

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 21, 2026

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Patrick O'Connor, Regional Economist

Patrick.s.oconnor@employ.oregon.gov

(503) 400-4374

Employment in the Columbia Gorge: February 2026

Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates remained steady in all five counties.

Hood River County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 4.1% in February, matching a revised January rate of 4.1%. Over the year, the county's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged up by 0.5 percentage point.

Hood River County's employment losses in February were less than normal; total nonfarm employment was down 40 during the month, when an employment decrease of 50 jobs would be expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was up 10 between January and February. Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment is now up 2.3% from the level in February 2020, or 980 jobs above its pre-pandemic level.

Over the past year Hood River County's seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment has shed 100 jobs or -0.8%.

The private sector overall shed 40 jobs over the month. Retail trade employment dropped 90 in February. Leisure and hospitality gained 40 jobs in February.

Public sector employment was unchanged in February.

Wasco County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.1% as of February, down from 5.2% in January. Over the year, Wasco County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 0.7 percentage point higher.

Wasco County's employment losses in February were larger than normal; total nonfarm employment was down 10 during the month, when an employment increase of 50 jobs would be expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was down 60 between January and February. Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment is now down -1.2% from the level in February 2020, or 120 jobs below its pre-pandemic level.

Over the past year Wasco County's seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment has shed 170 jobs or -1.6%.

Private sector employment overall was unchanged over the month. Construction, manufacturing, and leisure and hospitality each gained 10 jobs in February.

Public sector employment declined 10 in February. Local government employment declined 20 in February. Federal government added 10 jobs and state government employment was unchanged in February.

Gilliam County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained unchanged at 5.7% in February, matching January's revised unemployment rate of 5.7%. Over the year, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 1.1 percentage points higher.

Gilliam County's employment gains in February were larger than normal; total nonfarm employment was up 10 during the month, when an employment decrease of 20 jobs would be expected. As a result, seasonally adjusted employment was up 30 between January and February. Seasonally adjusted total nonfarm employment is now down -3.4% from the level in February 2020, or 30 jobs below its pre-pandemic level.

Sherman County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 5.1% in February, matching the revised January rate of 5.1%. The unemployment rate increased by 1.2 percentage points over the year. Sherman County's nonfarm employment increased by 5 jobs (+0.6%) over the month of February and now stands at 875. Private-sector employment added 5 jobs over the month, while public-sector employment was unchanged for the month. Over the year ending in February, private industry shed 40 jobs, bringing the total to 570, a 6.6% decrease from the previous year. Public-sector employment lost 30 jobs over the year for a net loss of 70 total nonfarm jobs over the year.

Wheeler County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 4.8% in February, matching January's rate of 4.8%. Over the year, Wheeler County's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was up by 0.4 percentage point. Total nonfarm employment increased by 10 jobs (+2.9%) from January to February and now stands at 350 jobs. Over the year ending in February, total nonfarm employment increased by 20 (+6.1%). The private sector added 20 jobs over the year, while the public sector was unchanged.

Next Press Releases

The Oregon Employment Department plans to release the March county and metropolitan area unemployment rates on Tuesday, May 5 and the statewide unemployment rate and employment survey data on Friday, May 1.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

QualityInfo.org

April 21, 2026

Hood River County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

| | --Change From-- | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | February 2026 | January 2026 | February 2025 | January 2026 | February 2025 |
| Labor Force Status | | | | | |
| Civilian labor force | 13,454 | 13,273 | 13,489 | 181 | -35 |
| Unemployed | 586 | 609 | 616 | -23 | -30 |
| Unemployment rate | 4.4% | 4.6% | 4.6% | -0.2 | -0.2 |
| <i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 4.1% | 4.1% | 3.6% | 0.0 | 0.5 |
| Employed | 12,868 | 12,664 | 12,873 | 204 | -5 |
| Nonfarm Payroll Employment | | | | | |
| Total nonfarm employment | 11,740 | 11,780 | 11,840 | -40 | -100 |
| <i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 11,700 | 11,690 | 11,800 | 10 | -100 |
| Total private | 10,260 | 10,300 | 10,320 | -40 | -60 |
| Mining, logging, and construction | 490 | 490 | 500 | 0 | -10 |
| Manufacturing | 1,720 | 1,690 | 1,620 | 30 | 100 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 1,800 | 1,910 | 1,770 | -110 | 30 |
| Wholesale trade | 460 | 480 | 380 | -20 | 80 |
| Retail trade | 1,180 | 1,270 | 1,240 | -90 | -60 |
| Transportation, warehousing, and utilities | 160 | 160 | 150 | 0 | 10 |
| Information | 90 | 90 | 80 | 0 | 10 |
| Financial activities | 340 | 340 | 320 | 0 | 20 |
| Professional and business services | 960 | 950 | 930 | 10 | 30 |
| Private education and health services | 1,950 | 1,970 | 1,930 | -20 | 20 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 2,590 | 2,550 | 2,840 | 40 | -250 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 1,040 | 1,010 | 1,320 | 30 | -280 |
| Accommodation and food services | 1,550 | 1,540 | 1,520 | 10 | 30 |
| Accommodation | 450 | 450 | 440 | 0 | 10 |
| Food services and drinking places | 1,100 | 1,090 | 1,080 | 10 | 20 |
| Other services | 320 | 310 | 330 | 10 | -10 |
| Government | 1,480 | 1,480 | 1,520 | 0 | -40 |
| Federal government | 100 | 100 | 110 | 0 | -10 |
| State government | 150 | 150 | 140 | 0 | 10 |
| Local government | 1,230 | 1,230 | 1,270 | 0 | -40 |
| Local education | 730 | 720 | 730 | 10 | 0 |
| Local government excluding educational services | 500 | 510 | 540 | -10 | -40 |

