STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 30, 2021
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State population steadily increases, tops 7.7 million residents in 2021

OLYMPIA, Wash. –Washington's population growth steadily increased by 61,600 people in 2021, launching the state into one of the most unique population estimate years because of delayed census data and COVID-19 impacts. As of April 1, 2021, Washington now tops 7,766,925 residents, with most of the growth concentrated in larger cities across the state.

The Office of Financial Management originally estimated a population increase of 61,600 people (from births, deaths, and net migration). However, the 2020 census resident population data[1] showed a higher number in 2020. To account for this, we adjusted the 61,600 population change estimate to 110,700 — an increase of 49,100 people bringing the total to 7.7 million residents.

The unadjusted population growth rate is much slower than last year at 0.8% compared to the previous year at 1.5%. In late August, detailed 2020 census data will be released, which means we can make more detailed comparisons for counties and cities. Until then, we have used our 2020 estimates for comparison.

As we expected, the COVID-19 crisis dramatically affected the 2021 estimates. The findings show a decrease in births, increase in deaths, a dramatic drop in migration and in the population who live in group quarters. Many of the group quarters changes were large enough to cause population decline, particularly in areas with college dorms. We expect some of these changes will be temporary, with population rebounding once pandemic impacts subside.

Despite a drop in migration due to COVID-19, migration continues to be the primary driver behind population growth. From 2020 to 2021, net migration (people moving in minus people moving out) to Washington totaled 37,100, which is down 46,600 people from last year. Net migration accounted for 60% of the state's population growth, with natural increase (births minus deaths) responsible for the other 40%.

[1] The Census Bureau has only released state level results from the 2020 count. We use the Census 2020 resident population count for Washington as the base for state estimates. Due to the lack of information about where the 49,100 people reside within the state, we proportionately distributed the adjustment to each jurisdiction based on OFM's 2020 population estimates.

Consistent with previous years, over 70% of state population growth occurred in the five largest metropolitan counties: Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish and Spokane. The eight counties with populations between 100,000 and 300,000 saw 18% of the state's growth followed by smaller counties with an 8% share. Franklin was the fastest-growing county between 2020 and 2021, with 2.8% growth, followed by Clark at 2.7% and Chelan at 2.4%.

The April 1, 2021, population estimate for Washington's incorporated cities and towns is 5,064,200, an increase of 1.5% from the previous year. The top 10 cities for numeric change, in descending order, are: Seattle, Vancouver, Pasco, Auburn, Everett, Kent, Lacey, Yakima, Bellevue and Ridgefield. Seattle's population increased by 8,400 people for a total of 769,500.

Washington's population has grown by 1,042,400 people since the 2010 decennial census on April 1, 2010. The state has grown by an average of 94,800 people per year this decade, exceeding the 83,000 the previous decade. King County is the main contributor, with an average growth of 32,900 people per year over 11 years, compared to an average of 19,400 people per year between 2000 and 2010.

In the past year, the state added 46,700 housing units, which is 2,350 fewer than last year. Of all new units built this past year, 57% were multi-family. The state's housing stock has grown by an average of 34,700 units per year since 2010, about 80% of the previous decade's average of 43,500 units per year. More than 71% of all new housing units this decade were built in one of the state's five largest metropolitan counties. King County leads all counties with 15,250 new housing units this year, and 36% of the state total since 2010.

You can find additional information on the latest population estimates for the state, counties, cities and towns on OFM's website.

