



# Grant County

## Labor Area Summary

### April 2018

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## Overview

This report provides an update on the Grant County economy incorporating not seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment and civilian labor force data. Analysis focuses on year-over-year (between April 2017 and April 2018) and average annual (between 2016 and 2017) changes in the labor market.

## Unemployment rates

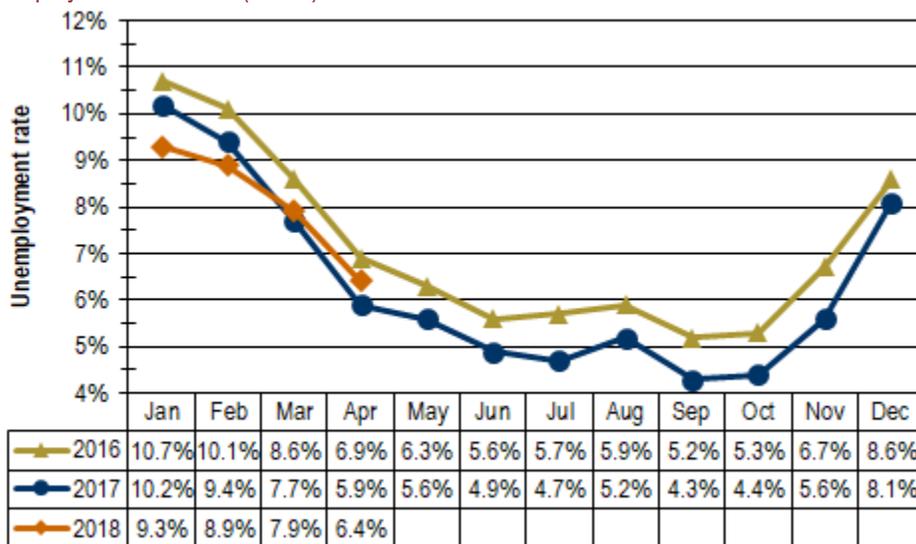
Preliminary Civilian Labor Force (CLF) data show that Washington’s not seasonally adjusted average annual unemployment rate fell five tenths of a point between 2016 and 2017, from 5.3 percent to 4.8 percent. Between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018 the rate stabilized at 4.4 percent.

In Grant County, the average annual unemployment rate fell eight-tenths of a point between 2016 and 2017, from 7.1 to 6.3 percent. Monthly unemployment rates had fallen, year over year, from September 2016 through February 2018. However, unemployment began creeping upwards during the past two months (see *Figure 1*). Between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018 the rate rose five-tenths of a point, from 5.9 to 6.4 percent as the civilian labor force stagnated while the number of unemployed residents increased (see *Figure 3*).

**Figure 1.** Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted

Grant County, January 2016 through April 2018

Source: Employment Security Department/WITS; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



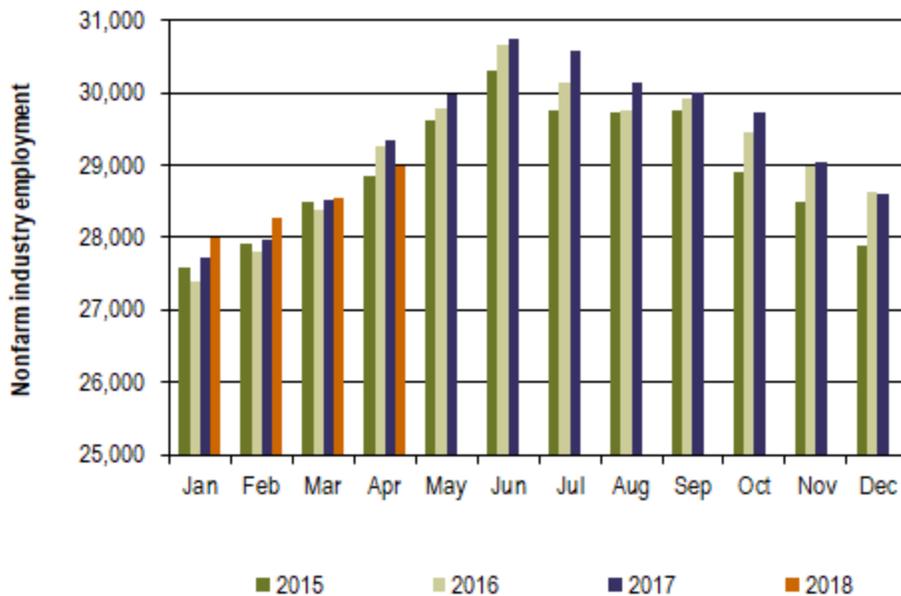
*The Grant County unemployment rate increased five-tenths of a percentage point between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018.*