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.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

QualityInfo.org

April 21, 2026

Wasco County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

| | --Change From-- | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | February 2026 | January 2026 | February 2025 | January 2026 | February 2025 |
| Labor Force Status | | | | | |
| Civilian labor force | 12,486 | 12,300 | 12,471 | 186 | 15 |
| Unemployed | 779 | 800 | 719 | -21 | 60 |
| Unemployment rate | 6.2% | 6.5% | 5.8% | -0.3 | 0.4 |
| <i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 5.1% | 5.2% | 4.4% | -0.1 | 0.7 |
| Employed | 11,707 | 11,500 | 11,752 | 207 | -45 |
| Nonfarm Payroll Employment | | | | | |
| Total nonfarm employment | 9,980 | 9,990 | 10,150 | -10 | -170 |
| <i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 10,170 | 10,230 | 10,340 | -60 | -170 |
| Total private | 7,800 | 7,800 | 7,920 | 0 | -120 |
| Mining, logging, and construction | 420 | 410 | 480 | 10 | -60 |
| Mining and logging | 50 | 50 | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| Construction | 370 | 360 | 430 | 10 | -60 |
| Manufacturing | 480 | 470 | 460 | 10 | 20 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 1,980 | 2,000 | 2,030 | -20 | -50 |
| Wholesale trade | 220 | 220 | 180 | 0 | 40 |
| Retail trade | 1,480 | 1,480 | 1,550 | 0 | -70 |
| Transportation, warehousing, and utilities | 280 | 300 | 300 | -20 | -20 |
| Information | 260 | 260 | 260 | 0 | 0 |
| Financial activities | 280 | 280 | 270 | 0 | 10 |
| Professional and business services | 530 | 540 | 570 | -10 | -40 |
| Private education and health services | 2,330 | 2,330 | 2,260 | 0 | 70 |
| Ambulatory health care services | 520 | 520 | 510 | 0 | 10 |
| Nursing and residential care facilities | 590 | 590 | 520 | 0 | 70 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 1,190 | 1,180 | 1,260 | 10 | -70 |
| Accommodation and food services | 1,140 | 1,130 | 1,170 | 10 | -30 |
| Other services | 330 | 330 | 330 | 0 | 0 |
| Government | 2,180 | 2,190 | 2,230 | -10 | -50 |
| Federal government | 270 | 260 | 300 | 10 | -30 |
| State government | 320 | 320 | 320 | 0 | 0 |
| Local government | 1,590 | 1,610 | 1,610 | -20 | -20 |
| Indian tribal | 60 | 100 | 50 | -40 | 10 |
| Local education | 770 | 760 | 820 | 10 | -50 |
| Local government excluding education and tribal | 760 | 750 | 740 | 10 | 20 |

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.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

QualityInfo.org

April 21, 2026

Gilliam County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

| | --Change From-- | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | February 2026 | January 2026 | February 2025 | January 2026 | February 2025 |
| Labor Force Status | | | | | |
| Civilian labor force | 939 | 934 | 1,061 | 5 | -122 |
| Unemployed | 59 | 67 | 55 | -8 | 4 |
| Unemployment rate | 6.3% | 7.2% | 5.2% | -0.9 | 1.1 |
| <i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 5.7% | 5.7% | 4.6% | 0.0 | 1.1 |
| Employed | 880 | 867 | 1,006 | 13 | -126 |
| Nonfarm Payroll Employment | | | | | |
| Total nonfarm employment | 860 | 850 | 1,025 | 10 | -165 |
| <i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 865 | 835 | 1,035 | 30 | -170 |
| Total private | 580 | 575 | 730 | 5 | -150 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 100 | 100 | 110 | 0 | -10 |
| Professional and business services | 225 | 220 | 220 | 5 | 5 |
| Private education and health services | 70 | 70 | 75 | 0 | -5 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 40 | 40 | 40 | 0 | 0 |
| Government | 280 | 275 | 295 | 5 | -15 |
| Federal government | 15 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| State government | 25 | 25 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Local government | 240 | 240 | 260 | 0 | -20 |

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.



