



## Workforce System COVID-19 Response for Clark, Cowlitz & Wahkiakum Counties May 7, 2020

As we continue to assist and connect businesses and individuals to resources, we've also started to think about reopening and recovery. While we don't yet know what the "new normal" will be, we're having conversations with partners and our team to gather ideas and input on what might be needed and how to move forward.

Our [survey](#) asking how COVID-19 is impacting your business is still open. We encourage you to complete it if you haven't already.

We hope to hear from you.

*Kevin Perkey*  
Chief Executive Officer

### Response to Businesses

On Tuesday, May 5, we hosted our first "Workforce Development Recovery + Resiliency" online conversation. We provided business leaders with economic, labor market and unemployment data. The companies shared some of the challenges they're facing as they make plans to reopen. Our goal was to begin to identify ways to support business needs as we coordinate our regional workforce development response.

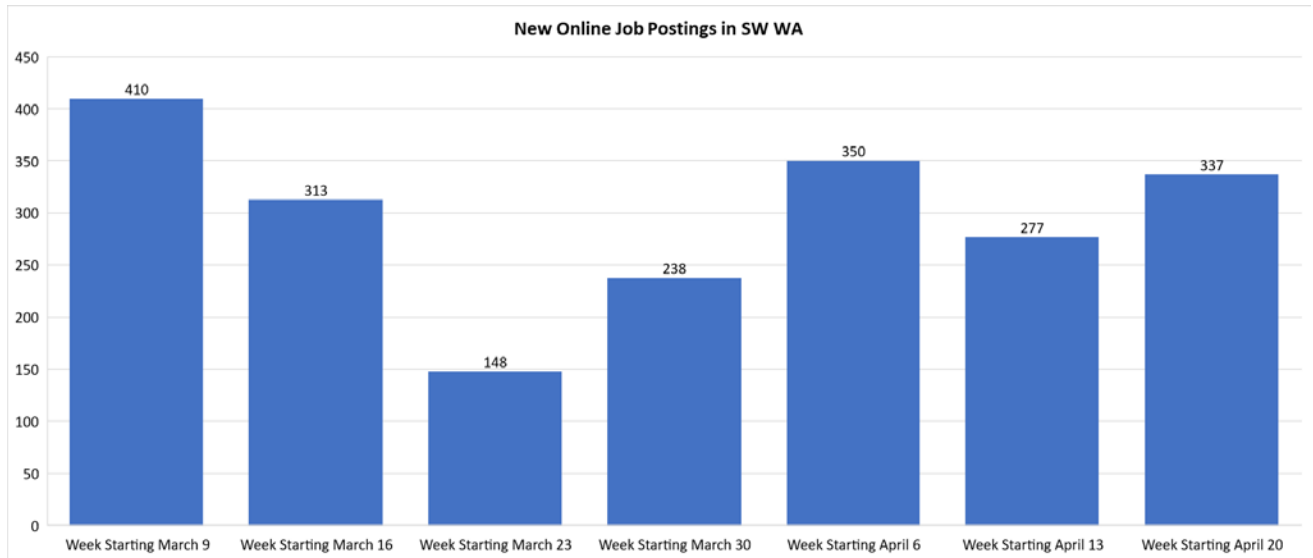
Some ways companies said they could use support:

- Assistance with access to PPE and best practices for safely bringing employees back to work when able.
- Office space redesign is on the horizon for some companies to allow room for social distancing in the workplace. Guidance on requirements and best practices is needed.
- Ongoing support to resolve unemployment questions and issues for employees, particularly for those who were previously self-employed.

Online job ads for the week starting April 27 decreased to 227 from 337 last week.

Top occupations and companies hiring

- Laborers and Freight, Stock, & Material Movers: Amazon, Aerotek
- Retail Salespersons: Walmart, Walgreen, Sprint, Lowes, Sears, Crossmark, WinCo
- Hair Dressers, Hair Stylists and Cosmetologists: Great Clips
- Software Developers: MailChimp, CyberCoders, Jobot, Electronic Arts, United Health Group



## Assistance for People

WorkSource and Next continue to provide services virtually to adults and youth and are assisting customers by phone, email and video meetings.