Table 1. Population, Change and Rank

County	Total Population			Numeric Change			Percentage Change			Percentage of State Total		
	2010	2020	2021[1]	2010–21	2020–21	Rank	2010-21	2020–21	Rank	2010	2021	Rank
State	6,724,540	7,656,200	7,766,925	1,042,385	110,725	--	15.50	1.45	--	100.00	100.00	--
Adams	18,728	20,450	20,800	2,072	350	26	11.06	1.71	9	0.28	0.27	31
Asotin	21,623	22,640	23,000	1,377	360	25	6.37	1.59	12	0.32	0.30	29
Benton	175,177	205,700	209,300	34,123	3,600	7	19.48	1.75	8	2.61	2.69	10
Chelan	72,453	79,660	81,600	9,147	1,940	12	12.62	2.44	3	1.08	1.05	16
Clallam	71,404	76,770	77,550	6,146	780	18	8.61	1.02	26	1.06	1.00	18
Clark	425,363	499,200	512,800	87,437	13,600	4	20.56	2.72	2	6.33	6.60	5
Columbia	4,078	4,185	4,200	122	15	36	2.99	0.36	35	0.06	0.05	38
Cowlitz	102,410	110,500	111,800	9,390	1,300	14	9.17	1.18	19	1.52	1.44	12
Douglas	38,431	43,750	44,600	6,169	850	16	16.05	1.94	5	0.57	0.57	25
Ferry	7,551	7,910	8,000	449	90	33	5.95	1.14	20	0.11	0.10	36
Franklin	78,163	96,760	99,500	21,337	2,740	10	27.30	2.83	1	1.16	1.28	14
Garfield	2,266	2,225	2,250	-16	25	35	-0.71	1.12	21	0.03	0.03	39
Grant	89,120	100,130	102,400	13,280	2,270	11	14.90	2.27	4	1.33	1.32	13
Grays Harbor	72,797	74,720	75,450	2,653	730	19	3.64	0.98	27	1.08	0.97	19
Island	78,506	85,530	86,350	7,844	820	17	9.99	0.96	28	1.17	1.11	15
Jefferson	29,872	32,190	32,450	2,578	260	27	8.63	0.81	34	0.44	0.42	27
King	1,931,249	2,260,800	2,293,300	362,051	32,500	1	18.75	1.44	15	28.72	29.53	1
Kitsap	251,133	272,200	275,600	24,467	3,400	8	9.74	1.25	16	3.73	3.55	7
Kittitas	40,915	48,140	47,400	6,485	-740	38	15.85	-1.54	38	0.61	0.61	23
Klickitat	20,318	22,770	23,150	2,832	380	24	13.94	1.67	11	0.30	0.30	28
Lewis	75,455	80,250	81,250	5,795	1,000	15	7.68	1.25	17	1.12	1.05	17
Lincoln	10,570	11,050	11,150	580	100	32	5.49	0.90	33	0.16	0.14	35
Mason	60,699	65,650	66,250	5,551	600	21	9.15	0.91	32	0.90	0.85	20
Okanogan	41,120	43,130	43,525	2,405	395	23	5.85	0.92	31	0.61	0.56	26
Pacific	20,920	21,840	22,075	1,155	235	28	5.52	1.08	23	0.31	0.28	30
Pend Oreille	13,001	13,850	14,000	999	150	31	7.68	1.08	22	0.19	0.18	33
Pierce	795,225	900,700	917,100	121,875	16,400	2	15.33	1.82	7	11.83	11.81	2
San Juan	15,769	17,340	17,500	1,731	160	30	10.98	0.92	30	0.23	0.23	32
Skagit	116,901	130,450	131,800	14,899	1,350	13	12.74	1.03	25	1.74	1.70	11
Skamania	11,066	12,220	12,450	1,384	230	29	12.51	1.88	6	0.16	0.16	34
Snohomish	713,335	830,500	844,400	131,065	13,900	3	18.37	1.67	10	10.61	10.87	3
Spokane	471,221	522,600	527,600	56,379	5,000	5	11.96	0.96	29	7.01	6.79	4
Stevens	43,531	45,920	46,400	2,869	480	22	6.59	1.05	24	0.65	0.60	24
Thurston	252,264	291,000	295,300	43,036	4,300	6	17.06	1.48	14	3.75	3.80	6
Wahkiakum	3,978	4,210	4,275	297	65	34	7.47	1.54	13	0.06	0.06	37
Walla Walla	58,781	62,580	62,350	3,569	-230	37	6.07	-0.37	37	0.87	0.80	21
Whatcom	201,140	228,000	228,700	27,560	700	20	13.70	0.31	36	2.99	2.94	9
Whitman	44,776	50,480	48,000	3,224	-2,480	39	7.20	-4.91	39	0.67	0.62	22
Yakima	243,231	258,200	261,300	18,069	3,100	9	7.43	1.20	18	3.62	3.36	8

[1]Includes 49,100 person proportional adjustment for the difference between the OFM 2020 Estimate and the 2020 Census.

