



# Adams County

## Labor Area Summary

### March 2016

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## Overview

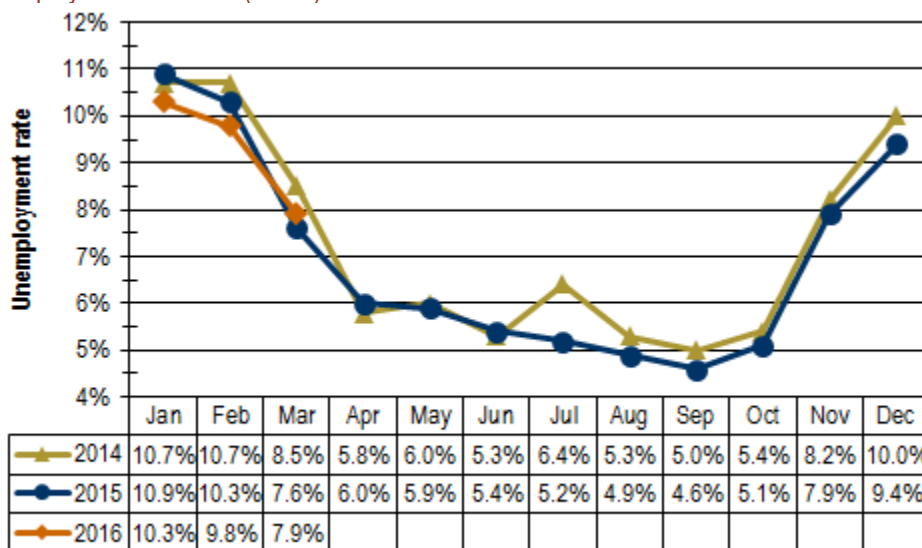
This report provides an update on the Adams County economy incorporating current, not seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment and civilian labor force data. Analysis focuses on year-over-year (between the Marches of 2014 and 2015) and average annual (between 2014 and 2015) labor market changes.

## Unemployment rates

Preliminary Civilian Labor Force (CLF) data show that Washington’s not seasonally adjusted average annual unemployment rate fell four-tenths of a point between 2014 and 2015, from 6.1 percent to 5.7 percent. Between the Marches of 2015 and 2016 the rate increased from 5.8 to 6.0 percent, up two-tenths of a point.

Adams County’s annual average unemployment rate decreased from 7.2 percent in 2014 to 6.8 percent in 2015, a downturn of four-tenths percentage point. In March 2016 the not seasonally adjusted rate was 7.9 percent, up three-tenths of a point from the 7.6 percent reading in March 2015 as the number of unemployed residents rose substantially while the local labor force expanded marginally (see *Figure 3*).

**Figure 1.** Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted  
 Adams County, January 2014 through March 2016  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



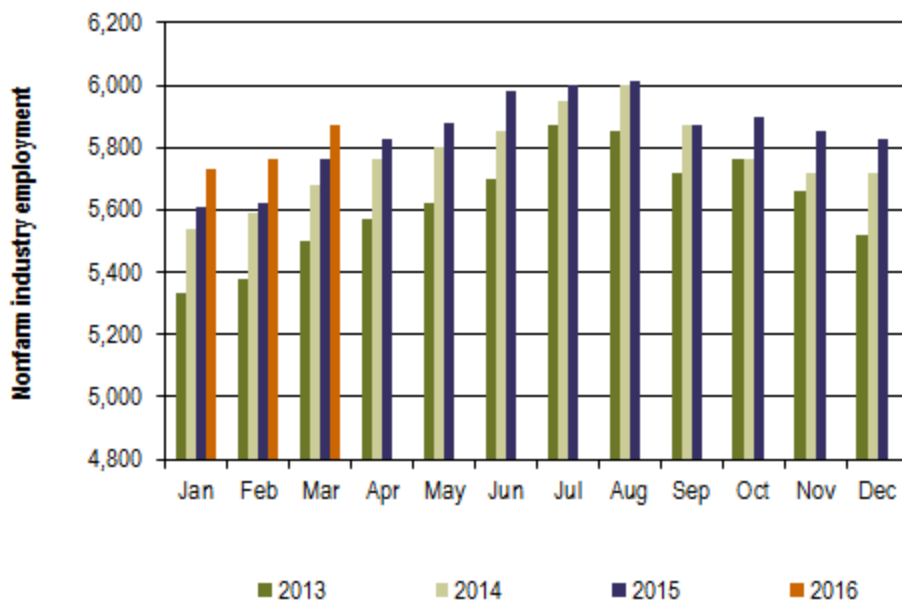
*The Adams County unemployment rate increased three-tenths of a percentage point between March 2015 and March 2016.*

