



# Snohomish County Labor Area Summary April 2017



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\*Data used in this report available at the web address listed above.

## Overview

- In April 2017, the not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Snohomish County was 3.1 percent. This is down from 3.5 in March and down from 3.9 percent observed 12 months ago.
- There were an estimated 287,600 nonfarm jobs in Snohomish County as of April 2017.
- Nonfarm employment in Snohomish County expanded by 1,000 jobs over the month and by 1,100 or 0.4 percent over the year.
- From March to April, the largest gains were observed in professional and business service and retail (each added 400).
- The largest annual gains were attributed to professional and business services (up 1,800), construction (up 900) and education and health services and government (each added 700). Three industry sectors shed jobs over the year: manufacturing (down 3,700) and information and financial activities (each shed 100).

## Unemployment rates and labor force information

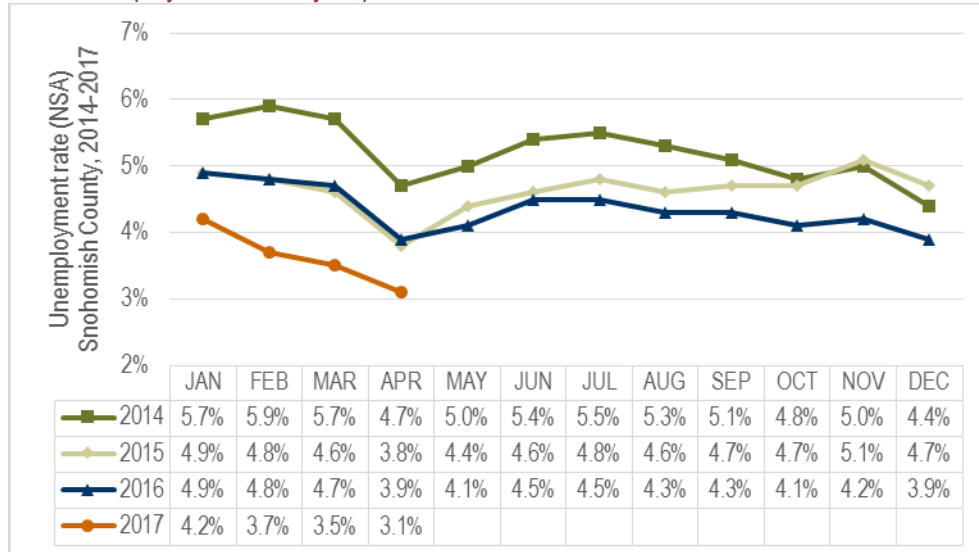
The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Snohomish County was 3.1 percent (preliminary) in April 2017. This is down from 3.5 percent reported in March. For comparison, the unemployment rate in April 2016 was 3.9 percent. The unemployment rate in Snohomish County has not dipped below 3.5 percent since 2008.

The ‘Great Recession’ gripped Washington in mid-2008. Through the course of 2008 and 2009, the unemployment rate rapidly increased, reaching a peak rate of 11.2 percent in January and February, 2010. Since then, the elevated rate has slowly diminished. April 2017 figures are:

- Snohomish County labor force: 418,733
- Total employed: 405,554
- Total unemployed: 13,179
- Unemployment rate: 3.1%

Month-to-month, Snohomish County’s total resident labor force declined by 1,659. The number of employed people decreased by 221 and the number of active job seekers decreased by 1,438, pushing the unemployment rate down. Over-the-year, the labor force expanded by 7,669 people or 1.9 percent.

**Figure 1. Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted**  
 Snohomish County, January 2014 through April 2017  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*The unemployment rate peaked at 11.2% in early 2010. In April 2017, the unemployment rate was 3.1 percent.*

**Washington state**

The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Washington state decreased from 4.8 percent (revised) in March to 4.3 percent (preliminary) in April. The statewide labor force increased by 60,591 (1.7 percent) over the year. For comparison, the statewide unemployment rate 12 months ago was 5.3 percent.