Table 2. Components of Population Change

County	2010–20			2020–21			
	Natural Increase	Net Migration	Population Change	Natural Increase	Net Migration	Census Adj.[1]	Population Change
State	338,109	593,551	931,660	24,529	37,115	49,081	110,725
Adams	2,724	-1,002	1,722	244	-25	131	350
Asotin	-108	1,125	1,017	-57	272	145	360
Benton	12,193	18,330	30,523	945	1,336	1,319	3,600
Chelan	2,269	4,938	7,207	101	1,328	511	1,940
Clallam	-3,304	8,670	5,366	-620	908	492	780
Clark	21,632	52,205	73,837	1,583	8,817	3,200	13,600
Columbia	-195	302	107	-27	15	27	15
Cowlitz	968	7,122	8,090	-52	644	708	1,300
Douglas	2,138	3,181	5,319	153	417	280	850
Ferry	-149	508	359	-13	52	51	90
Franklin	12,392	6,205	18,597	1,088	1,032	620	2,740
Garfield	-40	-1	-41	-3	14	14	25
Grant	8,263	2,747	11,010	686	942	642	2,270
Grays Harbor	-592	2,515	1,923	-237	488	479	730
Island	1,920	5,104	7,024	62	210	548	820
Jefferson	-1,742	4,060	2,318	-226	280	206	260
King	121,924	207,627	329,551	10,139	7,865	14,496	32,500
Kitsap	8,544	12,523	21,067	453	1,202	1,745	3,400
Kittitas	1,050	6,175	7,225	25	-1,074	309	-740
Klickitat	215	2,237	2,452	-3	237	146	380
Lewis	242	4,553	4,795	-2	488	514	1,000
Lincoln	-152	632	480	-36	65	71	100
Mason	-218	5,169	4,951	-74	253	421	600
Okanogan	757	1,253	2,010	-33	152	276	395
Pacific	-1,240	2,160	920	-180	275	140	235
Pend Oreille	-353	1,202	849	-39	100	89	150
Pierce	49,877	55,598	105,475	3,967	6,659	5,774	16,400
San Juan	-516	2,087	1,571	-46	95	111	160
Skagit	2,687	10,862	13,549	119	395	836	1,350
Skamania	87	1,067	1,154	-34	186	78	230
Snohomish	43,770	73,395	117,165	3,720	4,856	5,324	13,900
Spokane	15,289	36,090	51,379	972	678	3,350	5,000
Stevens	-155	2,544	2,389	-83	269	294	480
Thurston	9,480	29,256	38,736	548	1,887	1,865	4,300
Wahkiakum	-219	451	232	-50	88	27	65
Walla Walla	873	2,926	3,799	33	-664	401	-230
Whatcom	6,137	20,723	26,860	12	-774	1,462	700
Whitman	1,573	4,131	5,704	93	-2,897	324	-2,480
Yakima	20,088	-5,119	14,969	1,401	44	1,655	3,100

[1]Proportional adjustment for the difference between the OFM 2020 Estimate and the 2020 Census.