## Total nonfarm employment

Between 2016 and 2017, Washington's labor market provided 78,300 new nonfarm jobs, an annual average increase of 2.4 percent. In April 2018, businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 3,385,200 nonfarm jobs (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 3,300,100 jobs in April 2017, a 2.6 percent year over year employment increase. The state's economy has posted year over year nonfarm employment increases for the past 91 consecutive months (October 2010 through April 2018).

Between 2016 and 2017 Grant County's economy provided 190 new nonfarm jobs, an average annual increase of 0.7 percent, less robust than the 2.4 percent statewide growth rate. Between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018 local nonfarm employment contracted 1.2 percent (from 29,350 jobs to 28,990 jobs). Year-over-year growth rates in total nonfarm employment in Grant County have lagged statewide year-over-year increases for the past 37 months (April 2015 through April 2018).

**Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment**  
Grant County, January 2015 through April 2018  
Source: Employment Security Department/WITS



*Nonfarm employers in Grant County provided 28,990 nonfarm jobs in April 2018, a 1.2 percent downturn since April 2017.*

## Employment and unemployment

Washington's Civilian Labor Force (CLF) expanded by 89,522 residents (a 2.5 percent upturn) from 2016 to 2017. The state's labor force has grown, year over year, for the past 51 months (February 2014 through April 2018). In April 2018, Washington's CLF tallied 3,742,729 residents versus 3,693,551 in April 2017 equating to 49,178 more Washingtonians in the labor force (up 1.3 percent).

Grant County's CLF expanded by 743 residents (a 1.7 percent increase) from 2016 to 2017. However between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018 the local labor force virtually stagnated. Simultaneously there were 243 more residents unemployed this April (2,837) than in April 2017 (2,594), as shown in *Figure 3*. Hence, the local unemployment rate registered 6.4 percent in April 2018, up from 5.9 percent in April 2017. For Grant County in the month of April unemployment rates in the vicinity of six-percent are still low. In fact, the last time an April unemployment rate for the County area was in this range was in April 2008 (ten years ago) when the rate also registered 6.4 percent.

**Figure 3. Labor force and industry employment, not seasonally adjusted**  
 Grant County, April 2017, March and April 2018  
 Source: Employment Security Department/WITS

Grant County	Preliminary Apr-18	Revised Mar-18	Revised Apr-17	Change		
				Mar-18	Apr-17	Apr-17
				Apr-18	Apr-18	Apr-18 %
<b>Labor force and unemployment</b>						
Civilian labor force	44,035	43,645	44,036	390	-1	0.0%
Resident employment	41,198	40,215	41,442	983	-244	-0.6%
Unemployment	2,837	3,430	2,594	-593	243	9.4%
Unemployment rate	6.4	7.9	5.9	-1.5	0.5	
<b>Industry employment</b>						
Total nonfarm <sup>1</sup>	28,990	28,560	29,350	430	-360	-1.2%
Total private	20,340	19,960	20,840	380	-500	-2.4%
Goods producing	5,860	5,940	5,960	-80	-100	-1.7%
Mining, logging and construction	1,310	1,220	1,320	90	-10	-0.8%
Manufacturing	4,550	4,720	4,640	-170	-90	-1.9%
Durable goods	1,940	1,990	2,030	-50	-90	-4.4%
Nondurable goods	2,610	2,730	2,610	-120	0	0.0%
Service providing	23,130	22,620	23,390	510	-260	-1.1%
Trade, transportation and utilities	5,840	5,710	5,870	130	-30	-0.5%
Wholesale trade	1,400	1,340	1,450	60	-50	-3.4%
Retail trade	3,480	3,410	3,450	70	30	0.9%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	960	960	970	0	-10	-1.0%
Information and financial activities	1,150	1,130	1,060	20	90	8.5%
Professional and business services	1,490	1,440	2,030	50	-540	-26.6%
Education and health services	2,950	2,880	2,780	70	170	6.1%
Leisure and hospitality	2,510	2,320	2,590	190	-80	-3.1%
Government	8,650	8,600	8,510	50	140	1.6%
Federal government	730	750	740	-20	-10	-1.4%
State and local government	7,920	7,850	7,770	70	150	1.9%
State and local government education	3,950	3,950	3,770	0	180	4.8%
Workers in labor/management disputes	0	0	0	0	0	
<sup>1</sup> Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of the armed services, workers in private households and agriculture. Includes all full- and part-time wage and salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month. Columns may not add due to rounding.						