The March forecast by Washington’s Economic and Revenue Forecast Council predicts that the statewide unemployment rate will average 5.15 percent in 2017 and will dip to 4.68 percent in 2018. See [www.erfc.wa.gov](http://www.erfc.wa.gov) for more information.

**Seattle-Bellevue-Everett Metropolitan Division (MD)**

The Seattle-Bellevue-Everett MD combines labor force information for Snohomish and King Counties. During the current economic downturn, King County’s unemployment rate has consistently run below that of Snohomish County. The not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the combined MD decreased from 3.2 percent in March (revised) to 2.9 percent (preliminary). Twelve months ago, the unemployment rate was 3.7 percent.

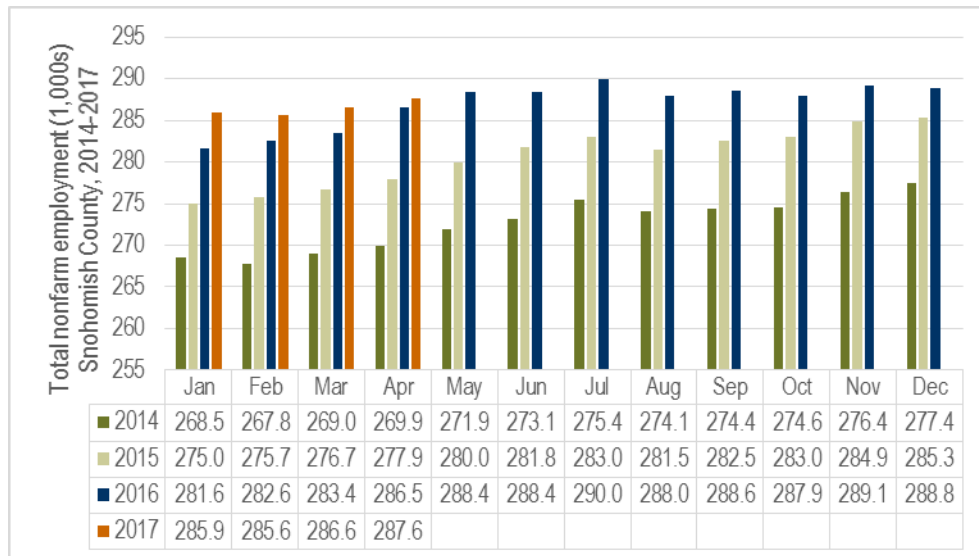
## Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claims

UI claims activity peaked in May 2009 (22,556 continued claims were counted that month) and has been on a downward trend ever since. In April 2017, 2,466 new claims were filed in Snohomish County and a total of 6,247 Snohomish County residents collected state benefits.

## Total nonfarm employment

Total nonfarm employment in Snohomish County increased by 1,000 in April 2017 and by 1,100 or 0.4 percent over the past 12 months. The estimated tally of jobs in April 2017 was 287,600.

**Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment**  
Snohomish County, January 2014 through April 2017  
Source: Employment Security Department/WITS



*Snohomish County employment continues to expand, with year-over-year growth observed in most industry sectors.*

Snohomish County employment levels peaked in early 2008 and reached their lowest levels since the start of the economic downturn in early 2010. Average annual nonfarm employment fell by 5.8 percent from 2008 to 2010. In 2010, employment levels were roughly equivalent to levels observed in 2006. Employment since 2010 has grown for all of Snohomish County's major private sector industries.

**Figure 3. Total nonfarm industry employment, not seasonally adjusted**  
**Snohomish County, April 2016, and March and April 2017.**  
**Source: Employment Security Department/WITS**