## Total nonfarm employment

Between 2014 and 2015, Washington's labor market provided 88,800 new nonfarm jobs, an annual average increase of 2.9 percent. This March, businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 3,204,300 nonfarm jobs (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 3,106,100 jobs in March 2015, a 3.2 percent year-over-year employment increase. The state's economy has posted year-over-year nonfarm employment increases for the past 66 consecutive months (October 2010 through March 2016).

Average annual nonfarm employment (not seasonally adjusted) in Adams County increased from 5,770 jobs in 2014 to 5,840 in 2014, a modest 1.2 percent gain. Year over year, nonfarm employment in Adams County has either stabilized or increased for the past 27 months (from January 2014 through March 2015). Employment increased by 1.9 percent between the Marches of 2015 (5,760 jobs) and 2016 (5,870 jobs).

**Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment**  
Adams County, January 2013 through March 2016  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Nonfarm employers in Adams County provided 5,870 nonfarm jobs in March 2016, a 1.9 percent upturn from March 2015.*

## Employment and unemployment

Washington's Civilian Labor Force (CLF) expanded by 50,156 residents (a 1.4 percent upturn) from 2014 to 2015. The state's labor force has increased, year over year, for the past 27 months (January 2014 through March 2016). In March 2016, Washington's CLF tallied 3,622,597 residents versus 3,526,657 in March 2015 equating to 95,940 more Washingtonians in the labor force (up 2.7 percent).

Adams County's CLF increased by 191 residents (up 2.3 percent) from 2014 to 2015. Year over year, Adams County's labor force has been expanding for the past eleven months (May 2015 through March 2016). The CLF grew from 8,147 residents in March 2015 to 8,425 in March 2016 (up 3.4 percent) – that's the good news. Unfortunately, the number of unemployed residents increased more rapidly (8.1 percent) from 617 in March 2015 to 667 in March 2016 (see *Figure 3*). Hence, Adams County's unemployment rate rose from 7.6 to 7.9 percent between the Marches of 2015 and 2016.

**Figure 3. Labor force and industry employment, not seasonally adjusted**  
 Adams County, March 2015, and February and March 2016  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Adams County	Preliminary Mar-16	Revised Feb-16	Revised Mar-15	Change		
				Feb-16	Mar-15	Mar-15
				Mar-16	Mar-16	Mar-16 %
<b>Labor force and unemployment</b>						
Civilian labor force	8,425	8,187	8,147	238	278	3.4%
Resident employment	7,758	7,386	7,530	372	228	3.0%
Unemployment	667	801	617	-134	50	8.1%
Unemployment rate	7.9	9.8	7.6	-1.9	0.3	
<b>Industry employment</b>						
Total nonfarm <sup>1</sup>	5,870	5,760	5,760	110	110	1.9%
Total private	4,120	4,030	4,130	90	-10	-0.2%
Goods producing	1,170	1,160	1,170	10	0	0.0%
Mining, logging and construction	80	80	90	0	-10	-11.1%
Manufacturing	1,090	1,080	1,080	10	10	0.9%
Service providing	4,700	4,600	4,590	100	110	2.4%
Trade, transportation and utilities	1,480	1,430	1,480	50	0	0.0%
Wholesale trade	430	410	420	20	10	2.4%
Retail trade	600	590	600	10	0	0.0%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	450	430	460	20	-10	-2.2%
Education and health services	730	700	720	30	10	1.4%
Leisure and hospitality	360	350	390	10	-30	-7.7%
Government	1,750	1,730	1,630	20	120	7.4%
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 Adams County increased 1.9 percent, a gain of 110 jobs, between March 2015 and March 2016.*

