

BEFORE THE
WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

CASCADE NATURAL GAS
CORPORATION,

Respondent.

DOCKET UG-240008

CASCADE NATURAL GAS CORPORATION
FIRST EXHIBIT TO THE
DIRECT TESTIMONY OF KIRSTI B. HOURIGAN

March 29, 2024

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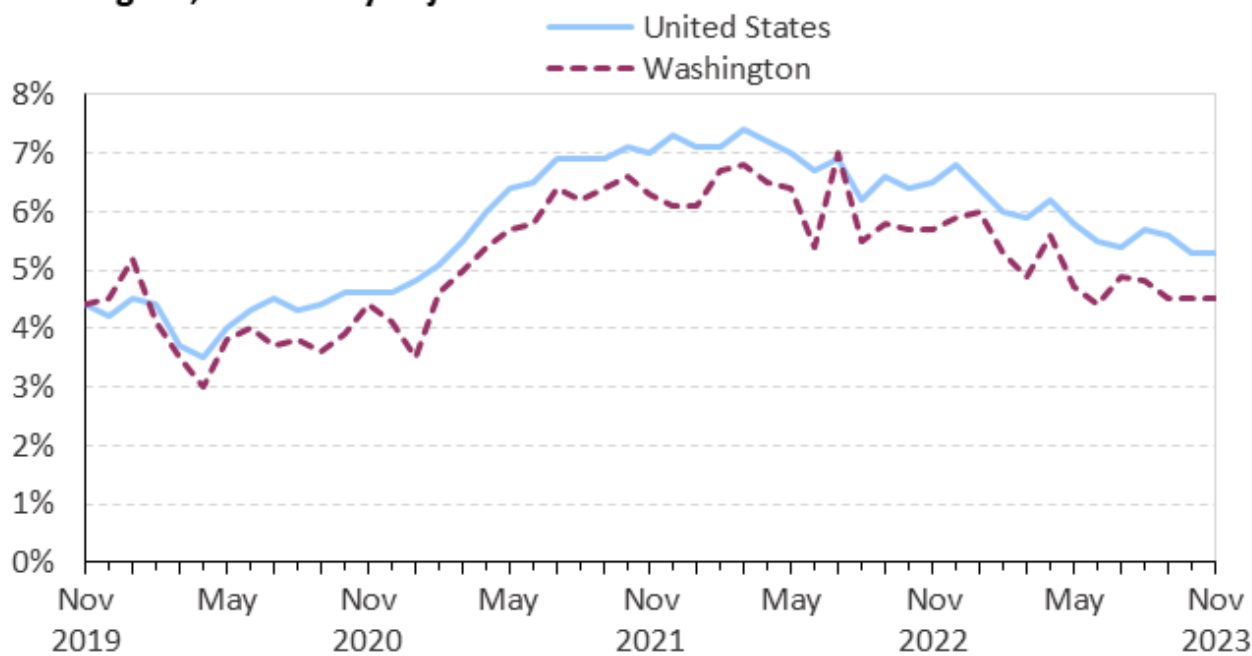
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Washington Job Openings and Labor Turnover — November 2023

Washington had 172,000 job openings in November 2023, unchanged from October, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table 1](#).) Regional Commissioner Chris Rosenlund noted that the job openings rate in Washington was 4.5 percent in November, unchanged from the previous month. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 2](#).) The job openings rate nationally was 5.3 percent in November, unchanged from October. (See [table 3](#).) All data in this release are seasonally adjusted.

