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Revised 2015 DC employment data shows 3,000 fewer jobs and changes in some key sectors

More jobs for local government, food service, and education; fewer for health, business services, and organizations

Every year in March the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) revises state employment data, in this case from March 2014, based on more complete information. This year’s result is a net reduction of 3,066 jobs in DC—0.4% of all jobs in the city—for the December quarter of 2015 compared to the previous estimate that had been made in January. This reduction was the consequence of changes in the various sectors of the economy. Private sector jobs were decreased by 5,566 jobs (1.0%), for example, while public sector ones were marked up by 2,500 (1.1%).

Revised estimates for wage and salary employment in DC: December 2015

	Level		Change	
	Old	Revised	number	%
Total	775,233	772,167	-3,066	-0.4
Private sector	539,433	533,867	-5,566	-1.0
Public sector	235,800	238,300	2,500	1.1

Source: BLS (3 month moving average)

The upward revision in public sector jobs is entirely attributable to local government—an increase of 2,767 (7.5%). (The federal government was trimmed by 267.) In the previous estimate local government jobs declined from 2014 to 2015; with the revision they go up by 1,433, equivalent to 16% of all job gains in DC for the year. (See p. 19.) The revision seems consistent with recent DC budget increases.

Revised estimate for DC employment in selected sectors : December quarter 2015

	Level		Change	
	Old	Revised	number	%
Sectors gaining jobs				
Local government	37,000	39,767	2,767	7.5
Food service	48,133	50,633	2,500	5.2
Education	61,767	63,167	1,400	2.3
Retail	23,500	24,000	500	2.1
Hotels	14,800	15,333	533	3.6
Sectors losing jobs				
Health	71,400	66,933	-4,467	-6.3
Business services	54,200	49,933	-4,267	-7.9
Organizations	65,367	62,767	-2,600	-4.0
Finance	31,333	30,367	-967	-3.1

Four sectors drove the downward revision of private sector jobs—health, business services, non-profit organizations, and finance. Together they lost 12,301 jobs; business services declined 7.9%, health, 6.3%. In the previous estimate, these two sectors, with 16% of all DC jobs, added 7,200 jobs in the past year, accounting for 75% of then estimated one year job growth in the city. The new estimate shows one year growth of only 900 jobs, a modest 10% of all DC job growth.

There were also private sector gains in the revised estimates. Food service was previously estimated to have added 367 jobs over the past year, 4% of all city job growth. The newly estimate yearly increase is 2,600—30% of all DC job growth, second only to professional and technical services. *(continued on p.19)*

Source: BLS
This briefing document was prepared by Stephen Swaim, DC Office of Revenue Analysis

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Similarly, the retail sector’s share of all one-year DC job growth has been raised to 19% from the previous estimate of 3%. Although education got 1,400 more jobs in the revision, this was not enough to increase jobs in the sector over the prior year. The new level in 2015 is still estimated to be 1,900 (2.9%) less than a year earlier.

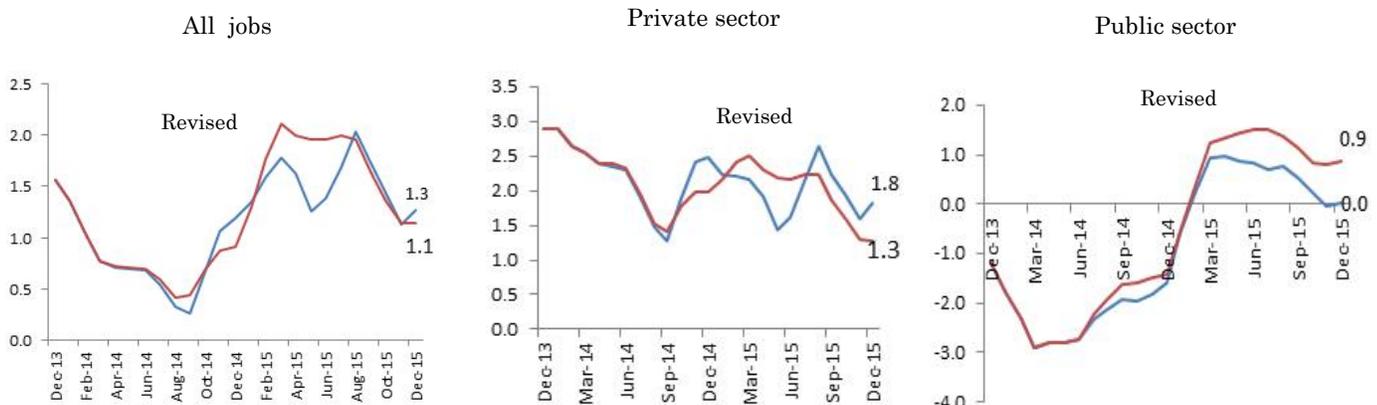
For the economy as a whole, the BLS revision reduced the rate of job growth from the December quarter of 2014 to the December quarter of 2015 from 1.3% to 1.1%. The revision reduced private sector growth from 1.8% to 1.3%, and the public sector went from virtually no growth to 0.9%. In terms of employment, the revision makes DC a 30.9% government town rather than a 30.4% one.