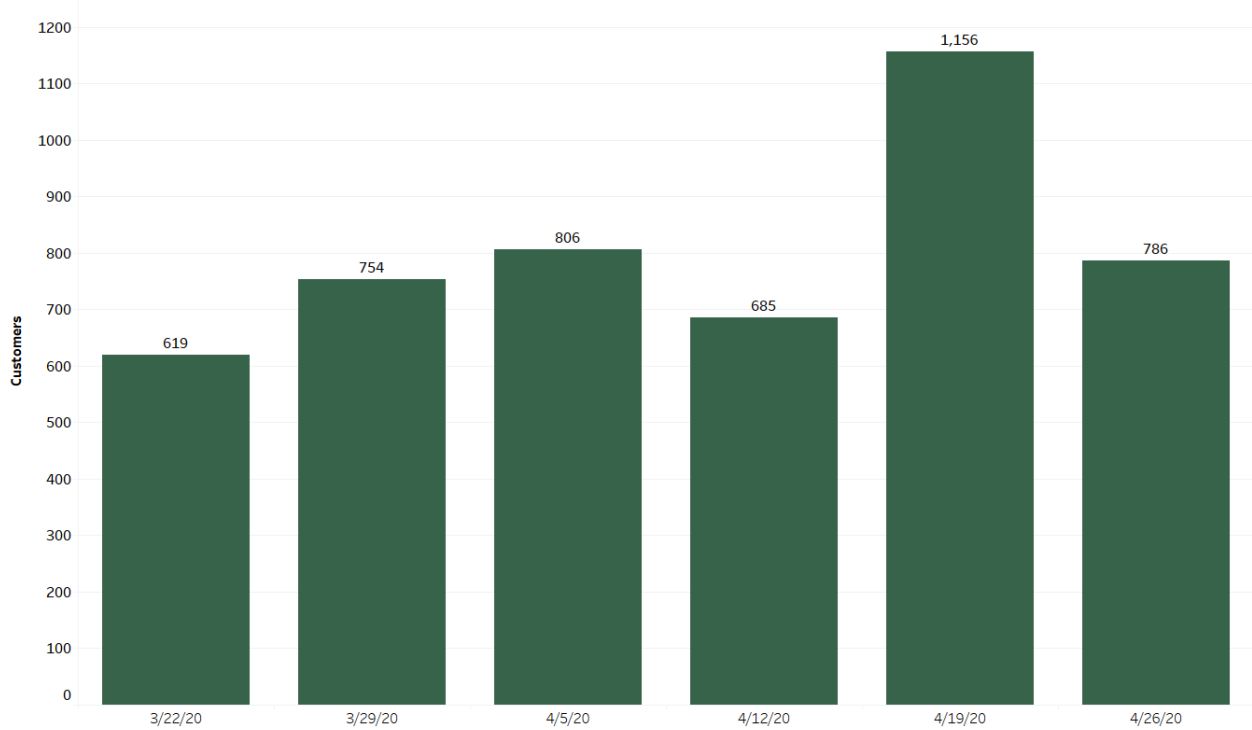
**WorkSource** – Call volume has decreased locally, but remains extremely high. Staff have been reassigned to help handle the large number of Unemployment Insurance requests so that individuals can get the assistance they need.

The team is having discussions around how to start planning for the eventual reopening, what that might look like and continuing to work with key industry sectors.

The Customer Appointments graph shows the number of people requesting services from WorkSource. Appointments decreased to 786 from a high of 1,156 during the week of April 19 when the three CARES Act expanded unemployment benefits became available.