Nonfarm Employment Estimates, Not Seasonally Adjusted

**Snohomish County**

Data benchmarked through September 2016

NAICS Industry Title	Prelim Apr-17	Revised Mar-17	Revised Apr-16	Change		
				Mar-17 Apr-17	Apr-16 Apr-17	Apr-16 Apr-17
Total Nonfarm	287,600	286,600	286,500	1,000	1,100	0.4%
Total Private	246,800	246,100	246,400	700	400	0.2%
Goods Producing	82,000	82,300	84,800	-300	-2,800	-3.3%
Mining, Logging, and Construction	22,000	21,800	21,100	200	900	4.3%
Construction of Buildings	3,700	3,700	3,400	0	300	8.8%
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	2,000	1,900	2,000	100	0	0.0%
Specialty Trade Contractors	16,000	16,000	15,500	0	500	3.2%
Manufacturing	60,000	60,500	63,700	-500	-3,700	-5.8%
Durable Goods	56,300	56,700	60,000	-400	-3,700	-6.2%
Wood Product Manufacturing	900	900	900	0	0	0.0%
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	4,000	4,000	4,100	0	-100	-2.4%
Computer and Electronic Product Mfg.	5,300	5,300	5,300	0	0	0.0%
Aerospace Product and Parts Mfg.	40,400	40,900	44,000	-500	-3,600	-8.2%
Nondurable Goods	3,700	3,800	3,700	-100	0	0.0%
Service Providing	205,600	204,300	201,700	1,300	3,900	1.9%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	47,600	47,100	47,100	500	500	1.1%
Wholesale Trade	8,400	8,400	8,200	0	200	2.4%
Retail Trade	34,600	34,200	34,300	400	300	0.9%
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	4,700	4,700	4,600	0	100	2.2%
Food and beverage stores	6,800	6,800	6,700	0	100	1.5%
General merchandise stores	7,800	7,800	7,800	0	0	0.0%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	4,600	4,500	4,600	100	0	0.0%
Information	5,900	6,000	6,000	-100	-100	-1.7%
Telecommunications	3,900	4,000	4,100	-100	-200	-4.9%
Financial Activities	12,500	12,600	12,600	-100	-100	-0.8%
Finance and Insurance	9,300	9,400	9,400	-100	-100	-1.1%
Credit intermediation and related activities	3,200	3,200	3,100	0	100	3.2%
Insurance carriers and related activities	5,800	5,900	6,100	-100	-300	-4.9%
Real estate and rental and leasing	3,200	3,200	3,200	0	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	28,000	27,600	26,200	400	1,800	6.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11,800	11,800	11,500	0	300	2.6%
Architectural and engineering services	2,200	2,200	2,300	0	-100	-4.3%
Administrative, Support, Waste Mgmt., & Remed.	14,600	14,200	13,200	400	1,400	10.6%
Employment services	5,200	5,100	4,300	100	900	20.9%
Educational and Health Services	34,400	34,500	33,700	-100	700	2.1%
Ambulatory health care services	12,300	12,300	11,700	0	600	5.1%

Nursing and residential care facilities	5,100	5,100	5,100	0	0	0.0%
Social assistance	9,200	9,200	9,200	0	0	0.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	26,100	25,800	25,900	300	200	0.8%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3,400	3,200	3,500	200	-100	-2.9%
Food Services and Drinking Places	21,400	21,100	21,100	300	300	1.4%
Other Services	10,300	10,200	10,100	100	200	2.0%
Government	40,800	40,500	40,100	300	700	1.7%
Federal Government	2,100	2,100	2,000	0	100	5.0%
State Government	6,900	6,700	6,900	200	0	0.0%
State Educational Services	3,800	3,600	3,800	200	0	0.0%
Local Government	31,800	31,700	31,200	100	600	1.9%
Local Educational Services	15,800	15,800	15,500	0	300	1.9%
Workers in Labor/Management Disputes	0	0	0	0	0	

*Snohomish County employment expanded by 1,100 over the past 12 months.*

## Nonfarm industry employment

### Goods-producing Industries

From March to April 2017, employment in construction and manufacturing combined contracted by 300. Year-over-year, goods producers in Snohomish County shed an estimated 2,800 jobs.

Total employment in **construction** expanded by 200 in April. Year-to-year, employment in construction was up 900. This is a 4.3 percent increase over last year's observed employment level.

- Workers and employers in construction suffered losses above and beyond most. Based on annual average employment levels, construction declined an estimated 40 percent from peak levels in 2007 to 2011. Recovery has lagged other industries and employment is highly seasonal. The cold wet months of winter tend to reflect month-to-month losses. Hiring will pick up again in the spring.