Change in DC jobs from the December quarter of 2014 to the December quarter of 2015: prior and revised estimates

	Prior estimate				Revised estimate			
	Dec. 2014	Dec. 2015	change	% ch	Dec. 2014	Dec. 2015	change	% ch.
Total	765,567	775,233	9,667	1.3	763,433	772,167	8,733	1.1
Private sector	529,800	539,433	9,633	1.8	527,200	533,867	6,667	1.3
Public sector	235,767	235,800	33	0.0	236,233	238,300	2,067	0.9

Source: BLS (3 month moving average)

Previous and revised estimates of DC wage and salary employment by sector: December 2013 to December 2015
(% change from the prior year in the 3-month moving averages)



Change in DC jobs from the December quarter of 2014 to the December quarter of 2015: previous and revised estimates of selected sectors

	Prior estimate				Revised estimate			
	Dec. 2014	Dec. 2015	change	% ch	Dec. 2014	Dec. 2015	change	% ch.
Sectors gaining jobs in the March revision								
Local government	37,800	37,000	-800	-2.1	38,333	39,767	1,433	3.7
Food service	47,767	48,200	433	0.9	48,033	50,633	2,600	5.4
Education	64,567	61,767	-2,800	-4.3	65,067	63,167	-1,900	-2.9
Retail	23,233	23,500	267	1.1	22,333	24,000	1,667	7.5
Hotels	15,267	14,800	-467	-3.1	15,333	15,333	0	0.0
Sectors losing jobs in the March revision								
Health	67,800	71,400	3,600	5.3	66,300	66,933	633	1.0
Business services	50,600	54,200	3,600	7.1	49,667	49,933	267	0.5
Organizations	62,800	65,367	2,567	4.1	63,033	62,767	-267	-0.4
Finance	30,633	31,333	700	2.3	30,300	30,367	67	0.2

Source: BLS

DC revisions from the perspective of the DC metropolitan area.

BLS also revised its estimates for wage and salary employment in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Overall, the metro area change was quite small—a 2,300 (0.1%) decline. An increase of 767 in the suburbs offset some of the 3,066 reduction in DC. Of note, however, is that the revision increased private sector jobs in the metropolitan area and decreased public sector jobs—the reverse of what happened in DC. In the DC suburbs, the revision added 9,533 private sector jobs and reducing public sector ones by 9,200.

Revision to December 2015 quarter employment estimates for the entire Washington metro area, DC, and the suburbs <i>(change in number of jobs from prior estimate)</i>				Percent revision to December 2015 quarter employment estimates for the entire Washington metro area, DC, and the suburbs <i>(% change in jobs from prior estimate)</i>			
sector	Metro area	DC	Suburbs	sector	Metro area	DC	Suburbs
Total	-2,300	-3,066	767	Total	-0.1	-0.4	0.0
Private sector	3,967	-5,566	9,533	Private sector	0.2	-1.0	0.5
Public sector	-6,267	2,500	-9,200	Public sector	-0.9	1.1	-1.9

Source: BLS

In four of the five sectors where the revised estimate increased DC employment by a significant amount, BLS lowered estimates for suburban employment. Retail was the one sector that increased in both DC and suburbs. Retail employment was increased more in the suburbs than in DC (3,267 versus 500). However, DC’s share of the higher estimate for metropolitan area retail employment, 11.8%, was greater than DC’s share of total retail employment in the region, about 8.4%.

For three of the four sectors in which the revision resulted in fewer jobs in DC, suburban employment was marked higher. The one exception was health, which was reduced in both DC and the suburbs. DC’s 55% share of the reduction in metropolitan area health employment was, however, larger than DC’s share of total health employment, which is about 22%.