Chart 1. Job openings as a percent of employment for the United States and Washington, seasonally adjusted

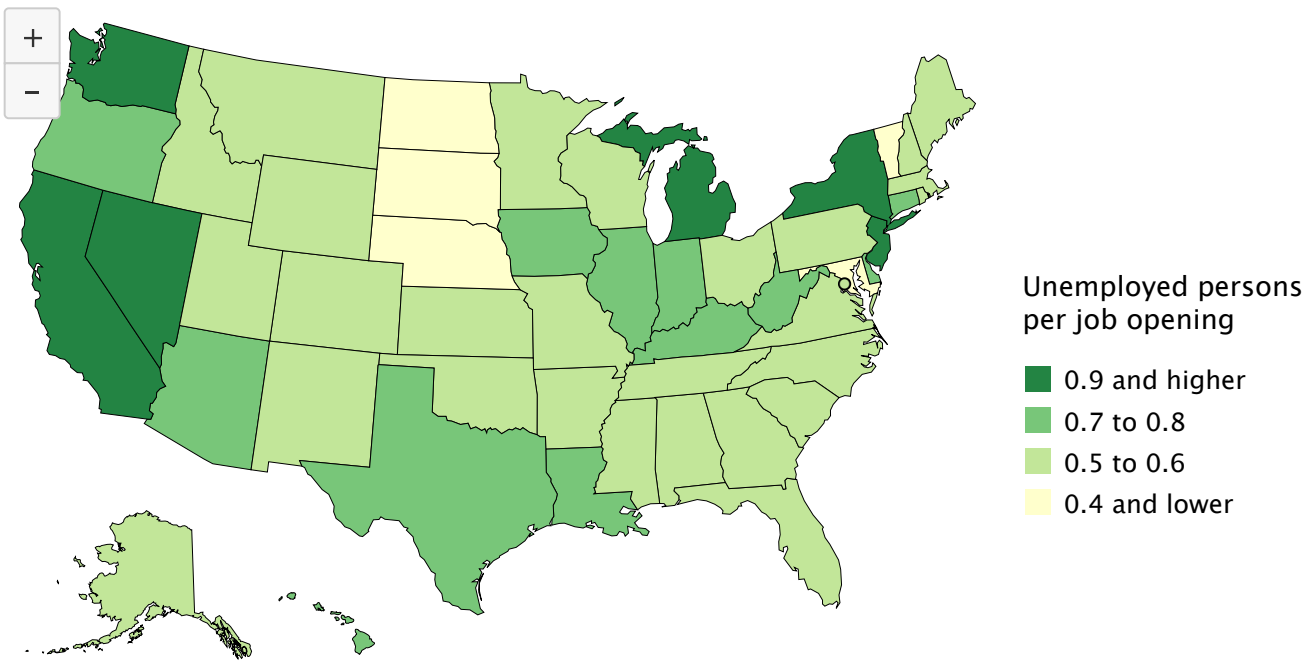


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[View Chart Data](#)

The ratio of unemployed persons per job opening in Washington was 0.9 in November. Nationwide, 32 states and the District of Columbia had ratios in November that were lower than the national measure of 0.7 unemployed persons per job opening; 13 states had ratios that were higher than the national ratio, and 5 states had ratios equal to the national measure. (See [map 1](#).)

Map 1. Number of unemployed persons per job opening by state, November 2023, seasonally adjusted (U.S. ratio = 0.7)



