unemployed Washington residents increased by 1,791 over the month. The estimated number of employed Washington residents increased by 5,621. Overall, this amounted to an increase of 3,830 workers in the labor force from December 2024 to January 2025. January 2025 preliminary unemployment rates:

- United States (preliminary) 4.1%
- Washington (preliminary) 4.3%
- Seattle area (preliminary) 4.0%

Figure 2: Unemployment rates, seasonally adjusted, U.S., Washington and Seattle, January 2015 through January 2025



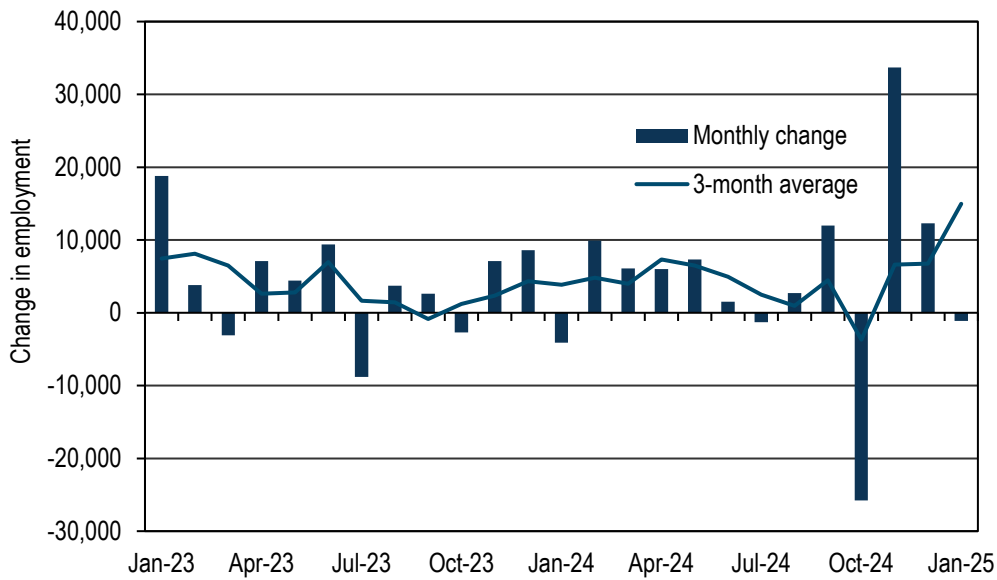
Source: Employment Security Department/LMIR Division; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Employment change, seasonally adjusted

Based on BLS estimates, Washington state nonfarm employment decreased by 1,100 from December 2024 to January 2025. Recent employment change:

- November 2024: up 33,700 (revised)
- December 2024: up 12,300 (revised)
- January 2025: down 1,100 (preliminary)

Figure 3: Monthly employment change, seasonally adjusted, Washington state, January 2023 through January 2025



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

Employment and unemployment, seasonally adjusted

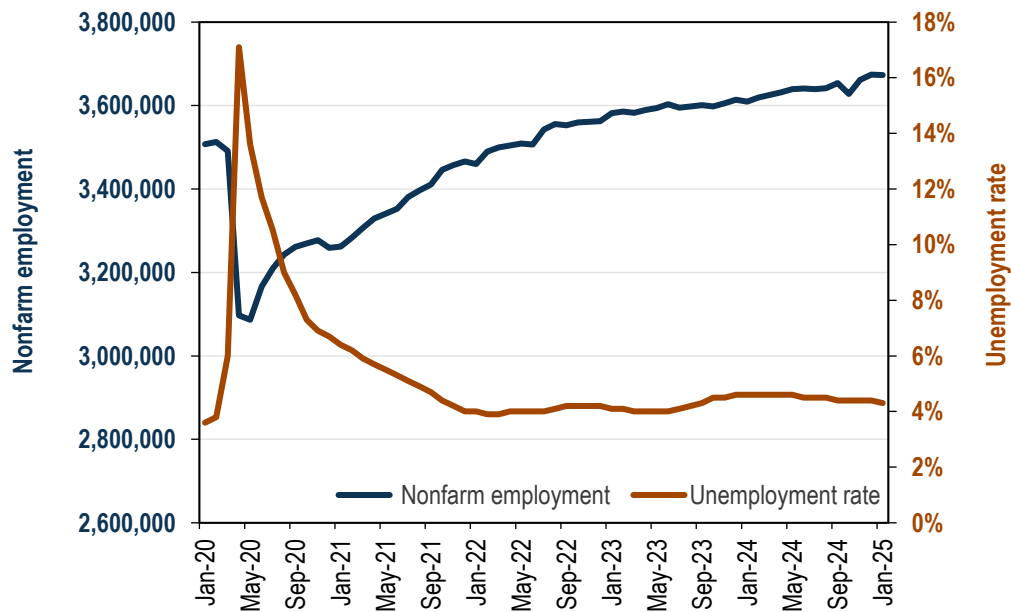
February 2020 (start of 2020 employment recession in Washington)

- Nonfarm employment: 3,512,900
- Unemployment rate: 3.8%

January 2025 (preliminary)

- Nonfarm employment: 3,673,100
- Unemployment rate: 4.3%

Figure 4: Nonfarm employment and unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, Washington, January 2020 through January 2025