Table 3. Components of Population Change, Average Annual Change

County	2000–2010			2010–2020			2020–2021			
	Natural Increase	Net Migration	Population Change	Natural Increase	Net Migration	Population Change	Natural Increase	Net Migration	Census Adj.[1]	Population Change
State	33,810.9	59,355.1	93,166.0	33,832.7	59,333.3	93,166.0	24,529	37,115	49,081	110,725
Adams	272.4	-100.2	172.2	272.6	-100.4	172.2	244	-25	131	350
Asotin	-10.8	112.5	101.7	-11.7	113.4	101.7	-57	272	145	360
Benton	1,219.3	1,833.0	3,052.3	1,220.5	1,831.8	3,052.3	945	1,336	1,319	3,600
Chelan	226.9	493.8	720.7	227.7	493.0	720.7	101	1,328	511	1,940
Clallam	-330.4	867.0	536.6	-330.8	867.4	536.6	-620	908	492	780
Clark	2,163.2	5,220.5	7,383.7	2,170.5	5,213.2	7,383.7	1,583	8,817	3,200	13,600
Columbia	-19.5	30.2	10.7	-18.9	29.6	10.7	-27	15	27	15
Cowlitz	96.8	712.2	809.0	99.1	709.9	809.0	-52	644	708	1,300
Douglas	213.8	318.1	531.9	213.9	318.0	531.9	153	417	280	850
Ferry	-14.9	50.8	35.9	-15.2	51.1	35.9	-13	52	51	90
Franklin	1,239.2	620.5	1,859.7	1,239.9	619.8	1,859.7	1,088	1,032	620	2,740
Garfield	-4.0	-0.1	-4.1	-4.0	-0.1	-4.1	-3	14	14	25
Grant	826.3	274.7	1,101.0	826.9	274.1	1,101.0	686	942	642	2,270
Grays Harbor	-59.2	251.5	192.3	-58.4	250.7	192.3	-237	488	479	730
Island	192.0	510.4	702.4	191.9	510.5	702.4	62	210	548	820
Jefferson	-174.2	406.0	231.8	-174.2	406.0	231.8	-226	280	206	260
King	12,192.4	20,762.7	32,955.1	12,124.5	20,830.6	32,955.1	10,139	7,865	14,496	32,500
Kitsap	854.4	1,252.3	2,106.7	856.2	1,250.5	2,106.7	453	1,202	1,745	3,400
Kittitas	105.0	617.5	722.5	105.5	617.0	722.5	25	-1,074	309	-740
Klickitat	21.5	223.7	245.2	21.4	223.8	245.2	-3	237	146	380
Lewis	24.2	455.3	479.5	26.1	453.4	479.5	-2	488	514	1,000
Lincoln	-15.2	63.2	48.0	-14.9	62.9	48.0	-36	65	71	100
Mason	-21.8	516.9	495.1	-21.2	516.3	495.1	-74	253	421	600
Okanogan	75.7	125.3	201.0	76.1	124.9	201.0	-33	152	276	395
Pacific	-124.0	216.0	92.0	-124.2	216.2	92.0	-180	275	140	235
Pend Oreille	-35.3	120.2	84.9	-35.5	120.4	84.9	-39	100	89	150
Pierce	4,987.7	5,559.8	10,547.5	4,998.3	5,549.2	10,547.5	3,967	6,659	5,774	16,400
San Juan	-51.6	208.7	157.1	-50.7	207.8	157.1	-46	95	111	160
Skagit	268.7	1,086.2	1,354.9	292.2	1,062.7	1,354.9	119	395	836	1,350
Skamania	8.7	106.7	115.4	9.2	106.2	115.4	-34	186	78	230
Snohomish	4,377.0	7,339.5	11,716.5	4,392.4	7,324.1	11,716.5	3,720	4,856	5,324	13,900
Spokane	1,528.9	3,609.0	5,137.9	1,539.1	3,598.8	5,137.9	972	678	3,350	5,000
Stevens	-15.5	254.4	238.9	-14.4	253.3	238.9	-83	269	294	480
Thurston	948.0	2,925.6	3,873.6	950.7	2,922.9	3,873.6	548	1,887	1,865	4,300
Wahkiakum	-21.9	45.1	23.2	-23.0	46.2	23.2	-50	88	27	65
Walla Walla	87.3	292.6	379.9	87.3	292.6	379.9	33	-664	401	-230
Whatcom	613.7	2,072.3	2,686.0	616.8	2,069.2	2,686.0	12	-774	1,462	700
Whitman	157.3	413.1	570.4	158.0	412.4	570.4	93	-2,897	324	-2,480
Yakima	2,008.8	-511.9	1,496.9	2,013.0	-516.1	1,496.9	1,401	44	1,655	3,100

[1]Proportional adjustment for the difference between the OFM 2020 Estimate and the 2020 Census.

Table 4. Top 25 Cities by Population Change

Municipality	Numeric Change 2020–21	Rank	Change Due to Annexation 2020–21
Seattle	8,400	1	0
Vancouver	4,900	2	0
Pasco	2,480	3	0
Auburn	2,010	4	0
Everett	2,000	5	0
Kent	1,900	6	0
Lacey	1,870	7	5
Yakima	1,850	8	0
Bellevue	1,800	9	0
Ridgefield	1,790	10	0
Spokane	1,700	11	0
Kirkland	1,450	12	0
Tacoma	1,400	13	0
Lake Stevens	1,310	14	0
Redmond	1,280	15	0
Federal Way	1,250	16	0
Bonney Lake	1,150	17	0
Issaquah	1,150	17	0
Arlington	1,110	19	0
Spokane Valley	1,110	19	0
Camas	1,060	21	0
Sammamish	1,030	22	0
Richland	1,020	23	0
Renton	1,000	24	0
West Richland	1,000	24	0

Municipality	Percent Change 2020–21	Rank	Change Due to Annexation 2020–21
Ridgefield	18.32	1	0
Black Diamond	15.08	2	0
Winlock	8.93	3	0
Edgewood	7.71	4	0
Leavenworth	7.45	5	0
Tenino	7.30	6	0
La Center	6.88	7	0
West Richland	6.37	8	0
Chelan	6.20	9	0
Sumas	5.71	10	0
Arlington	5.39	11	0
Bonney Lake	5.38	12	0
Snoqualmie	5.04	13	0
Liberty Lake	4.96	14	0
Long Beach	4.84	15	0
Ferndale	4.59	16	0
Ocean Shores	4.56	17	0
Mountlake Terrace	4.52	18	0
Buckley	4.33	19	0
Royal City	4.22	20	0
Camas	4.22	21	0
Stanwood	4.21	22	0
Newcastle	4.20	23	0
Cle Elum	4.01	24	0
Winthrop	4.00	25	0