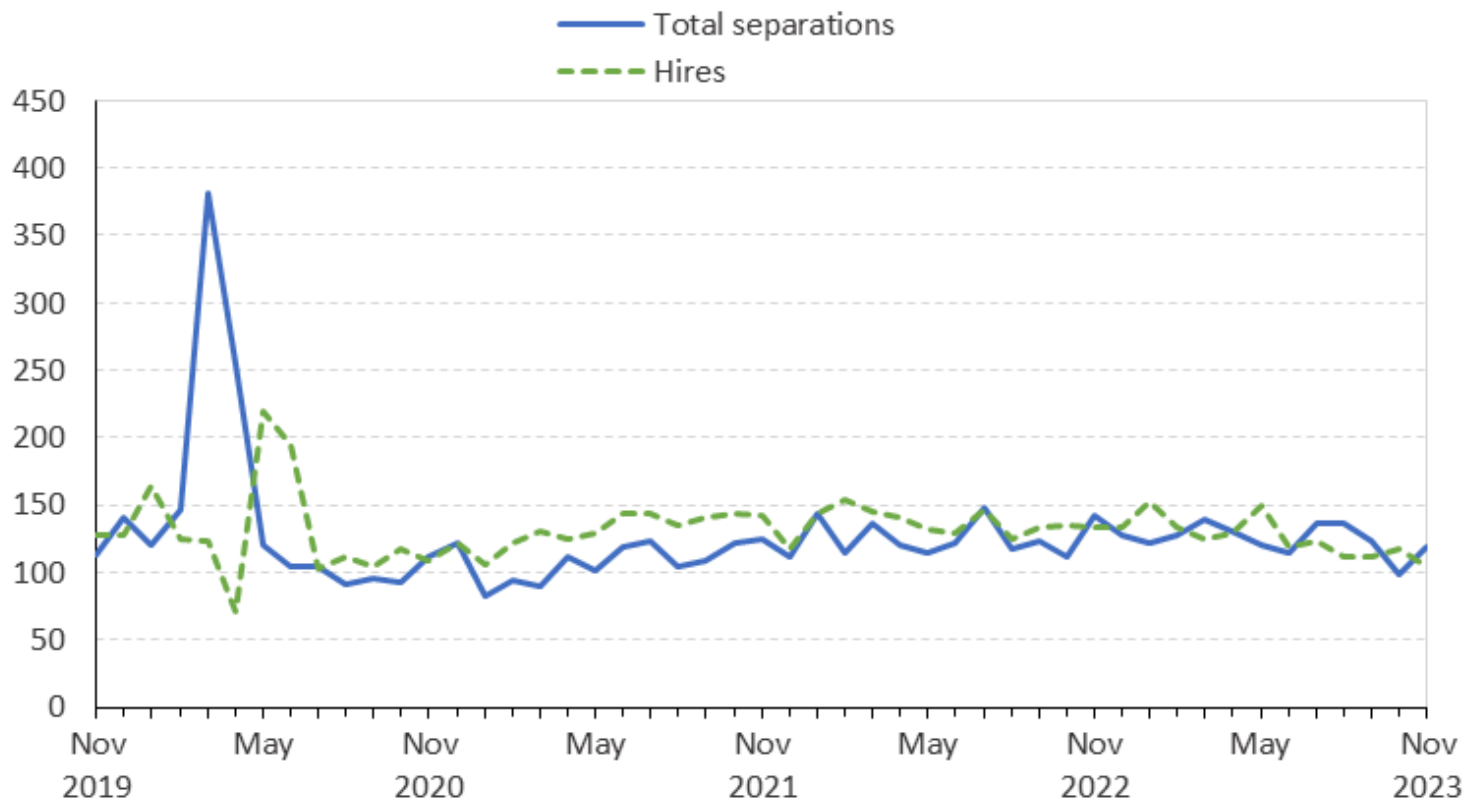
Hover, tap on mobile devices, or use tab and arrow keys to see area data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



In November, Washington had 104,000 hires and 119,000 separations, compared to 117,000 hires and 98,000 separations in October. (See [chart 2](#).) Over the 12 months ending in November, hires have averaged 126,000 per month and separations have averaged 124,000 per month. These averages include workers who may have been hired and separated more than once during the year.

