

Monthly Update—February 2015

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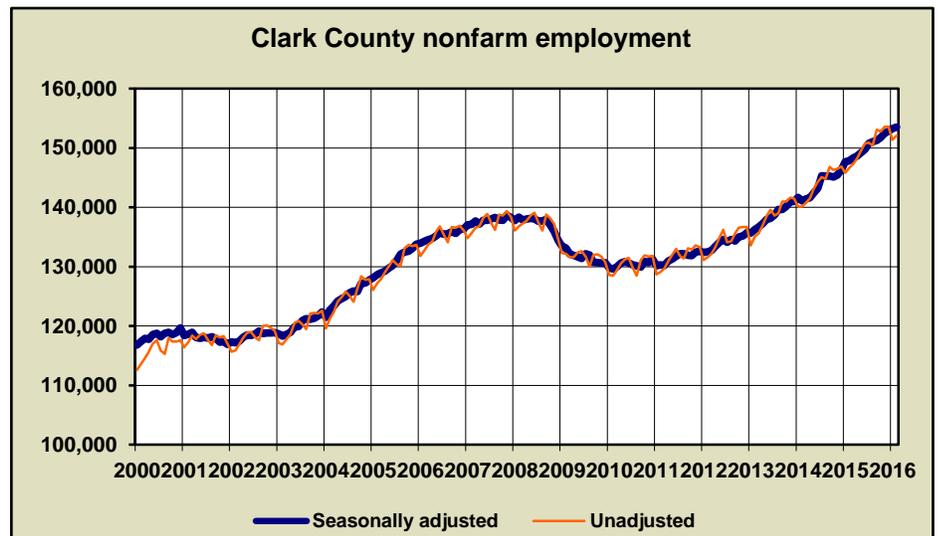
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Next data release: March numbers will be published on April 19.

Clark County

Clark County seasonally-adjusted nonfarm employment rose by 300 jobs in February, while unemployment stayed put at 6.6 percent. Job growth remained at 3.8 percent over the past twelve months.

Unadjusted nonfarm employment rose by 700 jobs. On the plus side, leisure & hospitality added 300 jobs, and health care 200 jobs. On the negative end, retailers completed their post-holiday layoffs by cutting 200 positions.



Over the year:

- Job growth over the year was 5,500 jobs, or 3.8 percent. Comparison rates: U. S., 1.9 percent; state of Washington, 3.1 percent; state of Oregon, 3.1 percent; Portland Metro, 3.3 percent.
- Similar to last month, all major sectors were in the black: information services (+300, 10.0 percent), financial services (+600, 7.9 percent), trade, transportation & utilities (+1,600 jobs, 6.0 percent), leisure & hospitality (+800, 6.0 percent), construction & mining (+600, 5.9 percent), professional & business services (+600 jobs, 3.4 percent), government (+600, 2.5 percent), and education & health services (+200 jobs, 0.8 percent)...
- ...except for manufacturing employment, which was unchanged over the year.

A quick note about education & health services—social assistance was estimated at -400 over the year. Part of social assistance is in-home assistance funded through the state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The employment numbers for these private households have been very inconsistent, and account for most of the decline.

The unemployment rate was estimated at 6.6 percent, the same as January and most a point below the 7.3 percent from last February. Both initial and continued unemployment claims remained at very low levels.

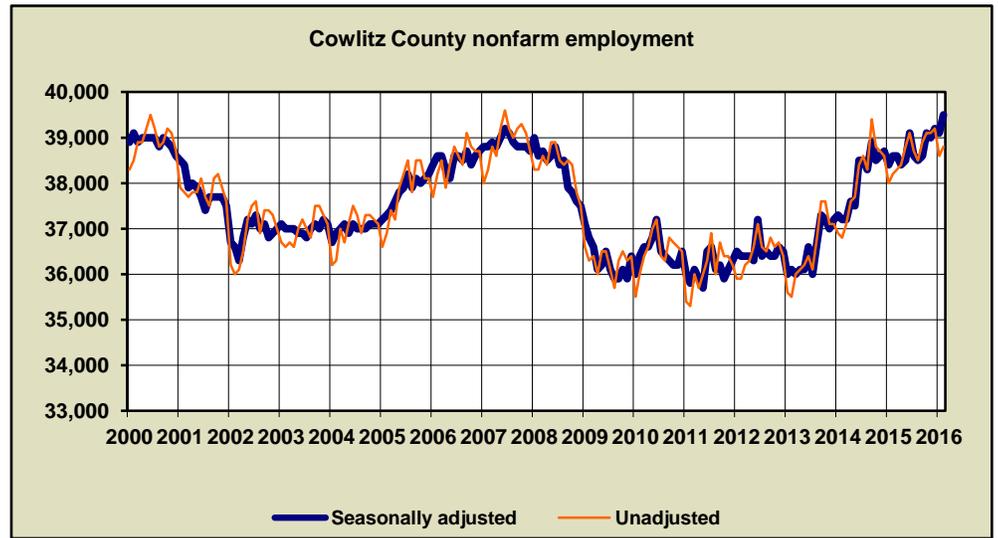
Cowlitz County

According to the latest estimates prepared by the federal government, Cowlitz County nonfarm employment increased by 200 jobs in February, to a total of 38,800 jobs. Job growth over the year remained moderate at 600 jobs (+1.6 percent).

There were small gains in three industries: trade, transportation & utilities, leisure & hospitality, and local government. Other services (not shown in the published table) declined by 100 jobs. Manufacturing was unchanged, as a gain in durable goods was offset by a loss in nondurable goods.

Over the past twelve months, nonfarm employment has increased by 600 jobs (1.6 percent). Changes at the industry level included a loss of 300 jobs in construction and 200 jobs in nondurable goods manufacturing. There were gains in services: +400 in trade, transportation & utilities (including +200 in retail trade), +200 in education & health services, +100 in leisure & hospitality, +200 in other services (not shown in the published table), and +200 in local government. These estimates are all preliminary and subject to revision.

The county unemployment rate remained at 8.0 percent, half a point lower than last February. Around 3,600 county residents were jobless and seeking work, compared with 3,800 a year earlier. The number of initial and continued unemployment claims remained at low levels.



Wahkiakum County

Wahkiakum County nonfarm employment was estimated at 720 jobs in February, identical to a year earlier. Preliminary estimates show a loss of 20 jobs over the month.

Unemployment was estimated at 9.8 percent, roughly the same as the 9.7 percent from February 2015. About 130 county residents were jobless and actively seeking work, versus 120 a year ago. Both initial and continued unemployment claims remained at low levels.