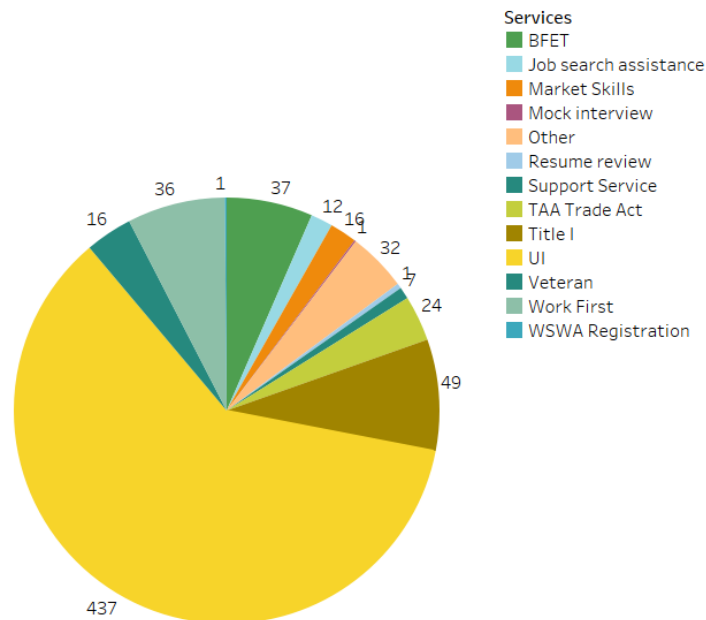


Weekly Customer Appointments



Unemployment Insurance (UI) continues to be the largest source of customer questions and requests at more than half of all inquiries. However, requests for UI assistance have declined by more than half compared to last week when 933 requests for assistance were unemployment related.

**Services 4/27-5/1/2020**



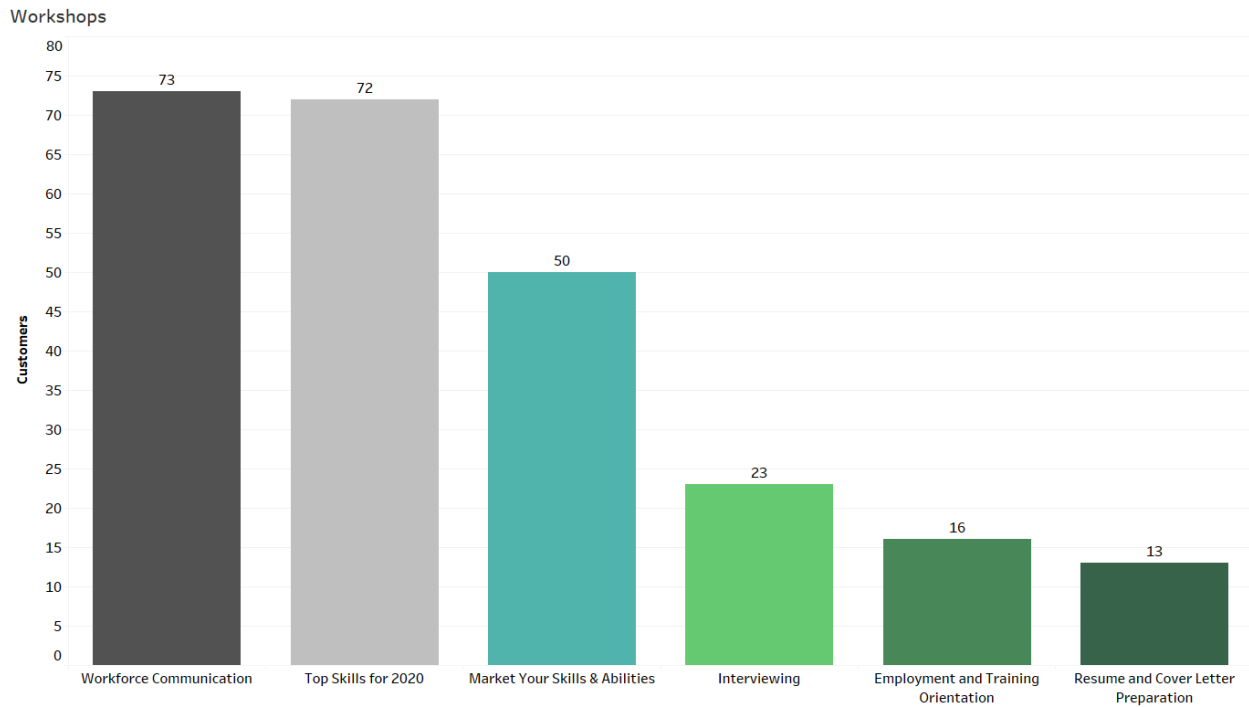


**Workshops** – More than 1,800 people have participated in our local WorkSource online workshops since services moved to virtual on March 18.