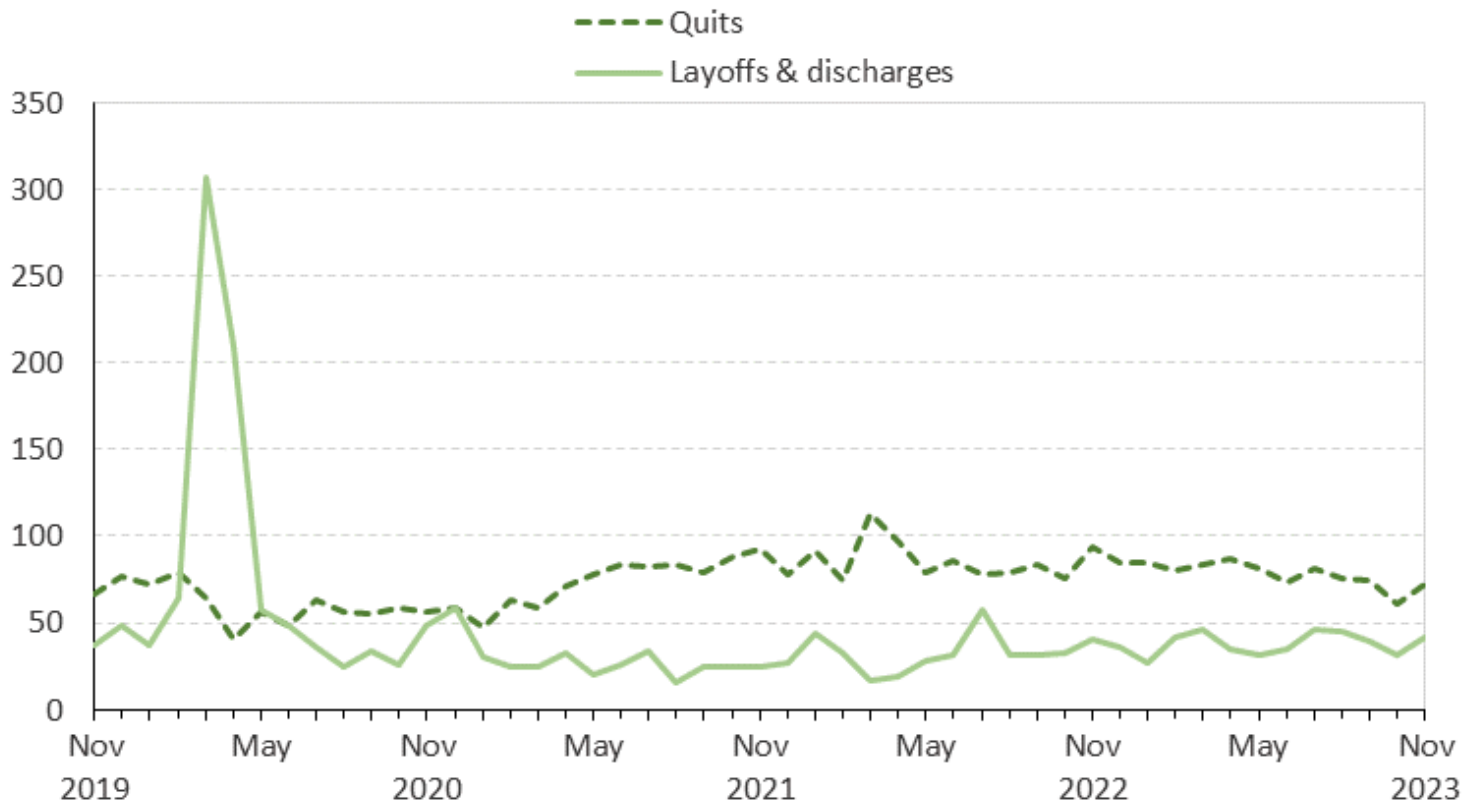
Chart 2. Hires and total separations in Washington, seasonally adjusted (in thousands)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[View Chart Data](#)

Among the November separations in Washington, 72,000 were quits and 41,000 were layoffs and discharges, compared to 61,000 quits and 31,000 layoffs and discharges in October. (See [chart 3](#).) Over the last 12 months, quits averaged 78,000 per month, ranging from 61,000 to 87,000. Layoffs and discharges have averaged 38,000 per month, ranging from 27,000 to 46,000.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

[View Chart Data](#)

The State Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey estimates for December 2023 are scheduled to be released on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

This news release presents statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey](#) (JOLTS). The JOLTS program provides information on labor demand and turnover. The state estimates produced by JOLTS are model-based, incorporating JOLTS sample, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), and Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates. For more information see the [JOLTS State Estimates Methodology](#).

Job Openings. Job openings include all positions that are open on the last business day of the reference month. A job is open only if it meets all three of these conditions:

- A specific position exists and there is work available for that position.
- The job could start within 30 days.
- The employer is actively recruiting workers from outside the establishment to fill the position.

