

Grays Harbor Workforce Summary **Demographic Comparisons – 1999 and 2004**

Grays Harbor County has experienced significant growth in the available workforce, their respective skills and employment experiences between 1999 and 2004. Compared with national trends, our workforce matches, and in several categories, exceed the skills and experiences of 20M+ employees surveyed nationally in over 100 large through medium sized communities. This comparative information is provided and exemplifies that Grays Harbor has the appropriate workforce to supply companies that relocate or expand in our region.

Grays Harbor County's western labor shed (centered in Aberdeen/Hoquiam/Cosmopolis from which workers might be drawn to an employer in the western portion of Grays Harbor and Pacific Counties) has a population of approximately 90,500 and a labor force of approximately 36,350. Nearly 2,800 unemployed persons are actively seeking work. Underemployed workers (defined as having the skills, experience and education qualifying them for a new job) total approximately 7,500. In addition, roughly 1,800 people neither employed nor seeking work might re-enter the workforce for the proper job.

Grays Harbor County's eastern labor shed (centered in Elma and comprised of the eastern portion of Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, and Thurston Counties) has a population of approximately 186,200 and a labor force of nearly 68,200. Approximately 4,400 unemployed persons are actively seeking work. Underemployed workers are roughly 15,800. Additionally, roughly 2,900 people neither employed nor seeking work might enter the workforce for the proper job.

Since 1999, the desired wage of underemployed people has significantly dropped to a level between \$11 to \$17 per hour. This trend is comparable with a reduction in the average age of the workforce, witnessing a significant loss of employees above 46 years of age, and a significant addition of employees ages 19 through 45.

The workforce has significantly shifted from a majority of women in 1999 to men in 2004. Additionally, one-third of the workforce is now commuting over 20 miles to work.

Educational levels have improved for high school graduates and those with some college. Associate degrees have experienced a modest reduction while college graduation levels have remained constant.

The following trend reports provide data and trends for Workforce, Desired wage of the underemployed, Age, Education, Commute distance, Gender, and Skills/Experience of the underemployed. For questions and additional information on the economic viability of Grays Harbor County, we can be contacted at:

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