Total number of workshop participants for the week of April 27 was 247, down from 367 the prior week. Attendance at “interviewing, “employment and training orientation” and “resume and cover letter preparation”) workshops declined from the prior week. However, more than double the number of people attended “marketing your skills and abilities” compared to the prior week.

The staff asked workshop participants about how they will use information in their job search efforts. The quote below from a customer who may be going back to work is a reminder to us as a system that we can support customers not only with job search, but also job retention and support as work environments change and people enter new territory.

“I presently feel I am getting close on two prospects. I had second and third interviews yesterday. Both would involve working remotely for 80% or more of the time so I found the entire [workshop] content pertinent to thinking about how I can ensure my effectiveness. ... Working from home will be new if I land one of these so I will have a learning curve – mostly about myself – and this presentation gave me great ideas. ~ WorkSource Customer





**Next Youth Center** – Staff continue to find creative ways to engage with and serve our community’s youth through social media, interactive and educational videos, and digital communications.

- Outreach to school counselors that Next is operating and serving youth may be paying off as five new youth completed orientation applications.
- Youth are using and enjoying the YouTube platform.
- Youth seem excited about the new, easy ways to engage with Next (i.e., #nextyouthchallenge).
- Two youth participated in the Manufacturing Cohort and one was hired for a job.
- Staff are working to get youth access to internet services through Comcast and helping troubleshoot technological issues.

### System priorities

- Our partnership with Comcast Essentials and the Community Foundation for SW WA to provide six months of free internet access to 200 families is moving forward. Partners at WorkSource, Next, Lower Columbia Community Action Program, Partners in Careers, Goodwill of the Olympic Rainier Region and Cowlitz Habitat for Humanity will be identifying families in need of support. Priority will be for families receiving public assistance.

### Unemployment Insurance Claims

According to the WA State Employment Security Department (ESD), during the week of April 26-May 2, 1,086,031 total claims for unemployment benefits were filed.

Unemployment Claim Type	For week of April 26-May 2	For week of April 19-25
Regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) initial claims	100,762	137,605
Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) initial claims	59,234	190,948
Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) initial claims	40,267	168,165
Continued/ongoing weekly claims	885,768	959,190
<b>Total claims</b>	<b>1,086,031</b>	<b>1,455,908</b>



**Nine-week summary of statewide initial claims filed since the start of the COVID-19 crisis**  
(provided by the WA State Employment Security Department)

For the week ending on:	Total number of unemployment claims paid*	Number of initial unemployment claims**	Increase/decrease of initial unemployment claims over previous week	Increase of initial unemployment claims over same week in 2019
7-Mar	46,529	6,548	18.6%	1.0%
14-Mar	45,437	14,154	116.0%	182.0%
21-Mar	48,181	128,962***	811.0%	2568.0%
28-Mar	99,846	181,975	41.0%	3513.0%
4-Apr	182,276	170,063	-6.5%	2627.0%
11-Apr	265,745	143,241	-15.7%	1979.0%
18-Apr	352,870	82,435	-42.5%	1343.9%
25-Apr	504,273	137,604	66.9%	2501.0%
2-May	504,139	100,762	-26.8%	1833.3%

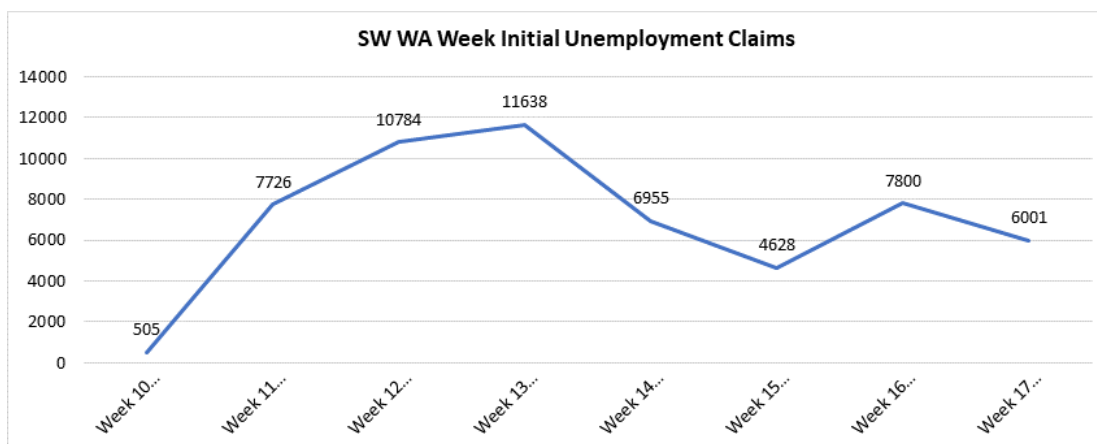
\*Total number of unemployment claims paid includes all benefit entitlements (Regular, PUA, PEUC)

