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Employment in the Columbia Gorge: September 2026

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates continued to edge down across the Columbia Gorge with only Sherman County remaining unchanged.

Hood River County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.8% in September, down from August's rate of 3.9%. Over the year, the county's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged down by 0.5 percentage point.

Hood River County's employment gains in September were larger than expected; total nonfarm employment was up 160 (+1.4%) during the month, when an employment increase of 140 jobs was expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was up 20 jobs (+0.2%) from August to September.

The largest gains occurred within the public sector (+300 jobs) at the local level (+310 jobs). Smaller gains were also seen in wholesale trade (+50 jobs). Losses were concentrated within the private sector (-140 jobs) with the largest losses seen in leisure and hospitality (-110 jobs). Smaller losses were also seen in retail trade (-30 jobs); private education and health services (-20 jobs); mining, logging, and construction (-20 jobs); and manufacturing (-10 jobs).

Over the past year, Hood River County's seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment shed 100 jobs or -0.8%. Unadjusted losses were largest in manufacturing (-80 jobs) and trade, transportation, and utilities (-80 jobs). Smaller losses were seen in financial activities (-50 jobs); mining, logging, and construction (-40 jobs); and information (-20 jobs). Gains were concentrated in leisure and hospitality (+60 jobs), private education and health services (+50 jobs), and professional and business services (+50 jobs).

Wasco County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.0% in September, down from a rate of 5.1% in August. Over the year, Wasco County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate declined by 0.4 percentage point.

Wasco County's employment losses in September were larger than normal; total nonfarm employment was down 80 jobs (-0.8%) during the month, when an increase of 100 jobs was expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was down 180 jobs (-1.8%) between August and September.

Private-sector employment was down 150 jobs (-1.8%) over the month. The largest losses were recorded in leisure and hospitality (-90 jobs). Smaller private-sector losses of 10 jobs each were recorded in private education and health services; manufacturing; other services; professional and business services; retail trade; and construction. Public-sector employment gained 70 jobs in September, specifically within local government (80 jobs). Federal employment declined by 10 jobs while state government remained unchanged in September.

Over the past year Wasco County's seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment was down 140 jobs or -1.4% with the largest losses occurring in the public sector (-160 jobs) and trade, transportation, and utilities (-80 jobs). Additional losses were seen in manufacturing (-40 jobs), leisure and hospitality (-40 jobs), other services (-10 jobs), and mining and logging (-10 jobs). Gains were strongest in construction (+110 jobs) with smaller gains registered in private education and health services (+30 jobs), professional and business services (+30 jobs), financial activities (+10 jobs), and information (+10 jobs).

Gilliam County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell from 4.8% in August to 4.6% in September. Over the year, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate declined by 1.4 percentage points.

Gilliam County's employment gains in September were larger than expected; total nonfarm employment was up 15 jobs (+1.6%) during the month, when an employment increase of 10 jobs was expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was up five jobs between August and September. Over the year, seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment was up 45 jobs.

Sherman County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.6% in September, unchanged from its rate in August. The unemployment rate declined by 0.9 percentage point over the year.

Sherman County's employment gains in September were slightly higher than expected; total nonfarm employment was unchanged while a decrease of five jobs was expected. Private-sector employment decreased by 15 jobs over the month, while public-sector employment increased by 15 jobs. Over the year ending in September, private industry lost 35 jobs, bringing the total to 550, a 6.0% decrease from the previous year. Public-sector employment lost 20 jobs over the year for a net loss of 55 total nonfarm jobs over the year.

Wheeler County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.1% in September, down from a rate of 4.2% in August. Over the year, Wheeler County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was down by 0.5 percentage point.

Total nonfarm employment was up five jobs from August to September when an employment increase of 10 was expected. Seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment is therefore down five jobs. Over the year ending in September, total nonfarm employment was up by 10 jobs. The private sector declined by 10 jobs over the year, while the public sector added 20 jobs.

Next Press Releases

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the next statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data for October on Wednesday, Nov. 18 and county and metropolitan area unemployment rates and employment survey data on Tuesday, Nov. 24.

The Oregon Employment Department and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) work cooperatively to develop and publish monthly payroll employment and labor force data for Oregon's metropolitan areas and counties. The estimates of monthly job gains and losses are based on a survey of businesses. The estimates of unemployment are based on a survey of households and other sources.

The Oregon Employment Department payroll employment estimates are revised quarterly using information from unemployment insurance tax records. All department publications use data from this *official Oregon series* unless noted.

The department also makes the BLS-produced nonfarm payroll employment series for metropolitan areas available. These are revised annually by BLS.

The pdf version of the news release, including tables and graphs, can be found at www.qualityinfo.org/press-release/. To obtain the data in other formats such as in Excel, visit QualityInfo.org, select Tools, and choose LAUS or CES from the dropdown menu. To request the press release as a Word document, contact the person shown at the top of this press release.