## Nonfarm industry employment

Estimates indicate that Adams County's nonfarm employers netted 110 more jobs in March 2016 than in March 2015, a 1.9 percent upturn (see *Figure 3*). This year-over-year job growth-rate was less robust than Washington's 3.2 percent job-growth pace during this timeframe. Following is a summary of recent over-the-year changes in Adams County, by major industry:

- Year over year, employment in Adams County's manufacturing industry has either stabilized or expanded for the past five months (November 2015 through March 2016). Between the Marches of 2015 and 2016 local manufacturing employment escalated from 1,080 to 1,090 jobs, a modest 0.9 percent upturn. Statewide, manufacturing employment increased for 62 consecutive months (from October 2010 through November 2016) before decreasing for the past four months (from December 2015 through March 2016).

- Wholesale trade employment edged upwards from 420 jobs in March 2015 to 430 this March, an advance of 2.4 percent.
- The number of retail trade jobs in Adams County has either stagnated or declined for the past five months (November 2015 through March 2016). The pattern continued in March 2016 as this industry tallied 600 jobs, exactly the same number as in March 2015. Across Washington, retail employment has increased for the past 66 months (October 2010 through March 2016).
- Education (private) and health services increased by 10 between March 2015 (720 jobs) and March 2016 (730 jobs), a 1.4 percent upturn. On an average annual basis, this industry (comprised primarily of health service providers in Adams County) provided 740 jobs in 2014 and in 2015.
- Government expanded by 120 jobs, from 1,630 to 1,750 between the Marches of 2015 and 2016, a 7.4 percent upturn. Year over year, Adams County's government sector has been increasing from January 2015 through March 2016 (the past 15 months). Many government positions in rural counties are with local public school districts, police and fire departments, the US Postal Service, public health care providers, etc. Since annual average nonfarm employment in Adams County netted only 70 new jobs between 2014 and 2015 (from 5,770 to 5,840 jobs, respectively) and government added 80 jobs during this timeframe, one could generalize that the government sector accounted for virtually all local job growth during 2015 and the trend is continuing. Statewide, government employment has grown for 32 consecutive months (from August 2013 through March 2016).

## **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 August 2015 preliminary annual average QCEW data for calendar year 2014 became available. A ten-year analysis (from 2004 through 2014) of these data show that in Adams County:

- Total covered employment rose from 6,846 in 2004 to 7,740 in 2014, an 864 job and 12.6 percent upturn. The number of agricultural jobs (a subset of total covered employment) increased from 1,836 in 2004 to 2,111 in 2014, a 275 job and 15.0 percent uptrend. In 2004 Adams County's agricultural industry accounted for 26.7 percent of total covered employment. In 2014 agricultural employment accounted for 27.3 percent of total covered employment countywide. Hence, agricultural employment rose 0.6 percentage point (from 26.7 to 27.3 percent) in Adams County during the past ten years.
- Total covered wages rose from \$171.1 million (in 2004) to \$277.1 million (in 2014) a \$106.0 million and 61.9 percent upturn. The agricultural payroll (a subset of total covered wages) advanced from \$38.3 million in 2004 to \$65.4 million in 2014, a \$26.1 million and 70.6 percent uptrend. In 2004 Adams County's agricultural industry accounted for 22.4 percent of total covered wages and by 2014 agricultural wages tallied 23.6 percent of total covered payroll. Hence, agricultural wages rose 1.2 percentage points (from 22.4 to 23.6 percent) in Adams County during the past ten years.