\*\* Initial claims include claims that are still being reviewed for eligibility. Counts for initial claims are not indicative of the number

of claims that will result in monetary compensation. \*\*\*This number was revised downward from 133,464 to 128,962 by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Since the week ending March 14, our three SW WA counties have seen 56,037 total initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI).

UI claims in our three Southwest Washington counties decreased by 23 percent from the prior week.

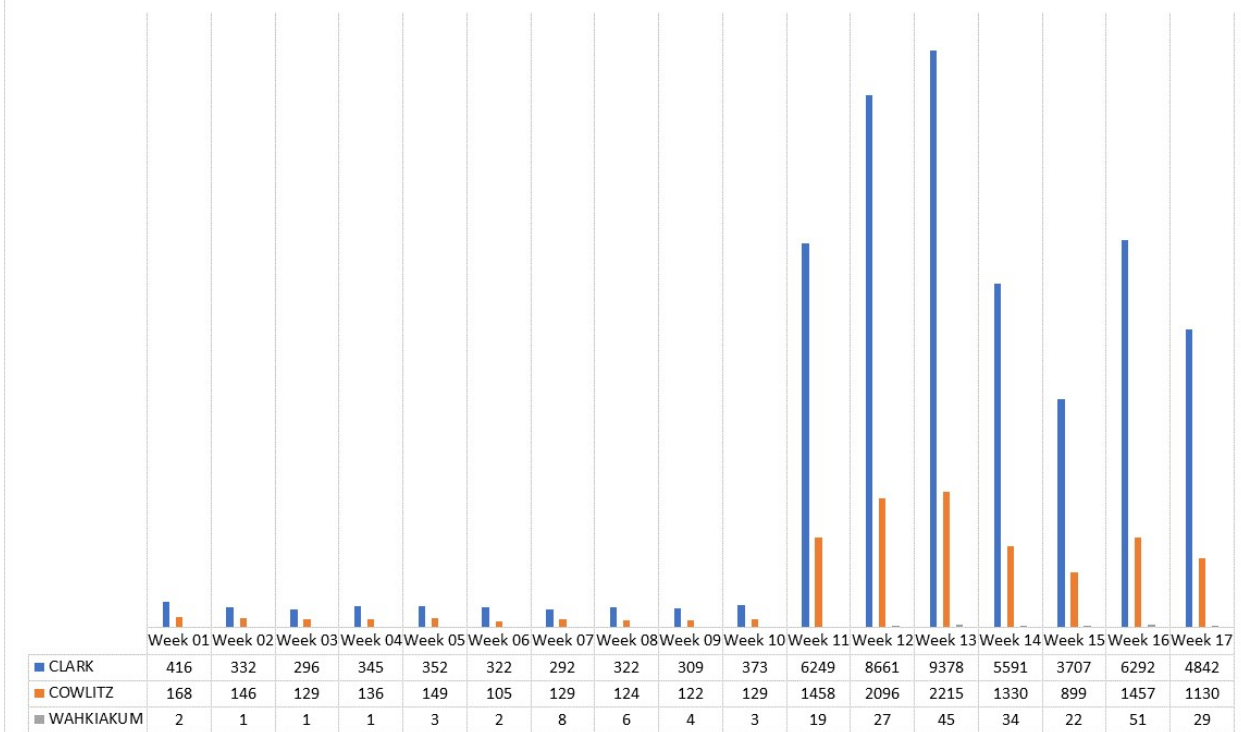


During the week of April 26-May 2:

- Clark County: Initial claims filed decreased from 6,292 to 4,842 down 23 percent from the week before.
- Cowlitz County: Initial claims filed decreased by 22 percent from the prior week from 1,457 to 1,130.
- Wahkiakum County: Initial claims decreased 43 percent to 29 claims from 51 the prior week.