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To file an Unemployment Insurance claim, visit our online claims system or call our contact centers, where Employment Department staff are ready to help by phone, at 1-877-FILE-4-UI (1-877-345-3484). For help finding jobs and training resources, go to: www.WorkSourceOregon.org

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Workforce & Economic Research Division

QualityInfo.org

October 20, 2026

Hood River County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	15,080	14,614	14,952	466	128
Unemployed	435	547	566	-112	-131
Unemployment rate	2.9%	3.7%	3.8%	-0.8	-0.9
<i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>3.8%</i>	<i>3.9%</i>	<i>4.3%</i>	<i>-0.1</i>	<i>-0.5</i>
Employed	14,645	14,067	14,386	578	259
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	11,690	11,530	11,790	160	-100
<i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i>	<i>11,770</i>	<i>11,750</i>	<i>11,880</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>-110</i>
Total private	10,170	10,310	10,270	-140	-100
Mining, logging, and construction	520	540	560	-20	-40
Manufacturing	1,770	1,780	1,850	-10	-80
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,890	1,870	1,970	20	-80
Wholesale trade	390	340	450	50	-60
Retail trade	1,320	1,350	1,330	-30	-10
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	180	180	190	0	-10
Information	70	70	90	0	-20
Financial activities	310	310	360	0	-50
Professional and business services	1,050	1,050	1,000	0	50
Private education and health services	2,010	2,030	1,960	-20	50
Leisure and hospitality	2,230	2,340	2,170	-110	60
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	370	390	320	-20	50
Accommodation and food services	1,860	1,950	1,850	-90	10
Accommodation	540	570	510	-30	30
Food services and drinking places	1,320	1,380	1,340	-60	-20
Other services	320	320	310	0	10
Government	1,520	1,220	1,520	300	0
Federal government	130	140	130	-10	0
State government	160	160	150	0	10
Local government	1,230	920	1,240	310	-10
Local education	690	370	700	320	-10
Local government excluding educational services	540	550	540	-10	0

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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Wasco County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

			--Change From--		
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	12,769	12,961	13,046	-192	-277
Unemployed	544	682	681	-138	-137
Unemployment rate	4.3%	5.3%	5.2%	-1.0	-0.9
Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)	5.0%	5.1%	5.4%	-0.1	-0.4
Employed	12,225	12,279	12,365	-54	-140
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	10,160	10,240	10,310	-80	-150
Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)	10,030	10,210	10,170	-180	-140
Total private	8,040	8,190	8,030	-150	10
Mining, logging, and construction	530	540	430	-10	100
Mining and logging	20	20	30	0	-10
Construction	510	520	400	-10	110
Manufacturing	420	430	460	-10	-40
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,910	1,920	1,990	-10	-80
Wholesale trade	220	220	220	0	0
Retail trade	1,440	1,450	1,510	-10	-70
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	250	250	260	0	-10
Information	270	270	260	0	10
Financial activities	290	290	280	0	10
Professional and business services	580	590	550	-10	30
Private education and health services	2,340	2,350	2,310	-10	30
Ambulatory health care services	510	520	510	-10	0
Nursing and residential care facilities	570	580	560	-10	10
Leisure and hospitality	1,350	1,440	1,390	-90	-40
Accommodation and food services	1,210	1,270	1,280	-60	-70
Other services	350	360	360	-10	-10
Government	2,120	2,050	2,280	70	-160
Federal government	290	300	280	-10	10
State government	320	320	330	0	-10
Local government	1,510	1,430	1,670	80	-160
Indian tribal	70	80	100	-10	-30
Local education	640	530	770	110	-130
Local government excluding education and tribal	800	820	800	-20	0

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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October 20, 2026

Gilliam County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	998	994	960	4	38
Unemployed	37	41	58	-4	-21
Unemployment rate	3.7%	4.1%	6.0%	-0.4	-2.3
Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)	4.6%	4.8%	6.0%	-0.2	-1.4
Employed	961	953	902	8	59
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	940	925	895	15	45
Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)	930	925	885	5	45
Total private	650	640	595	10	55
Trade, transportation, and utilities	105	115	105	-10	0
Professional and business services	220	220	230	0	-10
Private education and health services	80	80	75	0	5
Leisure and hospitality	40	45	45	-5	-5
Government	290	285	300	5	-10
Federal government	10	10	10	0	0
State government	25	25	25	0	0
Local government	255	250	265	5	-10

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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Sherman County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

	--Change From--				
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	917	922	944	-5	-27
Unemployed	38	37	47	1	-9
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.0%	5.0%	0.1	-0.9
Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)	4.6%	4.6%	5.5%	0.0	-0.9
Employed	879	885	897	-6	-18
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	870	870	925	0	-55
Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)	855	850	910	5	-55
Total private	550	565	585	-15	-35
Trade, transportation, and utilities	345	355	365	-10	-20
Retail trade	110	115	140	-5	-30
Leisure and hospitality	80	85	90	-5	-10
Government	320	305	340	15	-20
Federal government	115	120	125	-5	-10
State government	25	25	30	0	-5
Local government	180	160	185	20	-5

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.



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October 20, 2026

Wheeler County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

				--Change From--	
	September 2026	August 2026	September 2025	August 2026	September 2025
Labor Force Status					
Civilian labor force	696	688	709	8	-13
Unemployed	24	26	31	-2	-7
Unemployment rate	3.4%	3.8%	4.4%	-0.4	-1.0
Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)	4.1%	4.2%	4.6%	-0.1	-0.5
Employed	672	662	678	10	-6
Nonfarm Payroll Employment					
Total nonfarm employment	350	345	340	5	10
Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)	335	340	325	-5	10
Total private	160	170	170	-10	-10
Trade, transportation, and utilities	30	30	30	0	0
Leisure and hospitality	30	30	35	0	-5
Government	190	175	170	15	20
Federal government	5	5	5	0	0
State government	45	45	35	0	10
Local government	140	125	130	15	10

The most recent month is preliminary, the prior month is revised. Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Civilian labor force includes employed and unemployed individuals 16 years and older by place of residence.

Employed includes payroll employment, self-employed, unpaid family workers, domestics, agriculture, and labor disputants.

Unemployment rate is calculated by dividing unemployed by civilian labor force.

Nonfarm Payroll Employment: Data are by place of work and cover full- and part-time employees who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. The data exclude the self-employed, volunteers, unpaid family workers, and domestics.

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