The number of unemployed persons per job opening is a ratio of the level of unemployed persons and the level of job openings. The number of unemployed persons at the national level is an estimate from the [Current Population Survey \(CPS\)](#), while state-level unemployment estimates are modeled by the [Local Area Unemployment Statistics \(LAUS\)](#) program. A ratio of 1.0 means there is a job available for every unemployed person. Lower ratios signal tighter labor markets, where firms have more job openings than there are unemployed persons available to work. Higher ratios indicate there are more unemployed persons competing for each job opening.

Hires. Hires include all additions to the payroll during the entire reference month.

Separations. Separations include all separations from the payroll during the entire reference month and is reported by type of separation: quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations.

- *Quits* include employees who left voluntarily, except for retirements or transfers to other locations.
 - *Layoffs and discharges* include involuntary separations initiated by the employer.
 - *Other separations* include retirements, transfers to other locations, separations due to employee disability, and deaths.
- Levels and rates of other separations represent a small portion of total separations and are not published with the release of state estimates.

Complete definitions, including exclusions, and additional information about the State JOLTS data presented in this release are available in the [State Job Openings and Labor Turnover Technical Note](#).

Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Telecommunications Relay Service: 7-1-1.

Table 1. Job openings and labor turnover for Washington, seasonally adjusted (in thousands)

| Estimate | November 2022 | August 2023 | September 2023 | October 2023 | November 2023 ^(p) | Change from October 2023 to November 2023 ^(p) |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Openings | 215 | 184 | 170 | 172 | 172 | 0 |
| Hires | 133 | 111 | 112 | 117 | 104 | -13 |
| Total separations | 142 | 136 | 123 | 98 | 119 | 21 |
| Quits | 94 | 76 | 74 | 61 | 72 | 11 |
| Layoffs & discharges | 40 | 45 | 39 | 31 | 41 | 10 |

Footnotes:
(p) Preliminary.

Table 2. Job openings and labor turnover rates for Washington, seasonally adjusted

| Estimate | November 2022 | August 2023 | September 2023 | October 2023 | November 2023 ^(p) | Change from October 2023 to November 2023 ^(p) |
|----------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--|
|----------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--|

| Estimate | November 2022 | August 2023 | September 2023 | October 2023 | November 2023 ^(p) | Change from October 2023 to November 2023 ^(p) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Openings ⁽¹⁾ | 5.7 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 0.0 |
| Hires ⁽²⁾ | 3.7 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 2.9 | -0.3 |
| Total separations ⁽³⁾ | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 0.6 |
| Quits ⁽³⁾ | 2.6 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 0.3 |
| Layoffs & discharges ⁽³⁾ | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 0.2 |

Footnotes:
 (p) Preliminary.
 (1) The job openings rate is computed by dividing the number of job openings by the sum of employment and job openings and multiplying that quotient by 100.
 (2) The hires rate is computed by dividing the number of hires by employment and multiplying that quotient by 100.
 (3) The separations rate is computed by dividing the number of separations by employment and multiplying that quotient by 100. The quits and layoffs and discharges rates are computed similarly.

Table 3. Job openings and labor turnover rates for the United States, seasonally adjusted

| Estimate | November 2022 | August 2023 | September 2023 | October 2023 | November 2023 ^(p) | Change from October 2023 to November 2023 ^(p) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Openings ⁽¹⁾ | 6.5 | 5.7 | 5.6 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 0.0 |
| Hires ⁽²⁾ | 4.1 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.5 | -0.2 |
| Total separations ⁽³⁾ | 3.9 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.4 | -0.2 |
| Quits ⁽³⁾ | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.2 | -0.1 |
| Layoffs & discharges ⁽³⁾ | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.0 |

Footnotes:
 (p) Preliminary.
 (1) The job openings rate is computed by dividing the number of job openings by the sum of employment and job openings and multiplying that quotient by 100.
 (2) The hires rate is computed by dividing the number of hires by employment and multiplying that quotient by 100.
 (3) The separations rate is computed by dividing the number of separations by employment and multiplying that quotient by 100. The quits and layoffs and discharges rates are computed similarly.

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