**SW WA WEEKLY INITIAL CLAIMS**



**SW WA Claimants by Industry March 9 – May 2**

**Clark County:** top claimants by industry include healthcare, construction, retail trade, and accommodation and food services

Clark County Weekly Initial Claims by Industry, Seven Week Total for March 9 Through May 2

	Week 10, ending 3/14/2020	Week 11, ending 3/21/2020	Week 12, ending 3/28/2020	Week 13, ending 4/4/2020	Week 14, ending 4/11/2020	Week 15, ending 4/18/2020	Week 16, ending 4/25/2020	Week 17, ending 5/2/2020	Week 10- Week 17 UI Claims
Total, All Industries	453	6,252	8,709	9,378	5,591	3,707	6,292	4,842	45,224
Not disclosed	104	0	1,084	1,891	1,017	1,009	3,019	1,868	9,992
Health care and social assistance	36	1,016	1,174	1,223	753	399	465	440	5,506
Construction	70	215	1,199	1,092	700	308	305	261	4,150
Retail trade	21	413	953	923	616	381	407	359	4,073
Accommodation and food services	47	1,888	1,068	867	502	346	429	389	5,536
Manufacturing	32	228	624	510	364	162	209	197	2,326
Administrative and waste services	24	200	515	470	286	183	239	241	2,158
Wholesale trade	27	77	260	421	249	170	174	157	1,535
Professional and technical services	15	128	234	254	164	119	171	154	1,239
Educational services	48	427	278	217	173	129	222	218	1,712
Transportation and warehousing	19	111	124	128	120	53	83	97	735
Information	10	84	64	77	57	62	71	55	480



**Cowlitz County:** top claimants by industry were healthcare, retail trade, manufacturing, and accommodation and food services

Cowlitz County Weekly Initial Claims by Industry, Seven Week Total for March 9 Through May 2

Industry	Week 10, ending 3/14/2020	Week 11, ending 3/21/2020	Week 12, ending 3/28/2020	Week 13, ending 4/4/2020	Week 14, ending 4/11/2020	Week 15, ending 4/18/2020	Week 16, ending 4/25/2020	Week 17, ending 5/2/2020	Week 10-17
Total, All Industries	144	1,462	2,112	2,215	1,330	899	1,457	1,130	10,749
Not disclosed	22	57	173	337	206	189	621	314	1,919
Health care and social assistance	10	246	291	373	190	91	130	129	1,460
Retail trade		114	310	219	155	91	125	109	1,123
Manufacturing	15	84	170	166	102	57	109	87	790
Accommodation and food services	9	446	244	218	125	83	86	89	1,300
Construction	42	69	335	267	188	113	80	78	1,172
Administrative and waste services	11	50	123	114	66	69	65	89	587
Other services, except public admin.	11	117	124	94	63	31	48	29	517
Wholesale trade	8	25	58	63	35	32	39	33	293
Educational services	9	55	53	34	29	19	39	51	289
Arts, entertainment, and recreation		94	57	152	47	22	25	17	414
Transportation and warehousing	7	26	36	38	34	22	22	29	214
Professional and technical services		35	57	45	23	20	19	23	222
Government	0	5	22	22	18	16	15	20	118
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting		7	11	17	14	11	15	10	85
Real estate and rental and leasing	0	11	22	28	10	17	9	9	106
Information		13	7	12	4	7	6	5	54
Finance and insurance	0	8	12	12	10	9	4	9	64
Mining			7	4	11				22

**Wahkiakum County:** claimants by industry were not disclosed

Wahkiakum County Weekly Initial Claims by Industry, Seven Week Total for March 9 Through May 2