*Nonfarm employment in Grant County decreased 1.2 percent, a net loss of 360 jobs, between April 2017 and April 2018.*

## Nonfarm industry employment

Estimates indicate that Grant County's nonfarm employers provided 360 fewer jobs in April 2018 than in April 2017, a 1.2 percent downturn, while Washington's nonfarm market grew at a 2.6 percent pace. The following paragraphs highlight changes in three local industries between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018:

- Grant County's durable goods manufacturing industry has posted year-over-year losses for the past four months (January through April 2018). Between the Aprils of 2017 and 2018 this industry slipped by 90 jobs and 4.4 percent as employment declined from 2,030 to 1,940. Statewide, durable goods manufacturing employment has retrenched since December 2015 (the past 29 consecutive months).
- Year over year, employment in Grant County's professional and business services industry has been declining for the past five months (December 2017 through April 2018). This employment category consists of a diverse set of niche industries, ranging from computer systems design and accounting/tax preparation services to landscaping and janitorial services, legal services and temporary employment services. Within professional and business services, temporary employment services is likely accounting for much of this employment downturn - a discouraging economic indicator. This industry provided 540 fewer jobs countywide in April 2018 than in April 2017, falling from 2,030 to 1,490. This is a relatively recent downturn however. In calendar year 2017 professional and business services generated 170 new jobs and accounted for 89.5 percent of the 190 new nonfarm jobs generated countywide. Statewide, this industry has been growing for the past 96 months (from May 2010 through April 2018).
- Education and health services (primarily private health service providers) netted 170 more jobs in April 2018 than in April 2017, an advance of 6.1 percent. Year over year, Grant County's private education and health services industry has been adding workers for the past ten months (July 2016 through April 2018). In fact, in the past four months the job growth pace in health services has been faster in Grant County than across Washington. Statewide, this industry has been growing for 58 consecutive months (July 2013 through April 2018).

## Agricultural employment/production

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage (QCEW) program, conducted by the Washington State Employment Security Department provides agricultural and nonagricultural employment and wages for firms, organizations and individuals whose employees are covered by the Washington State Employment Security Act. Frequently termed "covered" or "QCEW" data, this information provides a reliable data set for comparing employment and wage trends in major industries at the county level. In May 2018 preliminary annual average QCEW data for calendar year 2017 became available. An analysis of employment changes from 2007 through 2017 shows that in Grant County:

- Total covered employment rose from 35,010 in 2007 to 39,190 in 2017, a 4,180-job and 11.9 percent upturn. The number of agricultural jobs (a subset of total covered employment) increased from 8,362 in 2007 to 10,243 in 2017, a 1,881-job and 22.5 percent uptrend. In 2007 Grant County's agricultural industry accounted for 23.9 percent of total covered employment. In 2017 agricultural employment accounted for 26.1 percent of total covered employment countywide. The share of agricultural employment (versus total covered employment) rose 2.2 percentage points (from 23.9 to 26.1 percent) in Grant County during this ten-year period.
- Total covered wages rose from \$1.037 billion (in 2007) to \$1.571 billion (in 2017) a \$533.3 million and 51.4 percent upturn. The agricultural payroll (a subset of total covered wages) advanced from \$167.6 million in 2007 to \$291.6 million in 2017, a \$124.0 million and 74.0 percent uptrend. In 2007 Grant County's agricultural industry accounted for 16.2 percent of total covered wages. In 2017 agricultural wages accounted for 18.6 percent of total covered payroll countywide. The share of agricultural wages rose 2.4 percentage points (from 16.2 to 18.6 percent) in Grant County during this ten-year period. Hence, one could generalize that within these past ten years, the footprint made by agriculture on Grant County's economy has become relatively larger.