Workforce & Economic Research Division
 QualityInfo.org
 April 21, 2026

Sherman County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

| | --Change From-- | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | February 2026 | January 2026 | February 2025 | January 2026 | February 2025 |
| Labor Force Status | | | | | |
| Civilian labor force | 916 | 905 | 953 | 11 | -37 |
| Unemployed | 49 | 52 | 44 | -3 | 5 |
| Unemployment rate | 5.3% | 5.7% | 4.6% | -0.4 | 0.7 |
| <i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 5.1% | 5.1% | 3.9% | 0.0 | 1.2 |
| Employed | 867 | 853 | 909 | 14 | -42 |
| Nonfarm Payroll Employment | | | | | |
| Total nonfarm employment | 875 | 870 | 945 | 5 | -70 |
| <i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 900 | 890 | 975 | 10 | -75 |
| Total private | 570 | 565 | 610 | 5 | -40 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 350 | 345 | 390 | 5 | -40 |
| Retail trade | 130 | 130 | 130 | 0 | 0 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 70 | 70 | 65 | 0 | 5 |
| Government | 305 | 305 | 335 | 0 | -30 |
| Federal government | 115 | 115 | 150 | 0 | -35 |
| State government | 30 | 30 | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Local government | 160 | 160 | 155 | 0 | 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.



Workforce & Economic Research Division

QualityInfo.org

April 21, 2026

Wheeler County Current Labor Force and Industry Employment

| | --Change From-- | | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| | February 2026 | January 2026 | February 2025 | January 2026 | February 2025 |
| Labor Force Status | | | | | |
| Civilian labor force | 706 | 687 | 673 | 19 | 33 |
| Unemployed | 38 | 40 | 44 | -2 | -6 |
| Unemployment rate | 5.4% | 5.8% | 6.5% | -0.4 | -1.1 |
| <i>Unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 4.8% | 4.8% | 4.4% | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| Employed | 668 | 647 | 629 | 21 | 39 |
| Nonfarm Payroll Employment | | | | | |
| Total nonfarm employment | 350 | 340 | 330 | 10 | 20 |
| <i>Total nonfarm employment (seasonally adjusted)</i> | 370 | 365 | 350 | 5 | 20 |
| Total private | 160 | 155 | 140 | 5 | 20 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 30 | 30 | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 25 | 20 | 25 | 5 | 0 |
| Government | 190 | 185 | 190 | 5 | 0 |
| Federal government | 5 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| State government | 35 | 35 | 40 | 0 | -5 |
| Local government | 150 | 145 | 145 | 5 | 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.

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.

You can subscribe to receive notification of new articles and publications from QualityInfo.org. To subscribe, go to www.qualityinfo.org/subscribe, enter your email address and click Sign In. In the Publication section, click on the + sign next to a report type category and then click on the geography(s) you are interested in. Take some time to browse the other publications on the page and see if there are some you'd like to receive an email notification for. You can receive notifications on a daily, weekly, or monthly schedule – whichever is most convenient for you. You can change your preferences – or unsubscribe – at any time.

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

The Oregon Employment Department (OED) is an equal opportunity agency. Everyone has a right to use OED programs and services. OED provides free help. Some examples are: Sign language and spoken language interpreters, written materials in other languages, braille, large print, audio and other formats. If you need help, please call 971-673-6400. TTY users call 711. You can also ask for help at OED_Communications@employ.oregon.gov.

El Departamento de Empleo de Oregon (OED) es una agencia de igualdad de oportunidades. El OED proporciona ayuda gratuita para que usted pueda utilizar nuestros servicios. Algunos ejemplos son intérpretes de lengua de señas e idiomas hablados, materiales escritos en otros idiomas, letra grande, audio y otros formatos. Para obtener ayuda, por favor llame al 503-947-1444. Usuarios de TTY pueden llamar al 711. También puede enviar un correo electrónico a OED_Communications@employ.oregon.gov.

###