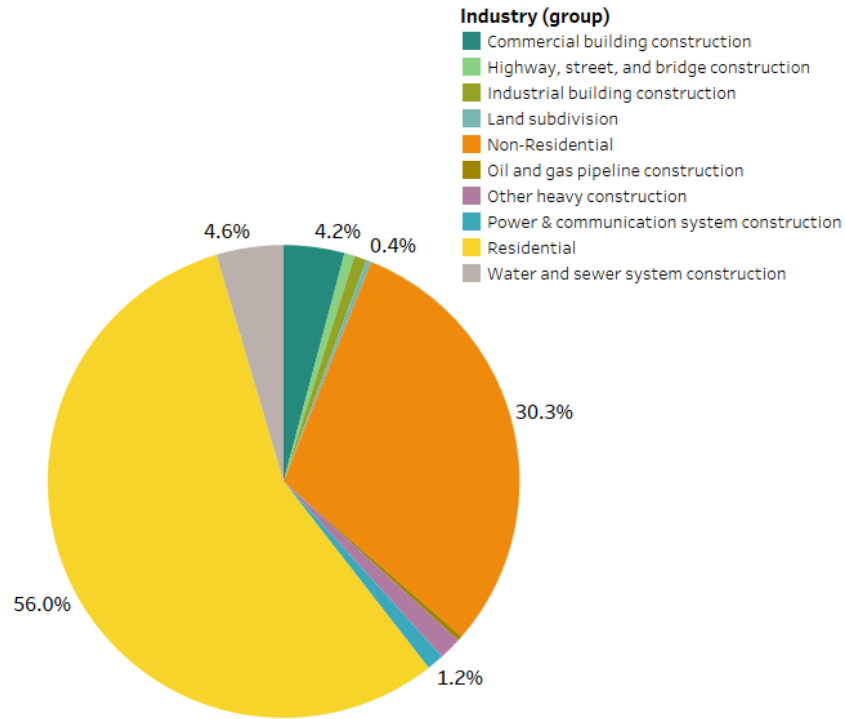
Industry	Week 10, ending 3/14/2020	Week 11, ending 3/21/2020	Week 12, ending 3/28/2020	Week 13, ending 4/4/2020	Week 14, ending 4/11/2020	Week 15, ending 4/18/2020	Week 16, ending 4/25/2020	Week 17, ending 5/2/2020	Week 10 - Week 17 Claims
Total, All Industries	3	19	27	45	34	22	51	29	230
Not disclosed	3	19	27	30	34	22	44	18	197
Grand Total	6	38	54	75	68	44	95	47	427

**Spotlight on Construction**

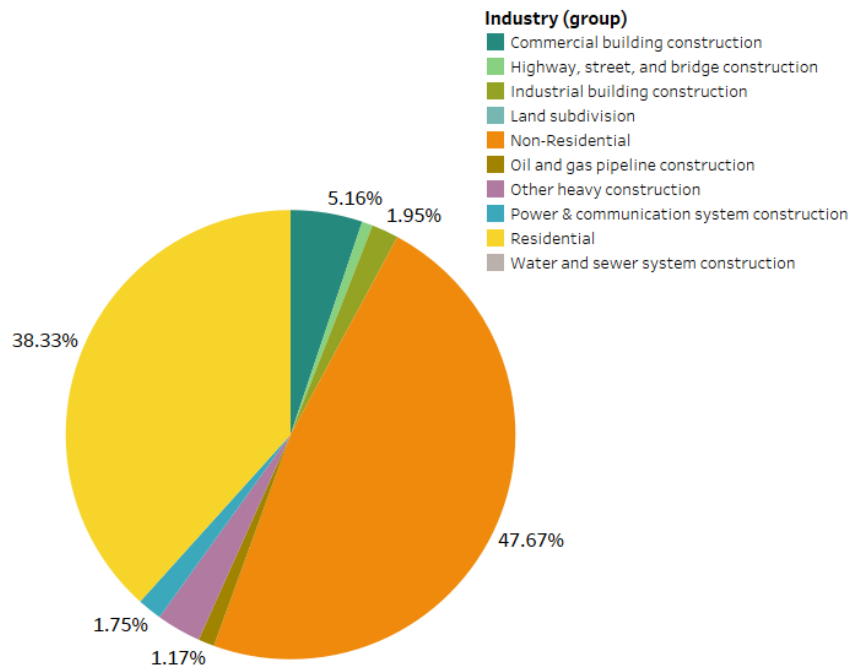
Unemployment insurance (UI) claimants from March 8 – April 25 in the construction industry