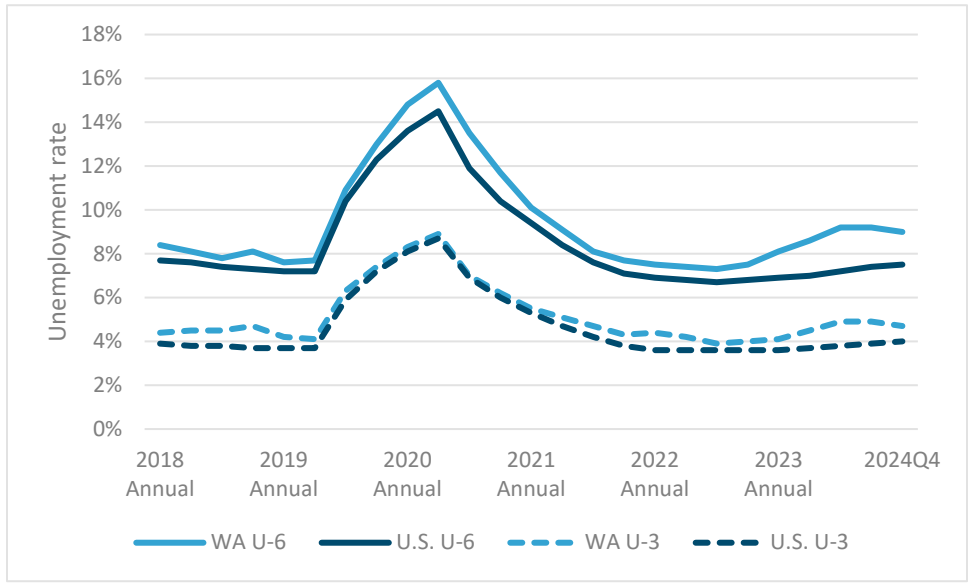
Source: Employment Security Department/LMIR; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.

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 fourth 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 fourth quarter of 2024 for Washington state was 9.0%. This is down from the previous four quarter moving average (9.2% through third quarter of 2024). The U.S. U-6 average for the four-quarter period through the fourth quarter of 2024 was 7.5%. 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-3 and U-6 unemployment rates



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

Year	WA/U.S.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Annual average
2024	WA	8.6%	9.2%	9.2%	9.0%
	U.S.	7.0%	7.2%	7.4%	7.5%
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%

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 shed an estimated 1,100 jobs over the month, on a seasonally adjusted basis:

- December 2024 BLS estimates were revised up by 4,300 jobs.
- Overall, employment increased in five major industry sectors and decreased in six.
- Private sector employment is estimated to have decreased by 400 and government employment decreased by 700 in January. The largest one-month sector level gains in private industry were observed in professional and business services (up 1,100) and other services (up 800).
- The largest one-month gains in professional and business services were attributable to the technical side of the sector – professional, scientific and technical services added 1,000 jobs over the month, while administrative and support and waste management services saw an overall decline in employment (down 400).
- The deepest one-month losses were observed in construction and manufacturing (each down 1,300).

Figure 7: Estimated one-month employment change by industry, seasonally adjusted, Washington state, December 2024 to January 2025

Total nonfarm	-1,100
Professional and Business Services	1,100
Other Services	800
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	700
Education and Health Services	300
Wholesale Trade	100
Information	0
Mining and logging	0
Leisure and hospitality	-200
Financial Activities	-200
Retail Trade	-400
Government	-700
Construction	-1,300
Manufacturing	-1,300

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 24,000 jobs from January 2024 to January 2025. This is a 1.9% increase in employment over the year.

- Over the past 12 months, employment in ten major industries increased and three decreased.
- Private sector employment increased 1.7%, up an estimated 50,600 jobs.
- Public sector employment rose 2.9%, up an estimated 17,600 jobs. The largest number of public sector jobs was added in state government, with nearly two thirds of jobs 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 28,100), leisure and hospitality (up 11,100) and professional and business services (up 9,800); one-year losses were observed in construction (down 5,100), wholesale trade (down 4,000) and manufacturing (down 3,000).
- 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 (7,900).
- Losses in construction were predominantly among specialty trade contractors (down 3,300), however losses were observed throughout the sector.

Figure 8: Estimated employment change by industry over the year, not seasonally adjusted, Washington state, January 2024 through January 2025

Total nonfarm	68,200
Education and health services	28,100
Government	17,600
Leisure and hospitality	11,100
Professional and business services	9,800
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	5,200
Information	3,500
Financial activities	2,600
Other services	1,200
Retail trade	1,100
Mining and logging	100
Manufacturing	-3,000
Wholesale trade	-4,000
Construction	-5,100

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, January 2025

	Normal seasonal change	Estimated change	Seasonally adjusted change
Total nonfarm	-18,200	-19,300	-1,100
Professional and Business Services	-3,500	-2,400	1,100
Other Services	-200	600	800
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	-2,400	-1,700	700
Education and Health Services	-1,700	-1,400	300
Wholesale Trade	-500	-400	100
Information	-500	-500	0
Mining and logging	0	0	0
Leisure and hospitality	-4,000	-4,200	-200
Financial Activities	-100	-300	-200
Retail Trade	-2,700	-3,100	-400
Government	-1,100	-1,800	-700
Construction	-1,400	-2,700	-1,300
Manufacturing	-100	-1,400	-1,300

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., March 18, 2025. The 2025 publication schedule can be found on [Employment Security's website](#)

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