Net **Manufacturing** employment fell by 500 over the month, and by 3,700 over the year. Manufacturing is the largest set of industries in Snohomish County and accounts for 60,000 jobs in Snohomish County -- about one in five nonfarm jobs.

- Manufacturing is a diverse set of industries experiencing different patterns of growth and decline. Since reaching a post-recession peak in late 2012, employment dropped slightly and more-or-less leveled off.
- Over the year, employment losses for the manufacturing sector came primarily from aerospace manufacturing (Snohomish County's largest manufacturing industry, accounting for 40,400 jobs). Over the year, employment in the aerospace manufacturing industry dropped by 3,600. The past couple years have been characterized by declining employment in aerospace.
  - The count of aerospace products and parts manufacturing *only* catches those employers that are directly and primarily responsible for manufacturing aerospace products. Other products and services in the supply chain are counted under their best fit industries.
  - More layoffs are coming:
    - The Boeing Company filed a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) with the Employment Security Department for 245 Puget Sound-area layoffs beginning on May 19. <https://esd.wa.gov/about-employees/WARN>
    - The Herald reports that the company's regional payrolls have contracted by nearly 9,000 since 2015 and that more layoffs are on the horizon.

### Service-providing industries

Service providers represent an extremely diverse collection of sectors. Taken as a whole, service-providing employers added 1,300 jobs over the month. Over the year, service-sector employers added 3,900 jobs to the Snohomish County economy, expanding employment by 1.9 percent. The largest year-over-year gains among service-providing industries were attributable to hiring in professional and business services (up 1,800), education and health services and government (each up 700).

**Wholesale trade** employment neither increased nor decreased over the month, but expanded by 200 jobs over the year. 8,400 jobs are found in this industry.

Employment in **retail trade** expanded by 400 in April and by 300 jobs or 0.9 percent over the past 12 months.

Employment in **transportation, warehousing and utilities** expanded by 100 over the month but did not change over the year. Transportation warehousing and utilities employed 4,600 in April.

Employment in the **information** sector – a small sector that is dominated by the telecommunications industry in Snohomish County – dropped by 100 over the month and the same amount over the year. Information sector businesses employed 5,900 in Snohomish County in April.

The **financial activities** sector includes the finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing industries. Net employment ticked downward by about 100 over the month as well as over the year. Altogether, the financial activities industries employed an estimated 12,500 in April.

**Professional and business services** includes a variety of professional and technical services such as accounting and engineering services. It also includes administrative support and management services and supports day to day business operations with services such as housekeeping and temporary employment services. In short, these are the businesses that provide operational support to others in the business community. In April, employment in this diverse sector expanded by about 400 jobs. Over the year, employers added 1,800 jobs or 6.9 percent.

- Year over year growth was observed in professional, scientific and technical services (up 300) as well as within administrative support, waste management and remediation (up 1,400). Employment services was up 900 over the year.

Employment in the **educational and health services** declined by an estimated 100 from March to April but expanded by 700 (2.1 percent) over the year. Year-over-year growth was concentrated in ambulatory health care services (up 600).

- Educational and health services weathered the economic storm relatively well compared to other industries. Employment in this sector is generally more dependent on population trends rather than business cycles.

**Leisure and hospitality** added 300 jobs in April and contributed 200 new jobs to the Snohomish County economy over the year. Leisure and hospitality expanded by 0.8 percent over the year and accounted for an estimated 26,100 jobs.

**Other services** represents a diverse collection of industries that do not fit elsewhere and include employers ranging from auto mechanics and dry cleaners to membership clubs. Net employment expanded by 100 over the month and by 200 over the year.

**Government** employment increased by 300 jobs over the month and expanded by 700 over the year (1.7 percent). Year-over-year gains were concentrated in local government, particularly reflecting employment gains in public K-12 education.

### **Forecast information for Washington state:**

The Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council issues quarterly forecasts that address Washington's projected economic health. The most recent forecast was issued in March and updated in May. Forecast information is available at [www.erfc.wa.gov](http://www.erfc.wa.gov).