Clark County: Three groups filing the largest number of UI claims were: Residential Construction 56 percent, Non-Residential 30 percent, and Water and Sewer Construction 4.6 percent





Cowlitz County: Three groups filing the largest number of UI claims were: Non-residential 47.6 percent, Residential 38 percent, and Power and Communication 5 percent



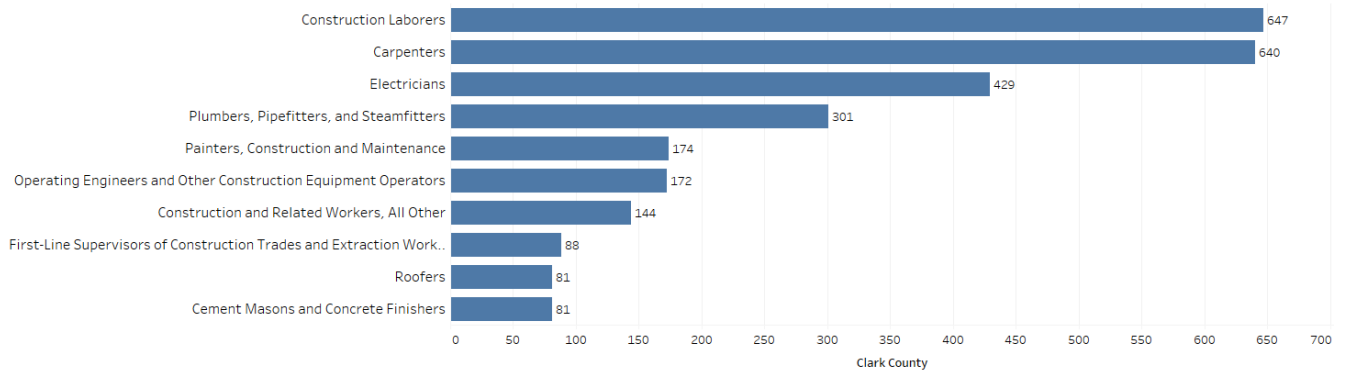


**Construction occupations with the largest number of claimants:**

- Clark County: Construction laborers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers/pipefitters/steamfitters.
- Cowlitz County: Construction laborers, electricians, plumbers/pipefitters/steamfitters.
- Wahkiakum County: data is not available.

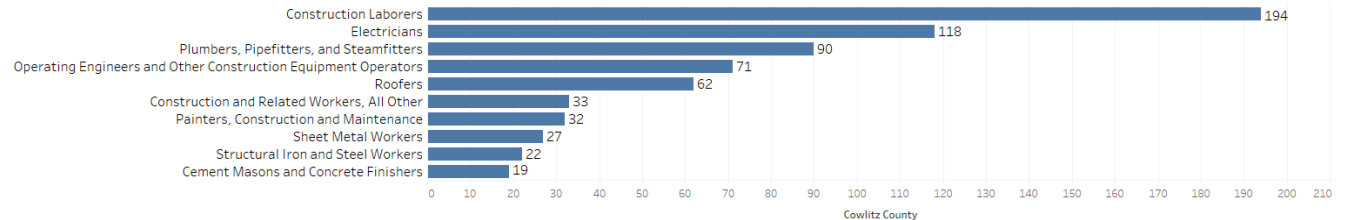
**Clark County**

March 8 - April 25 Construction UI Claimants



**Cowlitz County**

March 8 - April 25 Construction UI Claimants



**Washington State Claimants by Industry**

**Industry sectors experiencing the highest number of initial claims during April 26-May 2 were:**

- Healthcare and social assistance: 10,272 initial claims, down 789 initial claims (7 percent) from the previous week
- Retail trade: 8,489 initial claims, down 1,908 initial claims (19 percent) from previous week
- Accommodation and food services: 8,435 initial claims, down 1,614 initial claims (16 percent) from previous week
- Manufacturing: 5,409 initial claims, down 636 initial claims (4 percent) from the previous week
- Construction: 4,849 initial claims, down 1,198 initial claims (20 percent) from the previous week