The appendix table on the next page provides details on all sectors of the District’s economy.

—Stephen Swaim, DC Office of Revenue Analysis

Revision to December 2015 quarter employment estimates for the entire Washington metro area, DC, and the suburbs <i>(change in number of jobs from prior estimate)</i>				Percent revision to December 2015 quarter employment estimates for the entire Washington metro area, DC, and the suburb <i>(% change jobs from prior estimate)</i>			
	Metro area	DC	Suburbs	sector	Metro area	DC	Suburbs
DC sectors gaining jobs in the March revision				DC sectors gaining jobs in the March revision			
Local government	-6,400	2,767	-9,200	Local government	-0.9	7.5	-3.0
Food service	2,200	2,500	-300	Food service	1.0	5.2	-0.2
Education	133	2,500	-1,267	Education	0.1	2.3	-2.2
Retail	4,233	500	3,267	Retail	1.5	2.1	1.3
Hotels	200	533	-333	Hotels	0.5	3.6	-1.2
DC sectors losing jobs in the March revision				DC sectors losing jobs in the March revision			
Health	-8,167	-4,467	-3,700	Health	-2.6	-6.3	-1.6
Business services	-533	-4,267	3,733	Business services	-0.2	-7.9	2.1
Organizations	1,533	-2,600	3,200	Organizations	0.8	-4.0	2.6
Finance	2,800	-967	3,767	Finance	1.8	-3.1	3.1

Source: BLS

Appendix

Revised wage and salary employment located in DC: December quarter 2015

Sector	Prior Dec. 2015 estimate			Revised Dec. 2015 estimate			Revision to Dec. 2015 estimate	
	Level	ch from Dec 2014		Level	ch from Dec 2014		number	%
	Dec. 2015	number	%	Dec. 2015	number	%		
TOTAL	775,233	9,667	1.3	772,167	8,733	1.1	-3,066	-0.4
Total Private Sector	539,433	9,633	1.8	533,867	6,667	1.3	-5,566	-1.0
Construction	14,633	233	1.6	14,333	-67	-0.5	-300	-2.1
Manufacturing	1,000	0	0.0	1,100	0	0.0	100	10.0
Wholesale Trade	4,900	-67	-1.3	4,900	-100	-2.0	0	0.0
Retail Trade	23,500	267	1.1	24,000	1,667	7.5	500	2.1
Transport & utilities	4,333	67	1.6	4,867	400	9.0	533	12.3
Information	17,033	67	0.4	17,033	-67	-0.4	0	0.0
Financial Activities	31,333	700	2.3	30,367	67	0.2	-967	-3.1
Profess. & bus. serv.	166,767	5,700	3.5	162,800	3,533	2.2	-3,967	-2.4
Professional and tech.	112,567	2,100	1.9	112,867	3,267	3.0	300	0.3
Legal Services	30,133	900	3.1	28,833	33	0.1	-1,300	-4.3
Other professional	82,433	1,200	1.5	84,033	3,233	4.0	1,600	1.9
Business services	54,200	3,600	7.1	49,933	267	0.5	-4,267	-7.9
Education	61,767	-2,800	-4.3	63,167	-1,900	-2.9	1,400	2.3
Health	71,400	3,600	5.3	66,933	633	1.0	-4,467	-6.3
Arts, Ent., & rec.	7,367	133	1.8	7,600	-33	-0.4	233	3.2
Hotel and Food Services	62,933	-100	-0.2	65,967	2,600	4.1	3,033	4.8
Accommodation	14,800	-467	-3.1	15,333	0	0.0	533	3.6
Food Services	48,133	367	0.8	50,633	2,600	5.4	2,500	5.2
Other Services	72,467	1,833	2.6	70,800	-67	-0.1	-1,667	-2.3
Organizations	65,367	2,567	4.1	62,767	-267	-0.4	-2,600	-4.0
Other services	7,100	-733	-9.4	8,033	200	2.6	933	13.1
Public sector	235,800	33	0.0	238,300	2,067	0.9	2,500	1.1
Federal Government	198,800	833	0.4	198,533	633	0.3	-267	-0.1
Local government	37,000	-800	-2.1	39,767	1,433	3.7	2,767	7.5

Source: BLS. March 2016 revisions to state level wage and salary employment. December quarter is average of October, November, and December. Not seasonally adjusted.