Table 5. Top 10 Unincorporated Areas by Population Change

Area	Numeric Change 2020–21	Rank	Change Due to Annexation 2020–21
Unincorporated Pierce County	10,640	1	0
Unincorporated Snohomish County	5,525	2	0
Unincorporated Clark County	4,695	3	-2
Unincorporated King County	2,120	4	0
Unincorporated Spokane County	1,980	5	0
Unincorporated Kitsap County	1,700	6	0
Unincorporated Grant County	910	7	-118
Unincorporated Cowlitz County	885	8	0
Unincorporated Chelan County	765	9	-5
Unincorporated Douglas County	755	10	0

Table 6. Population Density

County	Land Area (sq. mi.)	Total Population 2010	Total Population 2021	Population Density 2010	Population Density 2021	Numeric Change 2010–21	Rank
State	66,455.1	6,724,540	7,766,925	101.2	116.9	15.7	--
Adams	1,925.0	18,728	20,800	9.7	10.8	1.1	32
Asotin	636.1	21,623	23,000	34.0	36.2	2.2	24
Benton	1,700.1	175,177	209,300	103.0	123.1	20.1	9
Chelan	2,921.2	72,453	81,600	24.8	27.9	3.1	20
Clallam	1,738.7	71,404	77,550	41.1	44.6	3.5	18
Clark	628.5	425,363	512,800	676.3	815.9	139.7	2
Columbia	868.6	4,078	4,200	4.7	4.8	0.1	38
Cowlitz	1,141.2	102,410	111,800	89.8	98.0	8.2	14
Douglas	1,819.2	38,431	44,600	21.1	24.5	3.4	19
Ferry	2,203.2	7,551	8,000	3.4	3.6	0.2	37
Franklin	1,241.6	78,163	99,500	62.9	80.1	17.2	10
Garfield	710.8	2,266	2,250	3.2	3.2	0.0	39
Grant	2,679.6	89,120	102,400	33.3	38.2	5.0	16
Grays Harbor	1,901.5	72,797	75,450	38.3	39.7	1.4	28
Island	208.5	78,506	86,350	376.6	414.2	37.6	7
Jefferson	1,803.7	29,872	32,450	16.6	18.0	1.4	27
King	2,115.2	1,931,249	2,293,300	912.9	1,084.2	171.3	1
Kitsap	395.1	251,133	275,600	635.9	697.5	61.7	5
Kittitas	2,297.3	40,915	47,400	17.8	20.6	2.8	21
Klickitat	1,871.6	20,318	23,150	10.9	12.4	1.5	25
Lewis	2,402.8	75,455	81,250	31.4	33.8	2.4	23
Lincoln	2,310.6	10,570	11,150	4.6	4.8	0.3	36
Mason	959.5	60,699	66,250	63.3	69.0	5.8	15
Okanogan	5,266.2	41,120	43,525	7.8	8.3	0.5	35
Pacific	933.6	20,920	22,075	22.4	23.6	1.2	29
Pend Oreille	1,400.2	13,001	14,000	9.3	10.0	0.7	34
Pierce	1,668.0	795,225	917,100	476.3	549.8	73.5	3
San Juan	173.9	15,769	17,500	90.7	100.6	10.0	12
Skagit	1,730.2	116,901	131,800	67.5	76.2	8.6	13
Skamania	1,658.3	11,066	12,450	6.7	7.5	0.8	33
Snohomish	2,086.5	713,335	844,400	341.8	404.7	62.9	4
Spokane	1,764.2	471,221	527,600	267.2	299.1	31.9	8
Stevens	2,477.1	43,531	46,400	17.6	18.7	1.2	30
Thurston	722.5	252,264	295,300	349.4	408.7	59.3	6
Wahkiakum	262.9	3,978	4,275	15.1	16.3	1.2	31
Walla Walla	1,270.0	58,781	62,350	46.3	49.1	2.8	22
Whatcom	2,107.9	201,140	228,700	95.5	108.5	13.0	11
Whitman	2,159.3	44,776	48,000	20.7	22.2	1.5	26
Yakima	4,294.5	243,231	261,300	56.6	60.8	4.2	17

Numeric Change in Population: 2020–21

Percentage Change in Population: 2020–21

Note: Classification of map data based on natural breaks (jenks) distribution.

Percentage of State Total Population: 2021

Population Density: 2021

Note: Classification of map data based on natural breaks (Jenks) distribution.